Implementation of Khotmil Quran Program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang: Building Religious Character in Vocational Schools

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Article Info	Abstract
	Character education is very important to build students' personality, especially in the era of globalization which is full of moral problems. At SMKN 1 Omben Sampang, the Khotmil Quran program aims to internalize Islamic values and build students' religious character. To understand the implementation of the program in a vocational school, this research uses qualitative methodology and case studies. Participatory observation, interviews, and documentation studies are the methods used to collect data. The results show that the program helps foster students' characters, especially in terms of discipline, responsibility, and religious awareness. As a result, there are still some issues that need to be addressed. These include uneven student involvement and the need for more organized program management. This program has the potential to be an effective model of Islamic values-based character education in vocational schools by optimizing the implementation strategy and increasing the involvement of all parties. Keywords: Character Education; Khotmil Qur'an; Islamic Values; Religiosity; Vocational School.

1.   Introduction

Character education is a crucial aspect in shaping students' personalities. In the era of globalization, the younger generation faces increasingly complex challenges, including the negative impact of technological developments and social changes that may affect their ethics and morals (Cil & Dotger, 2017). Therefore, character education is very important in the education system, especially in vocational schools that aim to produce employees with strong morals. Religious values are one of the main pillars in character education of students (Ainah, 2023). Character education is a fundamental

aspect of the education system (Kurdi, 2018), particularly in vocational schools that are designed not only to equip students with technical competencies but also to prepare them as future professionals with integrity and strong moral foundations. In this context, character education serves as a strategic approach to shaping students' attitudes, behavior, and ethical judgment, ensuring they are not only skilled but also responsible members of society.

According to Ismail & Imawan (2023) and Nurgiyantoro (2019), strengthening character education in vocational high schools includes implementation strategies, monitoring evaluation, and identifying supporting factors and obstacles. In addition, Islamic religious education teaches not only ritual aspects, but also values and daily habits that shape students' character (Fitriyani, & Kania, 2019; Rahmasari et al., 2024). As a comprehensive religion, Islam provides guidance in every aspect of life, including education. As a comprehensive and holistic religion, Islam provides guidance across all dimensions of life, including the field of education (Cahayaningsih, 2020; Rismayani, 2024). Its teachings encourage values such as honesty, discipline, respect for others, and a sense of responsibility—qualities that align closely with the goals of character education in vocational contexts. Therefore, integrating Islamic values into the educational framework can significantly enhance the moral and spiritual development of students, ultimately shaping them into ethical and competent professionals.

A study conducted by Suyadi and Fauziah (2020) found that the integration of religious values into the education system has a significant impact on improving students' discipline, integrity, and sense of responsibility. Their research demonstrated that religious-based programs—such as teaching students to read the Qur'an, performing congregational prayers, and participating in Islamic studies—have been effective in strengthening students' faith and moral awareness. These programs not only nurture spiritual development but also reinforce positive behavioral patterns that align with the objectives of character education. One notable initiative that schools can implement to further cultivate these values is the *Khotmil Quran* Program. This program, which involves the regular completion and recitation of the Qur'an either individually or collectively, serves as a spiritual exercise that fosters persistence, commitment, and reflection among students. Moreover, it provides a structured platform for building a religious culture within the school environment, thereby embedding Islamic values into students' daily routines and enhancing their moral development in a consistent and meaningful way.

SMKN 1 Omben Sampang is a vocational school located in Sampang Regency, East Java, that demonstrates a strong commitment to implementing an education system grounded in Islamic values. Situated in a predominantly religious community, the school leverages its sociocultural environment to integrate character education with religious teachings effectively. This integration is reflected in a variety of school programs designed to foster students' moral and spiritual development. One such initiative is the *Khotmil Quran* Program, which serves as a routine religious activity aimed at cultivating students' love for the Qur'an, enhancing their spiritual discipline, and reinforcing positive character traits such as patience, responsibility, and reverence for religious practices. By embedding Islamic values into both curricular and extracurricular activities, SMKN 1 Omben Sampang seeks to produce graduates who are not only technically competent but also morally upright, aligning with the broader objectives of vocational education in Indonesia that emphasize the development of character alongside vocational skills.

The *Khotmil Quran* program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang is one of the flagship religious activities aimed at shaping the religious character of students through habitual engagement with the Qur'an. By encouraging students to regularly read and recite the Qur'an, the program fosters spiritual discipline and reinforces Islamic values in their daily lives. This activity is held monthly on *Kamis malam Jumat Legi* (Thursday night sweet Friday), a time considered spiritually significant in Javanese Islamic tradition. The program involves not only students, but also teachers and educational staff, creating a collective

religious atmosphere that strengthens the school's moral culture. More than just reading, the *Khotmil Quran* initiative emphasizes understanding and internalizing Qur'anic values—such as honesty, patience, compassion, and responsibility—which are expected to be reflected in students' behavior both inside and outside the classroom. Through this program, SMKN 1 Omben Sampang actively integrates religious values into the fabric of school life, demonstrating a holistic approach to character education rooted in Islamic teachings.

The study conducted by Hermino & Arifin (2020) demonstrates that students' religious awareness and positive attitudes can be significantly enhanced through the implementation of Qur'anic reading habituation programs in schools. These programs not only cultivate spiritual sensitivity but also contribute to the improvement of student discipline and responsibility—two essential components of character education. This finding is in line with the research of Hakim (2015), which affirms that learning based on religious values can positively influence the formation of students' character, particularly in the vocational school context where moral grounding is as vital as technical competence. In this regard, the Khotmil Quran program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang serves as a strategic effort to integrate spiritual development with vocational training. The ultimate goal of the program is not merely to produce graduates with strong technical capabilities, but also to instill in them high moral standards and ethical behavior. By shaping students to become honest, responsible, and morally upright individuals, the program aligns with the broader vision of vocational education to prepare a competent and character-driven workforce for the future. .

2.   Methods

This study uses qualitative and case study methods (Moleong, 2011). This case study focuses on how the Khotmil Quran program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang can build students' religious character. This method aims to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of religious education in vocational schools (Sugiyono, 2021). This study was conducted in SMKN 1 Omben Sampang in East Java. The school is strongly committed to integrating Islamic values into learning and school life. The principal, religious teachers, students, and educational personnel involved in the program were the research subjects.

Participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary studies were used to collect data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, religion teachers, and students to understand the experiences, perceptions, and impact of the Khotmil Quran program on students' religious character development. Participatory observation was conducted by attending Khotmil Quran activities directly at the school so that the interaction between students, teachers, and the school environment could be directly observed. In addition, documentary studies were conducted by reviewing various related documents such as internal policies, school activity reports, and the Islamic values-based curriculum. This was done to support the data collected through interviews and observations (Sugiyono, 2018).

The qualitative data analysis method which consists of three main stages, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification have been described by Miles and Huberman in various literatures, as cited by Sugiyono (2018) to provide a deeper understanding of the implementation of the Khotmil Quran program at school. To do this, the data collected from observations, documentation, and interviews were classified according to the research focus. Next, this data was presented in the form of descriptive narratives. The final step was to draw conclusions. Here, research was conducted to find relationships and patterns between findings in the context of students' religious character formation.

In this study, source triangulation methods and techniques were used to increase the reliability and validity of the data (Kania et al., 2024). Triangulation is done by comparing information from

observations, documentary studies, and interviews to ensure that the results are consistent. It is expected that by applying this strategy, the results of this study can provide an accurate and in-depth picture of how effective the Khotmil Quran program is in shaping the religious character of students in vocational schools.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Student Participation and Engagement.

The results showed that the implementation of the Khotmil Quran Program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang had a significant impact on the formation of students' religious character. This can be seen from the document study of character assessment learning outcomes each semester which has increased. This program is an important part of the Islamic value-based education system that aims to instill discipline, responsibility, and piety in students. Based on interviews with teachers, the Khotmil Quran activity held every month on Kliwon Thursday night has increased students' religious awareness and created a spiritual atmosphere at school.

3.1.2. Scheduling and Program Management.

Interviews with students show that they have a positive attitude towards the program. Most students view Khotmil Quran as an activity that provides spiritual benefits and helps them to better understand and explore the Quran. Based on observations, students tend to be active and consistent in participating in these activities. Students' participation in these activities is not only an obligation but also a form of personal awareness and a desire to strengthen their relationship with Islamic teachings. In addition, the students' involvement in various aspects of the organization, such as chanting the holy verses, tartil, and discussing the meaning of the verses, also enhanced their understanding of Islamic teachings.s.

3.1.3. Role of Educators as Role Models.

The management of the Khotmil Quran program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang shows effectiveness in organizing time and implementation methods. This activity is scheduled every month on the night of Thursday Sweet Friday, which is specifically chosen to suit the local religious traditions. In addition, the implementation structure, which involves religion teachers, classroom teachers, and student council administrators in coordinating the event, ensures that the activities run smoothly and consistently. The success of moral education does require the seriousness and cooperation of all parties involved, from educational institutions (school principals and all components), parents, society, government (local government, and central government), all of them do what is best for education, either morally or spiritually (Abdillah & Munawwaroh, 2024; du Plessis & Marais, 2017). The continuity of this program is an important factor in its success, as it allows students to develop the habit of reading and understanding the Quran on an ongoing basis.

3.1.4. Improving the Program's Effectiveness

The role of teachers and educators in this program is very important, not only as facilitators, but also as role models for students. Based on interviews with teachers, they emphasized that familiarizing students to prosper the Musholla through routine reading of the Qur'an can instill the value of piety and increase faith in Allah SWT. This is in line with the results of observations, where students began to build the habit of reading the Qur'an in the musholla after the dzuhur prayer. In addition, teacher involvement in these activities, such as leading prayers, providing motivation, and sharing spiritual experiences, strengthens the positive influence on student character. In line with Assa'idi (2021) research, teachers' active involvement in religious values-based activities has been shown to increase students' religious awareness and promote positive characters such as discipline and responsibility.

Several strategic steps can be taken to ensure the sustainability and increased effectiveness of the Khotmil Quran program. Variations in learning methods, such as adding tafsir studies, short lectures, or interactive discussions, can help students to not only recite the Quran, but also understand its meaning and implement it in their daily lives. In addition, increasing student motivation through recognition or rewards for those who actively participate can encourage greater enthusiasm and engagement. Working with parents is also an important factor in encouraging the habit of reading the Qur'an at home, so that religious education takes place not only at school but also in the family environment. Regular evaluation through reflection with students and teachers is needed to identify obstacles and design improvement strategies so that this program can run more effectively and have a greater impact on the formation of students' religious character

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Student Participation and Engagement

Although the program is working well, there are some parts that can still be improved to get better results. Teachers said that one of the obstacles is the involvement of students, which still needs to be expanded. Most students still join Khotmil Quran voluntarily, so it does not fully reflect the participation of all students in the school. To maximize the management of the musholla, it is suggested to involve the student council and representatives of the board from each class. With more organized student involvement, the musholla can become a more active center of religious activities and become more attractive to the entire student body.

3.2.2. Scheduling and Program Management

More regular scheduling and time adjustment can also improve the performance of the program. Teachers have suggested several times that the duration of Khotmil Quran be extended so that students have more time to read, understand, and internalize Qur'anic values in their daily lives. They also believe that the Khotmil Quran schedule should be more detailed so that it is clearer who is responsible for what. With a clear schedule, each class and student organization can contribute more actively to the sustainability of the program.

3.2.3. Role of Educators as Role Models

Individual awareness and the example of educators are important elements in the formation of students' religious character. Educators emphasize that the formation of students' religious character cannot be achieved only through verbal instructions or formal rules; real-life examples from teachers and school staff are also important. According to Kurdi (2018) research, the formation of character education in schools can be achieved through the example of teachers, the internalization of religious values should take place in daily life through habits and examples that students can imitate. Therefore, the role of teachers as role models is crucial to ensure that the values of the program are truly reflected in their behavior.

3.2.4. Improving the Program's Effectiveness

Improvements in the program's management system are needed for the program to survive and become more effective. This can be achieved by making clearer rules about how tasks are divided, what students should do, and how the program is run. Schools can also think of more creative ways to get students to participate. For example, they can use technology to teach the Qur'an or reward students who are active.

Overall, the Khotmil Quran program at SMKN 1 Omben Sampang has strengthened the religious character of the students. It is hoped that this program can continue to develop into a flagship program with improved management, greater student participation, and a stronger role for teachers as role models. This will set this school apart from other schools in terms of shaping students' morals and morals. Hopefully, this program will continue to run well and become the hallmark of the school in producing a generation that is honest, noble, and has strong faith.

Figure 1. Documentation of Activities
(Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oA1WxRdIgF0)

4. Conclusions

At SMKN 1 Omben Sampang, the Khotmil Quran program has proven to build the religious character of the students. Not only do students learn to read and understand the Quran, but this activity also helps them develop an attitude of discipline, responsibility, and piety. The results show that the program has increased students' religious awareness and created a spiritual atmosphere in the school.

However, there are some things that need to be improved. These include increasing student involvement, managing the program more systematically, and improving the example set by the teachers. It is expected that the Khotmil Quran Program will continue to develop as a flagship program for building a generation of integrity and noble character with better management and innovation in its implementation.Include acknowledgements as appropriate. List individuals or institutions here that provided help and assistance during the research, such as offering grants, providing laboratory facilities, assisting with writing, or proofreading the article. For grants, please provide the grant number and the year it was received.

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Conflict of Interest

This article contributes to strengthening the academic culture at STKIP PGRI Sampang by producing results that can be published in academic journals. This supports the improvement of institutional accreditation and enriches studies in the field of Islamic value-based character education.

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