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Efforts to Form the Religious Character of Students Through Islamic Spiritual Extracurricular Activities at Junior High School in Surabaya

Sayyid Qutub Nabillah¹, Eli Masnawati², Amir Bandar Abdul Majid³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya, Indonesia Corresponding Email: ¹sayyidqutubn@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to explore and describe various efforts made to shape the religious character of students through the extracurricular activities of Islamic Spirituality (Rohis) Pro Patria at YP 17 High School Surabaya. The main problem in this study is how Rohis's activities function as an effective medium in developing the religious character of students, amidst the moral challenges of today's young generation. This study applies a qualitative approach with a case study design. The data collection process was carried out through observation techniques, in-depth interviews with Rohis instructors, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and active Rohis members, and documentation of activities. The results of the study showed that Rohis extracurricular activities at YP 17 High School Surabaya were carried out in a structured manner through routine programs such as Islamic studies (Hadith Arbain, Tauhid, Fikih, and Muhadharah), Reading and Writing the Qur'an (BTQ), Islamic arts (Sholawat Quraniyah and Al-Banjari), and the habituation of daily worship such as the call to prayer and congregational prayer. These programs play an active role in instilling religious values, forming positive habits, and increasing students' spiritual awareness. The implication of this finding is the importance of supporting and developing religious-based extracurricular programs as part of the character education strategy in schools.

Keywords: Character Formation, Religious Character, Students, Extracurricular, Islamic Spirituality

Introduction

The success of a country in achieving progress cannot be separated from the quality of its education system. Quality education plays a strategic role in forming the quality of competent, innovative, and highly competitive human resources. (Citra & Aidah, 2024). Education is a process that is carried out intentionally and planned, intending to form the personality of students so that they grow into individuals who have strong spiritual beliefs, noble morals, master life skills, are knowledgeable, and can bear moral and social responsibilities in community life. (Pamuji & Mulyadi, 2024). In addition, education is also directed at developing relevant skills so that students can actively contribute to the dynamics of social life and participate in realizing the progress and welfare of the nation and state. (Pakpahan & Habibah, 2021).

Education does not merely act as a medium to transfer knowledge to students, but also plays a more comprehensive role, namely as a vehicle to develop the full potential of the individual. Education must instill moral and ethical principles that are the main foundation in the implementation of character education, so that students can live their lives by upholding integrity, responsibility, and human values. (Yulianti, 2019). To improve the quality of education that is oriented towards Islamic values, a holistic approach is needed that not only relies on classroom learning but also strengthens activities outside the classroom. Therefore, education that is religiously charged is not only delivered through formal religious subjects (curricular), but is also reinforced through extracurricular activities that function as a means of internalizing Islamic values in the real lives of students. (Hadi, 2020).

Extracurricular activities serve as a means of fostering students who provide space for them to participate in activities outside of class hours, according to their interests and preferences. (Dermawan & Nugroho, 2020). Through guidance and training provided by educators, these activities can foster positive attitudes that support the development of student character. Meanwhile, extracurricular activities that are based on students' interests are expected to stimulate creativity and develop their potential, interests, and talents. (Abidin, 2019). Extracurricular activities are non-face-to-face activities held outside of class hours, both inside and outside the school environment, to broaden horizons, enrich learning experiences, and increase students' knowledge and skills in various fields. (Arifudin, 2022).

Islamic Spiritual Extracurricular (Rohis) is a forum provided for students as a means of implementing da'wah activities in the school environment. (Safitri, 2018). Furthermore, Sujianto and Febrianingsih (2020) Consider that Rohis is not just an ordinary extracurricular activity, but an organization that covers aspects of worldly and hereafter knowledge holistically. According to Hajah (2022)Islamic Spiritual activities play a strategic role in the educational environment, especially as a medium for developing students' character and behavior to be in line with Islamic teachings. Based on these various views, it can be concluded that the existence of Rohis greatly contributes to maintaining and developing a positive atmosphere in the school environment. Rohis is not only a spiritual medium, but also plays a role in shaping students' personalities to be wiser, more religious, and not have a negative impact on themselves or others.

Character education is a structured process carried out by both individuals and groups systematically to equip students with the ability to identify, evaluate, and internalize moral values rooted in religious teachings. (Zakki et al., 2024). Within the framework of character education, eighteen main values form the foundation, including religious spirituality, moral integrity, tolerance for differences, discipline in acting, high work enthusiasm, the ability to innovate, and independence in thinking and acting, democratic spirit, high curiosity, nationalism, love for the country, appreciation for achievement, social and communication skills, interest in peace, enthusiasm for literacy activities, concern for environmental sustainability, social sensitivity, and individual responsibility in community life. (Kemendiknas, 2011). In addition, the character built through this approach also includes love for local culture, appreciation for national values, and awareness of respecting all aspects that are related to the activities and dynamics of human life in everyday life (Subarkah & Ahmad, 2022).

Therefore, from the various studies that have been conducted, there are still gaps that need to be filled. Generally, previous studies have focused on the results or final impacts of extracurricular activities without examining in depth the program structure, implementation methods, active involvement of students, and the continuity of the program in the context of a particular educational environment. This study is here to answer this gap, especially in examining efforts to form religious character through the Islamic Spiritual (Rohis) Pro Patria extracurricular program at YP 17 High School Surabaya as a whole, including the implementation process, member involvement, program effectiveness, and its relevance in forming students' religious character. Thus, this study not only confirms the results of previous studies, but also broadens the understanding of how Rohis activities concretely become a medium for efforts to form religious character.

Literature review

Research on character formation through extracurricular activities, especially in a religious context such as Islamic Spirituality (Rohis), has been widely conducted by previous researchers. Citra and Aidah (2024), in their study of the Bintalis extracurricular at 12 Medan State High School, concluded that the program was effective in forming students' Islamic character, having a positive impact on their religious behavior. This finding shows that when religious programs are carried out consistently and based on value development, students' character can be formed significantly. In line with that, Hambali and Yulianti (2018), through their research at Islam Brawijaya Junior High School,

Mojokerto, stated that the implementation of religious extracurricular activities has a major influence in helping students understand Islamic values and suppressing negative behavior such as juvenile delinquency. This confirms that religious education through non-formal channels can be a strategic alternative in fostering student behavior. Saudah (2023) studied Rohis' activities at 5 Purworejo State Junior High School and found that programs such as 5S, Al-Qur'an Learning, Commemoration of Islamic Holidays, spiritual tourism, and Islamic arts contributed greatly to strengthening students' religious character. Likewise, research by Gunawan (2023) at 1 Margaasih State High School showed that religious extracurricular activities had a major impact in instilling religious values and reducing negative environmental influences on students.

Research methods

This study applies a qualitative approach with a case study type that provides researchers with the freedom to explore information from various sources, such as observations, interviews, documents, and other field data. All of this information is then integrated comprehensively to obtain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon or context being studied. This approach emphasizes the importance of data triangulation in formulating a complete picture of the case that is the focus of the study. (Baxter et al., 2008).

This research was conducted at YP 17 High School located at Jalan Randu No. 17, Sidotopo Wetan, Kenjeran District, Surabaya City, East Java 60128. In determining the research subjects, a purposive sampling technique was used, namely the selection of informants based on certain considerations that were considered most relevant and had a deep understanding of the context being studied. The informants involved in this study included the supervisors of the Islamic Spiritual (Rohis) Pro Patria extracurricular activities, students who were active as members of Rohis Pro Patria, and Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, all three of whom were selected because of their roles and direct involvement in the process of forming religious character in the school environment.

Documents successfully obtained from informants were then analyzed individually. At this stage, researchers conducted a thorough review of all information that had been collected and received through the application of observation techniques, interviews, and document reviews. The data analysis process was carried out using an approach that refers to an interactive model consisting of three main stages: data reduction process, data presentation in a structured form, and the stage of drawing conclusions and verification to ensure the validity of the findings. (Miles et al., 1994).

Results/Findings

YP 17 High School Surabaya is an educational institution that places a balance between increasing capacity in the fields of science and technology, accompanied by strengthening spiritual and moral values based on faith and piety as the main foundation in forming a complete student profile. The school's vision, which emphasizes spiritual, intellectual, and nationalistic excellence, achievement, character, and environmental concern, is reflected in every educational activity, both intracurricular and extracurricular. In this context, the extracurricular Islamic Spirituality (Rohis) Pro Patria activity is one of the strategic forums for instilling religious values as well as efforts to form positive character and behavior in students (Doc/YP17/Profile/2025).

YP 17 Junior High School Surabaya has a comprehensive understanding that the educational process does not only take place in the classroom, but also through various non-formal activities that support the holistic development of students' potential. Therefore, extracurricular programs are designed as a strategic means to encourage students to explore their interests and talents, while expanding their competencies beyond academic aspects. Through active involvement in extracurricular activities, students are not only honing their technical and social skills, but also their character and

personality are formed to become strong, independent, and adaptive individuals in facing the dynamics of life in the future (Doc/YP17/Profile/2025).

The Islamic Spiritual Extracurricular (Rohis) Pro Patria at YP 17 High School Surabaya is one of the self-development activities that focuses on spiritual guidance and strengthening Islamic values for students. This activity is designed to foster moderate religious awareness, strengthen noble morals, and shape students' characters with integrity and responsibility. Through various programs such as Islamic studies, spiritual discussions, da'wah training, and social activities based on Islamic values, Rohis Pro Patria becomes a strategic forum in fostering a young generation of Muslims who are not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually and socially mature. The name Pro Patria, which means "for the homeland", reflects the spirit of Islam combined with nationalism, making this activity a means of forming religious students who love their homeland and are ready to contribute positively to society (Doc/YP17/Profile/2025).

Routine Construction Activities

The extracurricular activities of Islamic Spirituality (Rohis) Pro Patria at YP 17 High School Surabaya are carried out routinely and in a structured manner as part of efforts to form the religious character of students. This coaching program aims to strengthen students' spirituality through a scientific approach, worship skills, and the development of spiritual attitudes in everyday life. Each activity is designed to instill comprehensive Islamic values, starting from the scientific aspect, religious art expression, worship skills, and the habituation of Islamic behavior. In general, routine coaching activities in the Rohis program are divided into four main categories, which are carried out both weekly and daily. Weekly activities are focused every Friday after Friday prayers, while daily activities take place during worship times at school.

Table 1. Construction Program Details

No.	Program	Sub Activities	Purpose/Benefits
	Name		
1.	Study	Hadith of Arbain	Instilling the basics of Islamic
	Program	 Monotheism 	teachings, deepening religious
		 Jurisprudence 	knowledge, and training in
		• muhadharah	preaching/public speaking.
2.	Islamic Arts	Qur'anic blessings	Cultivating love for the Prophet
	Program	 Al Banjar 	Muhammad SAW and preserving
			Islamic traditions in arts and
			culture.
3.	Reading and	Teaching the skills of reading and writing	To educate students who still have
	Writing the	the Qur'an by applying the correct rules of	limitations in reading the Qur'an
	Qur'an	tajwid, as well as guiding students who	and develop their recitation skills.
	(BTQ)	still have difficulty reading the Qur'an.	
4.	Daily	Azan Schedule	Forming discipline, responsibility
	Program	• Coordination of Congregational	for worship, and the spirit of
		Prayer	spreading Islam.

The implementation of the four programs shows the continuity between cognitive (religious knowledge), affective (spiritual experience), and psychomotor (religious practice) aspects in the Rohis coaching activities. Therefore, students not only master the concept of Islamic values in theory, but can also implement them practically in real actions in everyday life. This program is a strategic forum to

educate the religious character of students that is in line with the values of Islamic teachings and the school's vision that prioritizes integration between IMTAQ, IPTEK, character, and environmental culture.

Understanding the Material Given

Understanding religious material is a fundamental aspect of the process of forming students' religious character. At YP 17 High School Surabaya, the extracurricular activity of Rohis Pro Patria is a spiritual learning space that does not solely emphasize the ritual aspect, but also enriches students' knowledge of Islamic teachings comprehensively. Through various materials such as the study of Hadith Arbain, lessons on Tauhid, Fiqh, and Muhadharah, students are not only given conceptual understanding, but are also actively involved in the dialogical and reflective process of Islamic values.

The religious learning approach in Rohis activities prioritizes communicative methods, where instructors deliver material contextually and relevantly to everyday life. For example, in studying the Hadith of Arbain, students do not just memorize, but are invited to discuss the contents and their applications in the school and family environment. Likewise, in learning Tauhid and Fiqh, students are guided to internalize the deep meaning of the teachings of Sharia that prioritize Tauhid, ethics, and social responsibility. Muhadharah activities that contain Islamic lecture or speech exercises are also an effective forum for internalizing religious values, while also training students' communication skills and courage in conveying moral messages in public. This process not only forms spiritual depth but also builds self-confidence, responsibility, and exemplary character.

Thus, the understanding of religious material in Rohis activities is not one-way or dogmatic, but rather participatory and transformative. This is in line with the spirit of character education, which aims to form a generation that is not only superior in intellectual aspects, but also has resilience in moral and spiritual dimensions and has noble character.

Active Member Involvement in the Program

The active involvement of students in the Rohis Pro Patria extracurricular program at YP 17 High School Surabaya is an important indicator in assessing the effectiveness of religious character development. Student participation is not only formal or administrative, but truly reflects commitment and sincerity in participating in various activities that have been systematically designed. Their participation is evident in their enthusiasm in attending every religious study session, Islamic art practice, reading and writing the Qur'an, and daily tasks such as the call to prayer and coordinating congregational prayers.

One form of active involvement that stands out is the role of students in preparing and delivering religious study materials in the Muhadharah session. In this activity, students are not only passive listeners, but are encouraged to become communicators of Islamic values through practicing speaking in front of peers. This process not only instills religious values but also trains courage, leadership, and critical thinking skills in delivering moral messages.



Figure 1. Active Member Involvement in the Program

In addition, in Islamic art activities such as Sholawat Quraniyah and Al Banjari, students show emotional and spiritual involvement through meaningful artistic expressions. They collectively practice, perform, and interpret each verse of the sholawat reading as a spiritual expression in showing love and respect for the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and a form of strengthening their religious identity. Involvement in Reading and Writing the Qur'an (BTQ) also reflects the students' seriousness in improving and increasing their ability to read the Al-Qur'an. Some students even take the initiative to become peer mentors for friends who are still experiencing difficulties, creating a collaborative and inclusive learning atmosphere.



Figure 2. Active Involvement of Members in Routine Activities

With such active involvement, the process of forming religious character is no longer a process that is forced from the outside, but grows from within the awareness and direct experience of the students. This shows that the Rohis program is not just an additional activity outside of class hours, but an integral part of character education in the school environment.

Discussion

Islamic Spiritual Extracurricular (Rohis) is a form of self-development activity in the school environment that plays an important role in fostering the religiousness of students. This activity is not just an additional learning medium, but also a space for students to deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings and practice them in their daily lives. Rohis functions as a vehicle for preaching in the school environment, where all activities carried out are based on the values and principles of Islamic teachings (Sugiantoro et al., 2019). Through spiritual and educational activities, students are allowed to develop their religious potential in a supportive and conducive atmosphere. In general, the existence of Rohis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Islamic values, not only theoretically, but also

in the form of real implementation in the school environment. The importance of emphasizing deep religious experiences in shaping the religious character of students (Frisia & Sulaiman, 2021). In addition, Zaman (2017) added that Rohis is also able to create a strong Islamic atmosphere while providing creative space for students to express religious values in the form of artistic, leadership, and social activities.

Efforts to form religious character in the extracurricular activities of Islamic Spirituality (Rohis) Pro Patria at YP 17 Junior High School Surabaya are reflected in various activities that are designed in a structured, consistent manner and are filled with Islamic values. This is what is seen in the implementation of various Rohis programs that take place routinely at school. The main objective of Islamic Spirituality activities is to form students' religious attitudes by increasing their understanding of Islamic teachings, strengthening religious values, and fostering noble morals. (Sujianto & Febrianingsih, 2020). By providing adequate religious knowledge, students are not only directed to understand Islamic teachings theoretically, but also to internalize these values in their daily behavior. The guidance provided in this activity aims to produce a generation that has an Islamic character, good morals, and is able to practice religious teachings in their social lives.

One of the leading programs that is characteristic is the four main activities carried out every Friday after Friday prayers, including the study of the Hadith Arbain, tauhid material, fiqh, and Muhadharah training. The study of the Hadith Arbain, among the main values contained in it are the value of worship, the value of ihsan, and the value of da'wah, each of which has an important role in the formation of a complete Muslim personality. (Tantowi, 2018).

The material of monotheism functions as the main foundation and the most important pillar in the structure of Islamic teachings, a firm and unshakable belief in the oneness of Allah SWT as the only God who deserves to be worshiped, the Most High, Almighty, and has no partners in all aspects of divinity, creation, regulation, and control over the universe. (Tajik & Irawan, 2025).

Fiqh learning is an integral component in the Islamic study program taught in the Rohis Pro Patria activities and has its characteristics compared to other fields of study. This uniqueness lies in its strategic role in instilling a deep understanding in students regarding the provisions of Islamic law, both in terms of mahdhah worship (pure rituals such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj) and aspects of muamalah (social and community interactions). In addition to providing conceptual understanding, fiqh learning also aims to shape students' spiritual and ethical awareness so that they are able to apply these teachings in real life. Therefore, the fiqh learning process is not only cognitive, but also affective and psychomotor, which leads to the formation of a Muslim personality who is obedient, responsible, and able to carry out Islamic law well and consistently in various situations and conditions. (Lubis et al., 2024).

Muhadharah aims to foster students' self-confidence in conveying Islamic preaching messages and teachings verbally in front of an audience, both in educational environments and the wider community. Through muhadharah activities, students are not only trained in aspects of speaking techniques (*public speaking*) but also guided in terms of selecting appropriate materials, language mastery, and Islamic communication ethics. (Santoso et al., 2021). Public speaking skills have several main objectives, including conveying knowledge, providing information, offering an idea, and convincing the audience of something. (Batubara & Mavianti, 2024).

In addition, the activity of reading and writing the Qur'an (BTQ) is a form of implementing very essential religious values. In the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, it is stated that the best people are those who always study the Qur'an and teach it to others. The activity of studying and disseminating the teachings of the Qur'an is not only a form of spiritual devotion, but also included in the fundamental responsibility of every Muslim towards their holy book. This action reflects a noble obligation that is worth worship, because it not only deepens personal understanding of Divine

revelation, but also becomes a means of spreading the light of guidance to others (Muhaini et al., 2023). This program not only aims to improve the technical ability to train the ability to read and write the Qur'an by applying the correct tajwid rules, but also becomes a medium to foster a sense of love for the holy book and the spiritual discipline of students. Learning to read is not only intended to hone technical reading skills, but also aims to foster interest and love of students for the reading activity itself (Muhammad, 2018).

Islamic art activities such as Sholawat Quraniyah and Al Banjari are also important elements in shaping students' religious identity through aesthetic and cultural approaches. Islamic art acts as a means of expressing religious values collectively and pleasantly, which in turn strengthens solidarity among Rohis members.

In addition to the worship aspect, social values and concern for others are also internalized through various social action-based activities, such as charity, fundraising, and sharing activities during the month of Ramadan. These activities play an important role in forming empathy, solidarity, and a sense of social responsibility in students towards the surrounding community. Religious activities such as the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's Birthday and Isra' Mi'raj become reflective moments to deepen the understanding of Islamic history and strengthen Islamic identity in students' daily lives.

In the practice of implementing the daily Rohis program at Pro Patria Junior High School, the role of educators is very crucial in providing examples of religious values to students. For example, teachers always show a disciplined attitude in carrying out prayer, by always carrying it out on time and not delaying it, so that it indirectly forms positive habits in students to emulate it. In addition, teachers also consistently provide examples of Islamic behavior in everyday life, such as getting used to saying hello when meeting others, both in the school environment and outside the classroom. Daily programs such as taking turns for the call to prayer and coordinating congregational prayers also function as responsibility training and instilling student discipline in carrying out worship together, because through these habits, Islamic values are not only taught theoretically, but also implemented in real life in students' daily lives. (Pendi et al., 2020).

Thus, the implementation of religious values at YP 17 High School Surabaya through the Rohis program is not just an additional activity, but an integral part of the strategy for forming students' religious character as a whole. These programs do not merely increase students' religious literacy, but also form individuals who are responsible, independent, and have noble morals as mandated in the goals of national education.

Conclusion

From the results of the research and the discussion above, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Rohis Pro Patria program has a strategic role in shaping and strengthening the religious character of students. Routine activities, such as Islamic studies, Reading and writing the Qur'an (BTQ), Muhadharah training, and Islamic arts, are effective means of internalizing the values of faith, piety, and noble morals. Increasing students' understanding of Islamic teachings is carried out through various educational approaches and targeted coaching activities through learning that touches on spiritual, intellectual, and emotional aspects. Students' active participation in each activity reflects their involvement, which is not only a formality but grows from their awareness and interest in religious values. In addition, daily activities such as the call to prayer and congregational prayer help form consistent worship habits, as well as foster discipline and responsibility.

Overall, Rohis' activities at YP 17 Junior High School Surabaya have succeeded in becoming an integral part of the character education process. The religious values that are instilled are not only theories, but are also reflected in the attitudes and behavior of students daily. This shows that fostering

religious character through extracurricular activities is a relevant and effective approach in creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has a strong moral and spiritual foundation.

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