



Islamic character education model: An in-depth analysis for Islamic boarding school

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the implementation model of instilling Islamic characters at SMP-SMA Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Boarding School Purwokerto. This study employs a qualitative research design, utilizing observation, interviews, and document analysis as data collection techniques. The collected data are then analyzed to understand the character education model at Al-Irsyad. The research findings indicate that the formation of Islamic characters at SMP-SMA Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Boarding School Purwokerto is conducted through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects, which include Akhlaq (ethics), Aqidah (creed), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Tarikh Islam (Islamic history) as the learning materials. The Akhlaq lesson aims to promote honesty, integrity, and noble character for the students while eliminating feelings of envy. Meanwhile, the specific goal of Islamic character formation is instilled through Aqidah lesson. The Aqidah curriculum directs students to avoid practices in Islam that are considered deviant from monotheism, such as acts of shirk (polytheism), Tawassul (seeking intercession), and Tabarruk (seeking blessings). Some implications of this understanding result in Al-Irsyad not allowing the students to "salute the red-and-white flag" or "observe a moment of silence" during flag ceremonies. Additionally, the Al-Irsyad students are not permitted to sing the national song "Padamu Negeri," as this song negates Allah's presence. Such practices typically occur due to a textual interpretation and understanding of Islamic sources, the Qur'an, and Hadith.

Keywords: Al-Irsyad, boarding school, Islamic character, model, Purwokerto

Article history

Received:
5 October 2023

Revised:
7 March 2024

Accepted:
7 April 2024

Published:
14 June 2024

Citation (APA Style): Miftahuddin, M., Aman, A., & Yuliantri, R.D.A., (2024). Islamic character education model: An in-depth analysis for Islamic boarding school. *Cakrawala Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 43(2), 370-380. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v43i2.66516>

INTRODUCTION

Al-Irsyad is one of the Islamic organizations in Indonesia focusing on the development of Islamic education. The main mission of Al-Irsyad is to shape students with Islamic characters in accordance with its understanding and interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education subjects, which include Akhlaq (ethics), Aqidah (creed), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), and Tarikh Islam (Islamic history), are mandatory for the students. According to Al-Irsyad's model of understanding the Qur'an and Hadith, these subjects are expected to form students' Islamic characters.

In the context of Indonesian history, the organization of Al-Irsyad has a long history, spanning from the pre-independence era of Indonesia through the Soekarno Order, the New Order (Orde Baru), and the Reform Order (Orde Reformasi). The emergence of Al-Irsyad itself in 1915 can be seen as a part of the revival (nahḍah) of the Arab-Hadrami community in Indonesia. The conflicts, upheavals, identity crises, divisions, and dynamics characterize this Hadrami community. The formation of Al-Irsyad itself involved a serious conflict between the group representing the first nahḍah among the non-Sayid Hadramis and the Sayid group within the Jami'at Khair organization. Both the Sayid and non-Sayid groups were eager to maintain their positions as the most prominent Hadrami factions (Kesheh, 1999).

Thus, Al-Irsyad is an extended revival (*nahḍah*) of the Hadrami community within the framework of *Jami'at Khair*. *Nahḍah* can be understood as progress or as the gateway to the modern world through the adoption of ideas and institutions. In this context, the Hadrami people made significant efforts to be on par with others regarding culture, civilization, and education. Meanwhile, education is the hallmark of *nahḍah*, referring to modern education that combines knowledge from Western sciences with Islamic religious subjects that were previously considered traditional (Kesheh, 1999).

Deliar Noor includes Al-Irsyad as a part of the modern Islamic movement in Indonesia driven by the non-Sayid Arab Hadrami group, alongside Islamic movements in Minangkabau, Muhammadiyah, Persyarikatan Ulama, and Persatuan Islam (Persis). A distinctive feature of Al-Irsyad's modernity is its model of Islamic education, which integrates knowledge from Western sciences. Such an educational model was initiated by the previous Arab organization, *Jami'at Khair*. It is known that *Jami'at Khair*, founded in 1905, not only served as a religious school but also offered various subjects such as mathematics, history, and earth sciences with a structured curriculum and organized classes (Noer, 1990). However, after the establishment of Al-Irsyad, *Jami'at Khair*, as its predecessor organization, did not advance and seemed to decline.

The organization and educational model of Al-Irsyad subsequently spread to various regions, especially in Java. Some of them flourished and became significant, such as in Surabaya, while others simply existed. Additionally, as an organization, the journey of Al-Irsyad was not smooth, primarily due to frequent internal conflicts. Differences in orientation and the movement direction often served as reasons for internal conflicts within the Al-Irsyad organization. These conflicts proved to be obstacles to the organization's development. The most severe conflict, for example, was the one that emerged in the 1990s due to the infiltration of Salafi outreach, a transnational Islamic ideology. This conflict reached its peak in 2007, leading to the division of the Al-Irsyad organization into two entities: Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah itself and the Perhimpunan Al-Irsyad as a new organization (Miftahuddin, 2017).

Nevertheless, the conflict from 1990 to 2007 appears not to have affected the educational process at Al-Irsyad Purwokerto. Naseer Mohammad Balfes, the Chairman of the Al-Irsyad Dakwah Committee and Supervisor of the SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto, revealed that the conflict within Al-Irsyad in the 1990s did have an impact, but it was primarily at the upper levels. He even emphasized that the ongoing Al-Irsyad Purwokerto would not be influenced even if the central Al-Irsyad in Jakarta were to disappear. In fact, the central Al-Irsyad depended on the Al-Irsyad branches in various regions, including that in Purwokerto. The conflict within Al-Irsyad from 1990 to 2007 was indeed felt in the organizational structure, but mainly at the central leadership level, leading to the emergence of a new organization called the Perhimpunan Al-Irsyad in 2007. However, especially in Purwokerto, the influence of the Al-Irsyad conflict did not appear in the field of education because the existence of Al-Irsyad schools was protected by the Education and Teaching Committee (LPP) (Balfes, 2018).

This study focuses on the practice and implementation of Islamic character education in Al-Irsyad schools based on *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools). The sample for this study was taken from the SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto. Essentially, research on character education in *pesantren* has already been conducted by several researchers. For example, Ubaidillah wrote about "Cultivating Marine Leadership Character Through a Multicultural Boarding-School System" (Ubaidillah et al., 2020). In this article, it is explained that maritime leadership character is the profile of responsive, resilient, and resourceful graduates, representing a unique and authentic character that graduates of schools in Indonesia, as a maritime nation, should possess. To achieve this, the internalization of character values can be carried out through a cultivation model, which is integrated into the boarding school education system (Ubaidillah et al., 2020).

In another study, Murdiono, in an article titled "The education of the national character of Pancasila in a secondary school based on *pesantren*," discusses the development of Pancasila national character education in *pesantren*-based secondary schools and the strategies employed by teachers in fostering Pancasila national character education (Murdiono et al., 2017). This study

explains that Pancasila national character education is developed through policies established by school principals and instructional programs designed by the teachers. Meanwhile, the strategies employed by the teachers in developing Pancasila national character involve integration within both intra and extracurricular programs (Murdiono et al., 2017).

Regarding implementing character education in pesantren-based schools, Fahham examines this issue in his article titled "Character education in pesantren" (Fahham, 2013). Fahham explains that the values developed by pesantren to shape the character of its students include sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, brotherhood grounded in a religious spirit, and freedom. Additionally, modern Islamic boarding schools, such as Pondok Pesantren Modern Gontor, generally promote the motto of being physically healthy, possessing extensive knowledge, and thinking freely (Fahham, 2013).

Abdurrahman (2016) adds that the methods used in the character education processes are exemplified by role models, assignments and nurturing, habituation, training programs, student participation in various activities, and rewards and punishments. Furthermore, the students are expected to practice several characteristics, including faith and piety, and the ability to apply their knowledge in their daily behaviour (Abdurrahman, 2016).

To sum up, the current study and the previous research examine the Islamic characters that are intended to be cultivated through character education. However, this study highlights that the Islamic characters aimed to be developed for students at the SMP-SMA Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Boarding School Purwokerto are framed within the Islamic model that aligns with Al-Irsyad's understanding, which has been served the prominent difference of the study compared to existing literature. In other words, the Islamic characters intended for students at the SMP-SMA Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Boarding School Purwokerto represent a pure Islam spirit, which does not deviate from the beliefs or the Islamic ideology of Al-Irsyad. Meanwhile, the evidence of the cultivation of pure Islam can be observed in the implementation of Al-Irsyad Education.

METHOD

This study falls under qualitative research and involves subjects from the SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto. Qualitative research is a systematic and subjective approach used to explain life experiences and provide meaning to those experiences (Danim, 2002). Qualitative research can also refer to research procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observable behaviors (Moleong, 2002). The data collection techniques in this study included observation, interviews with Al-Irsyad leaders and the principal of SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto, and document analyses that cover the writings of the founders of SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto as well as the curriculum or syllabus of Islamic Religious Education subjects.

After obtaining data from these sources, an analysis was conducted, which involved classifying data, identifying relationships between the data, and drawing conclusions based on logical reasoning and theoretical constructs. Subsequently, the data were reduced, summarized, and key elements were selected to focus on the important aspects, in line with the study's pattern. Furthermore, data display was carried out using several strategies to facilitate the conclusion process. It comprised categorizing data, grouping data into specific categories, making classifications, and organizing them into a system in accordance with the research problem's framework (Kaelan, 2010).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Islamic character education

In Islam, the word "character" is synonymous with the word "personality" or "akhlaq" (morals/ethics). Akhlaq can mean qualities that are ingrained in the soul, leading to various actions effortlessly without the need for thought. Akhlaq can also refer to traits embedded in the soul that produce deliberate actions, whether good or bad, beautiful or ugly (Suhayib, 2016). In

Islamic terminology, akhlaq is generally defined as character, behavior, conduct, or knowledge related to human actions, whether good or bad. Akhlaq as human behavior has existed since a person's birth and then becomes a norm accepted by society, encompassing both good and bad actions (Al Hamdani, 2016).

Meanwhile, character education can be defined as a movement to nurture young people to be ethical, responsible, and caring through good role models based on universally agreed-upon values. Therefore, character education contains three main elements: understanding the good, loving the good, and doing the good. In practice, character education does not only teach students what is right and wrong but also instills the habit of doing good so that the students understand, feel, and are willing to do good things. Thus, character education carries the same mission as akhlaq education or moral education (Marzuki, 2015).

It is also explained that character education is one way to regulate students' behavior to help them become good citizens in the future. In this context, students are instructed and guided towards a series of predetermined behaviors. Character education is believed to nurture or train students to demonstrate maturity when faced with challenging situations. Character education is defined as "a process of student learning within the school community to understand, accept, and act based on ethical values, such as respecting others, being fair, acting wisely as citizens, and being responsible for oneself and others" (Agboola & Tsai, 2012).

In the context of Islamic education, character education or Islamic akhlāq is based on two primary sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, good and bad things in Islamic characters are measured according to the standards set by the Qur'an and Hadith, rather than human standards or general human thought (Marzuki, 2015). With this understanding, character education aims to foster good character or commendable akhlāq. *Ensiklopedi Khazanah Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* (Irawan, 2023) mentions that commendable akhlāq includes prioritizing others, honoring guests, maintaining dignity, being modest and calm, having a balanced life, being grateful for Allah's blessings, being patient and sincere, controlling anger, being fair and humble, keeping promises, paying debts, and maintaining cleanliness.

Islamic character and Al-Irsyad's religious ideology

Islamic teachings and Al-Irsyad, as a primarily education-focused religious social organization, are fundamentally interconnected. As mentioned earlier, the emergence of Al-Irsyad is primarily aimed at shaping the Islamic character of students through education. It is important to understand that interpretations of Islam itself sometimes differ among different Islamic groups, leading to variations in religious practices. For example, there are many differing understandings of Islamic practices between Al-Irsyad and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) or other organizations. However, this diversity is considered normal, as Islam acknowledges it as a blessing.

It is known that the primary sources of Islamic character are the Quran and the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Therefore, Islamic characters' criteria for what is considered good and bad are based on these two sources rather than human standards (Marzuki, 2015). However, sometimes there are differences in religious practices and behaviours among Muslims due to varied interpretations of the Quran and the Hadiths. It should be understood by every Muslim to avoid falling into fanaticism and claims of absolute truth (feeling that one's own interpretation is the only correct one). It is, therefore, reasonable that Muslims in Indonesia, for example, have diverse religious traditions stemming from these different interpretations.

The goal of Islamic education carries the meaning of a desired change that humans seek and strive to improve themselves through knowledge in the educational process. Therefore, the purpose of Islamic education is inseparable from its role, which is to humanize individuals. The aim of Islamic education should be able to encompass the three main functions of religion: the spiritual function related to faith and belief, the psychological function related to individual behavior, including moral values that elevate human dignity to a higher and more perfect level, and the social function related to the rules that connect humans with other individuals or society (Abdullah, 2018).

In Islam, character is more commonly referred to as 'akhlāq', which pertains to a person's personality and disposition that can be observed through their attitude, speech, and actions. All of

these aspects are inherent to an individual, forming their identity and character, making it difficult for someone to manipulate. Character is another form of 'akhlāq,' which, theoretically, is an accumulation of knowledge and direct experience that shapes a person's nature and traits. They are inherent and, in practice, have implications on a person's actual behavior, becoming habits. When connected to Islamic character education or 'akhlāq,' it can be explained that education is an ongoing effort involving training, cultivation, guidance, and direct engagement for students based on values deemed good according to Islamic teachings (Johansyah, 2017).

In Law No. 20/2003 on National Education System, Chapter 1, Article 1, it is stated that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed for themselves, society, the nation, and the state. Meanwhile, in Chapter 2, Article 3, it is mentioned that national education functions to develop the abilities and to shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation to enlighten its life, aiming for the development of students' potential to become individuals who have faith and piety in the One Almighty God, have noble characters, be healthy, knowledgeable, skilful, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Presiden, 2003).

What has been mentioned above regarding the role of education in character formation is fundamentally consistent with the objectives of education within Al-Irsyad. However, Al-Irsyad has its own references and guidelines for its implementation. For example, Al-Irsyad people often state that Ahmad Surkati, as the founder of Al-Irsyad, is a proponent or follower of the ideas of Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Ibn Taimiyyah, and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab as the basis for practicing Islam. Basjarahil affirms that it cannot be denied that the influence of Muhammad Abduh has transformed the condition of the Muslim community from ignorance (jahiliyah), misguided monotheism and reason, superstition (takhayul), polytheism (syirik), innovation (bid'ah), superstition (khurafat), talismans, charms, and an environment that initially made other people intermediaries for the worship of Allah, into the light of Islam (Basjarahil, 1964). Influenced by the puritanical spirit of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab and the Salafism of Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida, Ahmad Surkati used the Al-Irsyad organization as a means to purify the beliefs and worship without sacrificing modern development (Hasan, 2008).

In line with the thoughts of his Salafi predecessors, Ahmad Surkati, on various occasions, emphasized that in the context of Islamic renewal, Muslims should abandon religious practices that have no legal basis in the Quran and Hadith. He even wrote a book titled "Tiga Persoalan: Ijtihad dan Taqlid, Sunnah dan Bid'ah, Ziarah Kubur, Tawasul dan Syafaat" (Al-Anshori, 1988).

Another religious practice that Al-Irsyad sought to eliminate is the visitation of graves, tawasul, and intercession (syafaat), which are all interconnected. In this context, conducting ceremonies or celebrations and seeking blessings around graves is clearly forbidden and falls under the category of reprehensible acts. Such actions are reminiscent of the practices of the Majusi and idol worshippers. Similar actions are currently being carried out by Muslims towards prominent individuals, using the excuse that 'we do not worship them, but through them, we draw closer to God' (Al-Anshori, 1988).

Similarly, the Irsyadis firmly state that they are part of the Salafi movement, which opposes innovations (bid'ah) and superstitions and aligns with Ahlu Sunnah wa al-Jamaah (Al-Mukhlisin, 2006). The Irsyadis also affirm that true Salafis are those who follow the religious practices of the Prophet Muhammad's companions, the Tabi'ien (those who studied under the Prophet's companions), those who follow the Quran and Hadith (the Prophet's sayings and actions), and distance themselves from bid'ah. On the other hand, Salafi followers are those who continue to respect, admire, and honor religious scholars, such as Shafi'i, Hambali, Maliki, Hanafi, and others. They even follow those scholars' way of seeking the truth without violating the evidence (hujjah) (Salafi, 2005).

The ideology embraced by the followers of Ahmad Surkati's teachings within Al-Irsyad is often referred to as 'mabadi.' The word 'mabadi,' in its singular form 'mabda,' carries the meaning of principles, attitudes, doctrines, rules, foundations, or beliefs. In English, 'mabadi' can be

translated as ideology, doctrine, or belief. With this understanding, it can be defined that 'Mabadi Al-Irsyad' represents the fundamental ideas consisting of principles, key elements, and foundations upon which the organization stands. It also serves as the ideology prepared to shape the character of every Irsyadi (Amar, 2005a).

In essence, 'Mabadi Al-Irsyad' represents the attempts initiated by Sheikh Ahmad Surkati to purify and reform. 'Mabadi' did not emerge out of thin air but evolved from the thoughts and efforts, accompanied by the study and examination of books and magazines focusing on purification and reform written by prominent Islamic scholars and leaders such as Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyah (1229-1350), Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), and Rashid Rida (1865-1935). Furthermore, the concept of 'Mabadi' was developed through coordination with community leaders and senior members of Al-Irsyad to ensure its implementation (Amar, 2005b).

Islamic character education Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah boarding school

As mentioned earlier, Al-Irsyad is widely recognized as a social and religious organization focusing on Islamic-based education management. Various official foundations acknowledge Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto as an educational institution. According to the *Surat Pengesahan Perguruan Agama from the Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia Perwakilan Propinsi Jawa Tengah*, dated January 1, 1975, with the reference number K/201/IIb/75, MI (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) Al-Irsyad I received recognition as a Private Religious School with the registration number 201. Similarly, based on the *Surat Pengesahan Perguruan Agama* from the same department with the reference number K/203/IIIb/75, dated January 1, 1975, MI Al-Irsyad II was recognized as a Private Religious School with the registration number 203. Additionally, the approval of the establishment of a private kindergarten named TK Al-Irsyad was granted based on a letter from the Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Propinsi Jawa Tengah Kantor Kabupaten Banyumas, dated July 2, 1990, with reference number 5564/103.02.F/X.1990. Furthermore, SDS Al-Irsyad 01 was officially designated as a Private Elementary School, as per an excerpt from the *Surat Keputusan Gubernur Kepala Daerah Tingkat I Jawa Tengah*, dated August 10, 1993, with reference number 421.2/Swt/08230/1993 (LPP, n.d.).

Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto has been actively involved in educational activities since 1932, beginning with establishing the first Al-Irsyad school in Purwokerto. The complexity of educational management issues continued to grow, prompting the organizers of this religious community organization to establish a foundation on August 22, 1987. Presently, the Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto Foundation oversees seven schools: KB (Kindergarten) Al-Irsyad, TK Al-Irsyad, SD Al-Irsyad 01, SD Al-Irsyad 02, SMP Al-Irsyad, SMA Islam Teladan Al-Irsyad, and SMP-SMA Boarding School. These seven schools are under the management of the Education and Teaching Committee (LPP) of Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto. The LPP's operational activities are centralized at the office located at Jalan Jatiwinangun No. 37, Kelurahan Purwokerto Lor, Kecamatan Purwokerto Timur, Kabupaten Banyumas (LPP, n.d.).

Furthermore, the vision of SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto is 'to become a professional and modern Islamic school that produces future leaders to contribute to the glory of Islam and Muslims in Indonesia.' Meanwhile, its mission includes teaching Islamic studies (faith, law, and ethics), teaching the Quran (recitation and memorization), promoting proficiency in international languages (Arabic and English), fostering excellent and Islamic personalities (Islamic character building), and providing integrated knowledge for this world and the hereafter (AABS, n.d.).

Based on the above vision and mission, SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto has several objectives. Firstly, to provide education based on the values of the Quran, nurturing students' independence to achieve excellence in both worldly and hereafter accomplishments. Secondly, implementing quality management based on the boarding school system ensures effective, comprehensive, and integrative teaching and learning processes guided by Islamic values. Thirdly, to develop the boarding school system according to national and international standards. Fourthly, to offer education that focuses on shaping Muslim personalities through structured and systematic boarding environment practices. Fifthly, to conduct learning

activities that utilize all learning resources to address all aspects of students' intelligence, including spiritual, emotional, and intellectual dimensions. Sixth, to implement curriculum engineering strategies in the teaching and learning process to achieve competency targets in religious and scientific fields (Sifa, 2016).

Sifa explains that education at SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto takes place 24 hours a day through the boarding system. In their daily lives, the students or santri receive both teaching and education to the maximum and optimum extent, guided directly by the board of teachers and caregivers. Sifa emphasizes that a school with a boarding system is an alternative for parents who seek character-based education for their children. Education within a boarding school approach combines the school and pesantren educational systems, providing a comprehensive understanding of life. In this context, it encompasses not only general knowledge but also the religious one through character building, leadership, Quran memorization (tahfidzul Al-Qur'an), and proficiency in international languages, namely Arabic and English (Sifa, 2016).

On the other hand, Balfes states that the goal of SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto is to produce Muslim leaders who does not only understand their religion but can also lead and encourage others to do good deeds. For example, they can become doctors, but their basic knowledge is derived from what they have received and been taught in the boarding school. This institution guides its students toward successful admission to various state universities. Additionally, the students engage in Quran memorization and religious speech training every night. Furthermore, there is a program for 10th-grade students at the high school level where they are sent to Egypt for 3 months to learn the Arabic language. Egypt is the home of this language, making Arabic proficiency a valuable tool for students to better understand Islam (Balfes, 2018).

It is evident that all teaching and educational activities at SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto fundamentally aim to shape the students' Islamic characters. This is reflected in the curriculum of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at both the middle school (SMP) and high school (SMA) levels, which includes subjects such as Ethics (Akhlak), Faith (Aqidah), Jurisprudence (Fiqh), and Islamic History (Tarikh Islam). At SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad, character development is directly supported by specific lessons within the Ethics subject. More specifically, the Ethics lessons are based on the hadiths (sayings and actions) of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). In this context, students are required to understand their content and memorize these hadiths. The curriculum aims to nurture various virtues, including the importance of honesty, the prohibition of lying, staying away from envy, and demonstrating good character (husnul khuluq). Furthermore, the Islamic History material is related to the study of the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the intention of drawing inspiration from his life. These lessons are reflected in the content of the basic competency standards for PAI (Al-Irsyad, 2017b).

In the Akhlak subject of the middle school (SMP) curriculum, the competency standards have the following objectives: 1) To instil in students both knowledge and love for Hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet) and noble characters to exhibit commendable behavior in daily life, and 2) To foster awareness to refrain from bad character traits. Furthermore, the content of the basic competencies aims to include Maintaining good relations with others, with several indicators: 1) students can memorize hadiths about maintaining good relations, 2) students can explain the meaning of maintaining good relations, students can elucidate the merits of maintaining good relations, 4) students explain the consequences for those who sever relations, and 5) students explain the benefits of maintaining good relations. The Akhlak lesson also comprises the prohibition of loitering in the streets, with several indicators: 1) students memorize hadiths prohibiting loitering in the streets, 2) students explain the rights of the road as described in the hadiths regarding the prohibition of loitering, and 3) students explain other rights of the road beyond the prohibition of loitering. Lastly, Akhlak also tells about the prohibition of arrogance, with several indicators: 1) students memorize hadiths prohibiting arrogance, 2) students explain the meaning of arrogance, and 3) students explain the dangers of arrogance (Al-Irsyad, 2017b).

However, it's important to emphasize that in addition to shaping Islamic character, SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto has a specific model of Islamic character education. This model is reflected in the curriculum references, particularly in the *Aqidah* (Islamic creed) subject, which aligns with the ideological framework of Mabadi Al-Irsyad. The Mabadi Al-Irsyad promotes the teaching of 'pure Islam' based on a return to the Quran and Hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet). It is worth noting that Al-Irsyad's primary mission has always been a modernist movement aimed at purifying Islamic teachings. Modernist Islamic groups in Indonesia share the goal of purifying Islam from elements considered impure and un-Islamic. They seek to free Islam from the influence of various Islamic schools, making it compatible with the demands of the modern world. They believe that this can be achieved by returning to the Quran and Hadith as the authentic sources of Islam (Alfian, 2010).

Al-Irsyad is part of the Islamic renewal movement in Java, emerging after Muhammadiyah. These renewal movements in Indonesia share common roots and aim to purify and correct Islamic teachings they consider regressive or deviating from the Quran and Hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet) (Surkati & Badjerei, 1985). Al-Irsyad's objectives are twofold: first, to establish schools and disseminate relevant religious and secular knowledge within the spirit of independence, and second, to revive guidance from the Quran and Hadith while eradicating superstitions and *bid'ah* in the Islamic religion (Elansari, 1964). The content in Standar Kompetensi dan Kompetensi Dasar PAI SMP-SMA serves as a reference for education at SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto and aligns with Al-Irsyad's objectives.

Al-Irsyad's mission for purifying and correcting Islamic teachings is evident in the high school Grade XI Semester 2 subject of *Aqidah*. In this subject, the competency standards for the topic of "Wasail Syirik" entail the basic competencies, which comprise several principles. Firstly, it includes understanding the essence of witchcraft and sorcery in Islam, and the indicators encompass explaining the legal status of a sorcerer, the legal status of studying witchcraft, the legal status of visiting a sorcerer, distinguishing between witchcraft and non-witchcraft, explaining the Prophet's methods for countering witchcraft, and resolving simple issues related to witchcraft in the community. Secondly, it includes understanding the Islamic concept regarding Tawassul (seeking intercession) and Tabarruk (seeking blessings from sacred objects). The indicators for this aspect involve mentioning the meaning of Tawassul, presenting justifications for the legitimacy of Tawassul, explaining the prohibition of seeking Tawassul through the essence or status of a person, defining Tabarruk, specifying conditions for permissibility of Tabarruk, providing examples of permissible and prohibited Tabarruk, and mentioning the legal status of seeking blessings from Prophet Muhammad after his death (Al-Irsyad, 2017a).

If the Islamic characteristics have been instilled, as what has been performed at the SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto, it is reasonable for some activities to be prohibited since they are considered detrimental to the Islamic faith. For example, students cannot sing the patriotic song "Padamu Negeri" (To You, My Country). This song, composed by Kusbini, with lyrics that state, "Padamu negeri kami berjanji, Padamu negeri kami berbakti, Padamu negeri kami mengabdikan, Bagimu negeri jiwa raga kami" (To you, our country, we pledge, to you, our country, we serve, to you, our country, we devote our heart and soul), is considered potentially damaging to Islamic faith. According to Al-Irsyad, one's heart and soul should be dedicated solely to Allah, not anyone else (Sholeh, 2018). However, there are other Islamic groups in Indonesia who interpret singing the song "Padamu Negeri" as not being detrimental to Islamic faith because it does not amount to an act of shirk or associating partners with Allah.

For those Islamic groups, singing the song "Padamu Negeri" simply signifies that the Indonesian people, regardless of their religion, should wholeheartedly and sincerely love their nation. As Soekarno expressed in the context of Indonesian identity, pure Islam is not opposed to nationalism. Pure Islam contains socialist tendencies and fulfils its duties as a national obligation. Pure Islam mandates its followers to love and work for the country they inhabit, as well as to love and work for the people of the place they reside in, with the condition that the nation and its people are part of Darul-Islam (Sukarno, 1965).

Similarly, the headmaster of the SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto, mentioned that 'in the past, before he became a teacher at Al-Irsyad, flag ceremonies were prohibited, but now they are allowed because we have to follow government regulations,' with the condition that they do not contradict the Islamic values. Likewise, showing respect to the national flag is now permitted, which was previously prohibited" (Sholeh, 2018). Nevertheless, it can be inferred that fundamentally, the act of showing respect to the Indonesian national flag as a part of flag ceremonies in the Al-Irsyad community is considered less appropriate, and respect should be directed solely towards Allah. In this context, showing respect to the flag is seen as containing elements of shirk (polytheism).

The SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto also does not observe a moment of silence during the flag ceremony. This belief is derived from the Hadith, which states that Muslims are not allowed to mourn the dead. According to Al-Irsyad members, there is no need to commemorate heroes; thus, there is no remembrance of heroes. Respecting heroes should be performed by filling Indonesia's independence with a more realistic struggle rather than just commemorating and mourning, as that is not essential. Pancasila, with its principle of belief in the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*, is, according to Al-Irsyad members, very much in line with this. The prohibition of a moment of silence aligns with the value contained in the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* principle, which teaches tawhid (Sholeh, 2018).

CONCLUSION

We can conclude that the development of Islamic character at the boarding school is accomplished through Islamic Religious Education (PAI), which encompasses subjects such as Akhlaq (ethics), Aqidah (creed), Fiqih (Islamic jurisprudence), and Tarikh Islam (Islamic history). In the Akhlaq subject, students are expected to promote honesty and truthfulness, refrain from envy, and demonstrate noble behavior. The Islamic History subject is focused on delving into the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the intention of presenting him as a role model to emulate. Meanwhile, there is a specific aspect related to the goal of Islamic character education that SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto aims to achieve through the study of Aqidah material. This Aqidah material guides students to avoid practices in Islam that are considered deviant and detrimental to monotheism. The discussion in this Aqidah material revolves around acts of shirk (polytheism), Tawassul (seeking intercession), and Tabarruk (seeking blessings). Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto incorporates the learning of Aqidah material as a part of the purification and correction of Islamic teachings that are perceived to deviate from the Qur'an and Hadith. This is evident in the syllabus (lesson plan), which includes teachings on the purification of Islam. However, it can be noted that Al-Irsyad's understanding and interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith appear to be more textual rather than contextual.

The understanding and interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith in such a textual manner sometimes conflict with local Indonesian values. For instance, SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto prohibits students from observing a moment of silence during flag ceremonies, citing the principle that mourning the dead is not permissible. Conversely, flag ceremonies, including observing a moment of silence, are seen as integral to fostering nationalism in Indonesia. Similarly, other Islamic groups like Muhammadiyah and NU do not object to observing a moment of silence during flag ceremonies, viewing it as consistent with the Islamic creed. Furthermore, SMP-SMA Boarding School Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah Purwokerto forbids students from singing the national anthem, "Padamu Negeri" (To You, My Country). In this context, members of Al-Irsyad appear overly strict in their interpretation of the phrase "Bagimu negeri jiwa raga kami," implying that dedicating soul and body to the nation somehow denies Allah's existence. However, the song aims solely to encourage the entire Indonesian nation to unite in nation-building and dedicate themselves fully to Indonesia within the framework of nationalism, regardless of one's religion or group affiliation.

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