STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF TARUNA IN DEVELOPING SKILLED AND NOBLE CHARACTER STUDENTS

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Abstract: This research project is concerned with the process of strengthening the religious culture of State Vocational High School 1 Geger Madiun. The objective of this research is to elucidate the position and significant role of Taruna in the formation of an exemplary generation, characterised by proficiency and a virtuous character, in both vertical and horizontal relations. Taruna represents an educational and training activity for students in vocational high schools. Vocational high schools are synonymous with the advancement of expertise and proficiency. The reinforcement of a religious culture constitutes an essential element in the formation of an individual endowed with superior qualities. An individual may be considered superior if they possess both the requisite skills and a robust spiritual and social foundation. The data collection methods employed were observation, interview and documentation. The interactive analysis model was employed to analyse the data, comprising the following steps: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion. The findings of the study indicate that: (1) Taruna serves to enhance the physical resilience of students, equipping them with the capacity to thrive in the professional sphere; (2) Taruna cultivates the spiritual fortitude of students, fostering a sense of personal devotion and ethical conduct; and (3) The establishment of a religious culture can be achieved by integrating spiritual piety, social piety, and proficient skills, thereby establishing a model of religious culture within the context of vocational education.

Keywords: Religious Culture, Taruna, Vocational School.

Introduction

Vocational high schools are formal educational institutions that are oriented towards the development of the skills of their students.[1] Learners acquire knowledge and skills in a range of subject areas. The subject area is the foundation of the objectives of vocational education. However, on the one hand, it is necessary to reinforce religious culture to provide for spiritual aspects.[2] Vocational schools provide expert services and still pay attention to religious aspects. The religious aspect is an important factor in the formation of personal character. The balance of skills and religious aspects makes students independent and noble.[3]

The existence of Vocational High Schools (SMK) is perceived by some individuals as a contributing factor to the development of certain behavioural traits among students. Student delinquency encompasses a range of behaviours, including truancy, non-attendance at lessons and smoking. Student delinquency is the consequence of intricate social interactions, encompassing a multitude of contributing factors.[4] This public perception is a consequence of the general condition of vocational high schools. It is imperative that

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[1] Sara Magenes et al., "Learning Skills, Creativity, and Self-Efficacy in Vocational School Students," *Learning and Motivation* 79 (August 2022): 101829, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lmot.2022.101829.

[2] Christiana D.W. Sahertian, Betty A. Sahertian, and Alfred E. Wajabula, "Interpersonal Communication Within the Family for Improving Adolescent Religiosity," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (April 30, 2021), https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6267.

[3] . Aningsih et al., "How Is the Education Character Implemented? The Case Study in Indonesian Elementary School," *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 12, no. 1 (January 3, 2022): 371, https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2022-0029; Farida Ariani et al., "Implementing Online Integrated Character Education and Parental Engagement in Local Cultural Values Cultivation," *European Journal of Educational Research* 11, no. 3 (July 15, 2022): 1699–1714, https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.11.3.1699.

[4] Jungtae Choi, "Identifying Important Factors to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency among Male and Female Adolescents: An Exploratory Analysis Using the LASSO Regression Algorithm in the Korean Children and Youth Panel Survey (KCYPS)," *Child Indicators Research* 15, no. 4 (August 2022): 1429–64, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-022-09916-6; Glenn D. Walters, Lindsey Runell, and Jonathan Kremser, "Family Structure and Delinquency: Antisocial Cognition as a Mediating Mechanism," *Journal of Adolescence* 94, no. 5 (July 2022): 776–88, https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12063; Armelle Weil, "'I'll Choose My Own Way': Delinquent Girls and Boys in Search of Gender Hegemony," *Critical Criminology* 30, no. 2 (June 2022): 365–85, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-022-09607-2.

all parties pay attention to instances of "naughty" behaviour in order to prevent it from becoming a defining characteristic of students in their future lives. The development of students' character is supported by the teaching of Islamic religious education. This is an educational approach that provides knowledge and shapes students' attitudes, personalities and skills in the practice of their religious teachings. Islamic religious education is an important component of the curriculum, not only teaching religious knowledge. Of greater importance is the application of religious values in students' lives.[5] Islamic religious education makes an important contribution to the formation of individual piety and social piety.[6]

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The Taruna programme at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun represents one of the key physical and mental preparation programmes for students. The physical Taruna programmes comprise marching, exploring and physical training. The mental development activities

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[5] Edi Kuswanto et al., "State Islamic School: Institutional Transformation of Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 3 Dempet in Demak Regency," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (2022): 171–86, http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v17i2.15837.

[6] Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *Kesalehan Multikultural: Ber-Islam Secara Autentik-Kontekstual Di Aras Peradaban Global* (Pusat Studi Agama dan Peradaban Muhammadiyah, 2005).

include the implementation of Dhuha prayers in congregation, reading the Koran, memorising selected letters, leading tahlil and speech practice. Both forms of activity, both physical and mental, are conducted in a structured manner by the programme managers. The Taruna programme provides a means of achieving a balanced formation of a strong, resilient and noble character.

The objective of education in SMK is the formation of noble character in students, which includes the inculcation of religiosity. The academic community upholds certain values that are embedded within the culture. A culture is comprised of a set of beliefs, values, and norms.[7] The implementation of culture is based on the individual beliefs of those within the school community. The academic community considers its beliefs to be rational and reasoned, based on common sense. Values represent a pivotal element that can shape the conduct of school members. They are inextricably linked to perceptions of morality within the broader community. Moreover, culture is intertwined with norms, which are established as guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate conduct in social interactions. These three core elements of culture are integrated into the actions and behaviors of school members, serving as an indispensable aspect of fostering a harmonious school social environment.

Previous research on religious culture in vocational schools has primarily focused on the role of the principal as a manager. For instance, research conducted by Mustapa and his team concluded that principals play a pivotal role in shaping a religious culture, beginning with the planning, exemplification, habituation, participation, evaluation, coordination, and motivation stages.[8] Sugara's research findings also support this assertion, emphasizing the crucial role of religious culture in strengthening morality.[9]

Ademareta corroborated the assertion that the role of internal stakeholders is pivotal in fortifying religious culture in academic

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[7] Raymond Scupin and Christopher R. DeCorse, *Anthropology: A Global Perspective*, 8th ed. (Boston: Pearson Education, 2016).

[8] Akhmad Mustapa, Etty Nurbayani, and Siti Nasiah, "Strategi Kepala Sekolah Dalam Menciptakan Budaya Religius Di SMK Negeri 1 Samarinda," *El-Buhuth: Borneo Journal of Islamic Studies*, July 20, 2019, https://doi.org/10.21093/el-buhuth.v1i2.1583.

[9] Harry Sugara, "Implementasi Budaya Sekolah dalam Membangun Moralitas Bangsa di SMK Negeri 1 Panji Situbondo," *Jurnal Koulutus* 2, no. 1 (March 22, 2019): 108–23.

institutions.[10] Wathano's subsequent research corroborates the concept that value acculturation through educational institutions facilitates the formation of the character and soft skills essential for life.[11] Yuliana and her team appeared to respond favourably to previous findings indicating that the development of a religious culture could also be implemented in vocational schools.[12]

This paper seeks to address the limitations of previous studies on the strengthening of religious culture in vocational schools by examining the ways in which efforts to construct religious culture within the context of a diverse school community are undertaken. In alignment with this objective, this article concentrates on the establishment of students' religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun, the involvement of school members in the realisation of religious culture, and the influence of alterations on students' religious attitudes and behaviours at school. These three questions provide the framework for an understanding of the positive contribution that the construction of a religious culture makes to a shared life in diversity.

The advancement of religious culture represents a subsequent phase in the operationalisation of the tenets of multicultural education. The establishment of a unified understanding and perception of the meaning of multicultural education will facilitate the creation of a multicultural school culture. It is imperative that school culture ensures the active participation of all members.[13] This dimension is crucial in empowering the diverse cultural identities that students bring to school from different groups.[14] Furthermore, it can

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[10] Anindita Ademareta and Abdullah Aminuddin Aziz, "Perilaku Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Budaya Religius Studi Kasus Di SMK Sultan Agung 1 Tebuireng Jombang," *JM-TBI: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Tarbiyatul Islam*, 2020, 95–104.

[11] Nurlaili Wathano, "Internalisasi Nilai – Nilai Karakter Melalui Budaya Sekolah di SMKN 41 Jakarta," *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Isu-Isu Sosial* 19, no. 2 (2021): 47–77, https://doi.org/10.37216/tadib.v19i2.478.

[12] Yuliana Yuliana, Ahmad Rifa'i Abun, and Ali Mashar, "Implementasi Manajemen Kepala Sekolah dalam Mewujudkan Budaya Religius di SMK Negeri 5 Bandar Lampung Tahun Pelajaran 2021/2022," *Unisan Jurnal* 1, no. 1 (September 30, 2022): 831–40.

[13] Karen S. Acton, "Environmental Teacher Leadership: Overcoming Barriers Posed by School Culture, School Structure, and the Principal," *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, February 4, 2022, 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2022.2032369.

[14] Charles Crawford and Ronald Burns, "School Culture, Racial Composition, and Preventing Violence: Evaluating Punitive and Supportive Responses to Improving

be utilised to develop a social structure (school) that capitalises on the cultural potential of its diverse student population, as a defining feature of the local school structure. This may encompass group practices, social climate, exercises, extra-curricular participation and staff appreciation in responding to the various differences that exist in schools.

This research employed a qualitative methodology,[15] which illuminates the reinforcement of religious culture in vocational high schools. The disclosure of data directly from the research locus allows for an in-depth understanding to be obtained through informants, with the involvement of researchers in the process. The data is acquired in the form of words, actions, and documents related to the research. The qualitative approach demonstrates how data is collected in the form of information from interviews, field notes from observations, and available documents, particularly with regard to the religious culture in vocational schools. The qualitative method used is a case study.

The research data was collected via three methods: interviews, observation, and documentation. The researchers employed a purposive sampling technique to identify suitable informants.[16] The interview technique involved the participation of several informants, including the principal and teaching staff. To ascertain the general views on the means of reinforcing students' religious culture, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted. The non-participant observation technique was employed to observe the process of religious acculturation of students at school.[17] Moreover, documents pertaining to students' religious acculturation activities were also consulted. Qualitative data analysis was conducted throughout the research process, both during the fieldwork phase and after the conclusion of data collection. It is important to note that data collection and data analysis are not separate processes; they are

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Safety," *Social Sciences* 11, no. 7 (June 23, 2022): 270, https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11070270.

[15] John W. Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Boston: Pearson Education, 2012); Mattew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 3rd ed. (USA: Sage Publication Inc, 2014).

[16] Creswell, *Educational Research*.

[17] Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theories and Methods*, 5th ed. (USA: Pearson Education, 2007).

intrinsically linked and occur simultaneously in a cyclical manner. In other words, data collection is an integral aspect of the data analysis activities. The analysis employed an interactive model, comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusions.[18]

Transformation of Islamic Religious Education Construction

The distinction between religious education and religious instruction is a crucial one. Religious education is a form of education that equips learners with the knowledge, attitudes, personality traits, and skills necessary to practise their religious teachings. It is an educational endeavour that prepares learners to assume roles that require a command of knowledge about religious teachings and/or to become religious scholars, enabling them to practise their religious teachings.[19]

Transformation can be defined as a planned and systematic process of change from one state to another. The concept of educational transformation, as a cultural idea, is inextricably linked to the notion of mass education, which is deeply embedded within the fabric of school culture.[20] The logical construction of education levels is underpinned by four key principles, including: (a) the conviction that equality of opportunity is a form of justice that ensures the quality of individual education; (b) the conviction that modern individual development is a codification of progress towards human development; (c) the conviction that academic intelligence is a valuable asset in many areas of life; and (d) the conviction that the diversity of academic degrees reflects the diversity of knowledge specialisations and expertise.[21] The transformation of education is contingent upon the conditions and circumstances that arise. Educational transformation serves as a vehicle for advancing existing models of educational change.

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[18] Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis*.
[19] Muhammad Aminullah, "Analisis PP. No 55 Tahun 2007 Tentang Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan Perspektif Antonio Gramsci," *Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* Vol. 6 No. 2 (Tahun 2015).
[20] David Baker, *The Schooled Society: The Educational Transformation of Global Culture* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014).
[21] Rizky Firmansyah et al., "Educational Transformation: An Evaluation of Online Learning Due To COVID-19," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)* 16, no. 07 (April 9, 2021): 61, https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v16i07.21201.

Education plays a pivotal role in fostering a secure and conducive school environment. The field of educational construction engages students in engineering and project management, enabling them to achieve defined objectives.[22] Educational construction is inextricably linked to curriculum construction.**[23]** It encompasses the process of enhancing and developing attitudes, behaviours and actions. Attitude development prioritises the advancement of knowledge and abilities. Behaviour represents a tangible manifestation of knowledge in practice. Action constitutes a strategic measure to address challenges as they arise.

Religious Culture Construction

The ways in which humans interact with one another in social contexts are shaped by cultural influences. The concept of life in society is inextricably linked with cultural elements, the role of the state, and religion.[24] Cultural theory demonstrates that human culture is constituted by a range of elements, including values, beliefs, norms, rationalisations, symbols and ideology, as well as solidarity.[25] Culture exerts a significant influence on our knowledge, beliefs and values. The elements of culture shape our cognitive, affective and behavioural processes.

Educators are responsible for the construction of religious knowledge for their students. The outcome of this process of knowledge construction serves as the foundation for the practical application of religious beliefs in social contexts. The behaviour of learners in relation to religious values gives rise to the formation of a religious character. Habituation represents a relatively efficacious method for the cultivation of religious behaviour. In their theory of

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[22] Yuan-Ling Liaw et al., "Learning Assessment Strategies for an Educational Construction Safety Video Game," in *Construction Research Congress 2012* (Construction Research Congress 2012, West Lafayette, Indiana, United States: American Society of Civil Engineers, 2012), 2091–2100, https://doi.org/10.1061/9780784412329.210.

[23] Daniel Tröhler, "Curriculum History or the Educational Construction of Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century," *European Educational Research Journal* 15, no. 3 (May 2016): 279–97, https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904116645111.

[24] Peter Beyer and Lori Beaman, *Religion, Globalization, and Culture* (Leiden-Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2007).

[25] Michael Thompson, Gunnar Grendstad, and Per Selle, *Cultural Theory as Political Science*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 1999); Andre Ata Ujan, *Multikulturalisme:Belajar Hidup Bersama Dalam Perbedaan* (Jakarta: Indeks, 2009).

social construction, Berger and Luckmann propose three stages: externalization, objectification, and externalization.[26] Externalization refers to the process of adapting one's self to the socio-cultural construct created by humans. In the context of socio-religion, self-adaptation is based on the interpretation of biblical texts, which are open to various interpretations. Consequently, the adaptation to the biblical text necessitates an interpretation that is contextual and anchored in religious values. These values are closely intertwined with the social interactions between individuals within the same religious community and between different religious communities.

The subsequent phase is objectification. This stage represents a form of socio-cultural interaction with an institutional intersubjective dimension. Objectification represents a form of social interaction between religious elites and groups outside them. These two entities possess disparate perspectives, which facilitate the introduction of novel interpretations of religious plurality.[27] Both entities maintain their respective existence, albeit in an institutionalised manner. The existence of this institution encourages tangible action based on values. Values that are guided into a habit or habituation encourage the formation of religious and inter-religious harmony.

The third stage in the process of social construction is that of internalisation. Identification may be achieved through two principal channels: the family and the organisation to which it belongs. The family plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's unique characteristics, influenced by the specific dynamics and values of each family unit. Meanwhile, the organisation to which one belongs will influence the actions taken. Social groupings based on historical and ideological-theological factors give rise to both inclusive and exclusive groups. Inclusive groups accept differences as a positive necessity, leading to an attitude of tolerance, mutual respect, and mutual understanding in a pluralistic society. In contrast, exclusive groups will reject anything that does not align with their beliefs.

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[26] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Penguin Books, 1966); Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Tafsir Sosial Atas Kenyataan* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1990).

[27] Lena de Botton et al., "Solidarity Actions Based on Religious Plurality," *Religions* 12, no. 8 (July 22, 2021): 564, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12080564; Gregory D. Jones, "Video Gaming Faith: Playing Out Theologies of Religions," *Religions* 13, no. 10 (October 10, 2022): 944, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13100944.

Construction of Religious Culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun

SMKN 1 Geger Madiun has a policy of implementing a Taruna programme for all students. This activity represents a school-based initiative designed to reinforce religious observance and physical fitness among students. The Taruna programme offers an alternative approach to religious practice, which is often constrained by the limited time available in PAI subjects. The programme strikes a balance between religious activities and physical training, with students receiving coaching in physical fitness. The principles guiding SMKN 1 Geger Madiun's approach are as follows:

> This Taruna activity is carried out to train physical endurance and strength. The fields of expertise in vocational schools require excellent physical stamina, so that they can carry out practical activities well. However, equally important is the mental attitude. This is where we then design an Islamic religious education model to be integrated in this activity. Usually the activities begin with religious activities in the mosque, starting with dhuha prayers, reading and memorizing verses of the Qur'an, as well as being given a short motivational lecture from selected arguments. Then they continue the activities in the field or elsewhere according to the set schedule. All classes get a turn to carry out this activity for a full day each week."

The construction of a religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun is achieved through the implementation of Taruna activities. The Taruna activities encompass both spiritual and physical pursuits. Spiritual activities form part of the Taruna's civic duties and are to be carried out by all members in accordance with the established procedures and rules. Spiritual activities are designed to instill order and obedience in Taruna members with regard to religious worship. Physical activities are intended to enhance the human body's capacity to perform daily tasks to the fullest extent while maintaining reserves, avoiding excessive fatigue. Health is defined as the state of freedom from bodily and mental disease. The following sections delineate the specifics of these activities:

Figure 1. Spiritual and Physical Aspects of TARUNA Activities
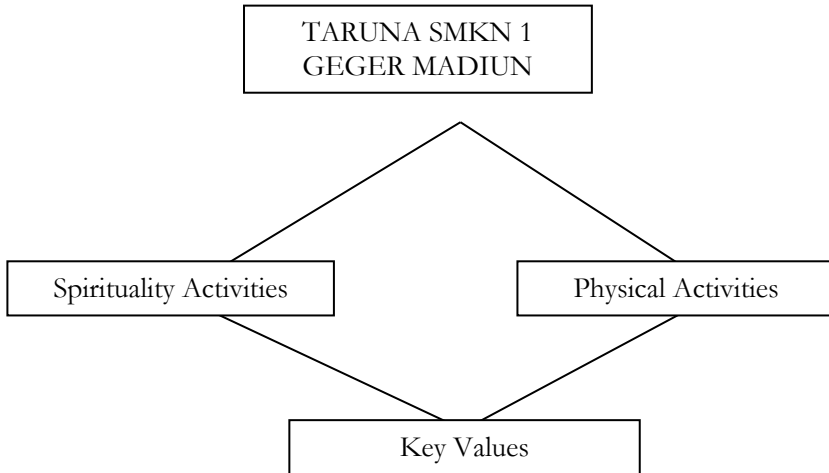
SMKN 1 Geger Madiun builds a religious culture through Taruna activities related to: 1) activities in the field of spirituality; 2) physical development activities; and 3) the main values of the school. Activities in the field of spirituality emphasize the practice of religion in daily life at school. Physical development activities provide exercises to keep the body fit and healthy. The main values of the school become the foundation of ethics and morals for the school academic community These three elements have a relationship with one another.

Furthermore, to construct a religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun, several things are done:

1. Spirituality Activities

The activities in the field of Taruna spirituality are designed to foster the development of orderly and obedient personalities among the Tarunas, with the objective of fostering sincere worship. Spiritual activities include wudu, order in the mosque, reading the Koran, memorising short letters, doing dhuha prayers, becoming prayer leaders, leading prayers, calling to prayer and iqamah (for men), and giving seven-minute lectures (Kultum). All activities are followed by all Tarunas without exception, in accordance with the existing procedures and rules.

The integration of spiritual activities into the daily routine of students at school is a fundamental aspect of their implementation.

The students adhere to the established guidelines for implementing spiritual activities. Each spiritual activity is conducted in accordance with a set of rules, ensuring that students engage in the activities in an orderly and disciplined manner. The principles of order in the place of worship encompass the following: obedience to the established rules, performance of worship, maintenance of security and cleanliness, and avoidance of negative behaviour. Students perform ablution in accordance with the established ethics and rules of ablution. They maintain ethical and disciplinary standards in the mosque during the performance of prayers, reading of the Quran, memorisation of short letters, and cultum activities.

The implementation of spiritual activities is overseen by Islamic religious education teachers, who provide guidance and assistance during these activities. This is done to instill order and discipline in spiritual activities. A teacher who oversees spiritual activities commented:

> Disciplined habituation in spiritual activities, starting with wudu', adhan, prayer, dhikr, reading the Qur'an, memorizing short letters, or tausiyah. The material in the tausiyah or lecture is adjusted to the coach who guides the activity. The material each day must be different, because the coaches and Taruna students are also different. We just make it flexible. This activity invites children to get used to going to the mosque, so they can feel comfortable. Thus, their own awareness will grow in carrying out spiritual activities properly. The habits that are carried out during this time become their provision in the future after graduating from school. When they graduate and work, mingle with many people, for example being asked to be a prayer leader, they do not feel awkward, even though they are vocational school graduates. I believe this is the main provision in their real life (w.S2).

2. Physical Activities

The objective of the physical field activities included in the Taruna programme is to: 1) The ability to recognise the various forms of physical fitness training material; 2) The capacity to carry out physical fitness training with the exercise programme method on a regular and correct basis; 3) The formation of physical fitness abilities; 4) The comprehension of the target achievement of each type of exercise in accordance with the assessment standard; and 5) The ability to carry out physical fitness tests in accordance with the

programme. In order to achieve the aforementioned goal, it is essential to ensure that the components of physical fitness are carried out in a proper and correct manner. The aforementioned components of physical fitness include, but are not limited to, the following: strength, endurance, muscle power, speed, flexibility, agility, coordination, balance, accuracy, and reaction.

The objective of Taruna activities can be defined as follows: 1) The capacity to engage in physical activity at a level that promotes bodily fitness; 2) the enhancement of the ability to perform a range of exercises and activities that require physical fitness; and 3) the development of physical capabilities that enable individuals to meet the demands of the workplace. Taruna activities have been observed to influence changes in student behaviour, physical preparedness, and the demands of the workplace. The impact of Taruna activities on these factors has been documented by coaches and teachers, who have noted the following:

> Before the Taruna activities, students were difficult to manage, when there were camp activities many were sick, and some were in a trance. However, after we held Taruna activities, they had a strong physique, so there were not many sick or trances when we included them in joint camp activities in the Kresek area. Requests from business and industry to organize Taruna activities. Physical training, discipline, neatness, and Islamic spiritual activities are given in the activities. Students do not talk much, are ready to be ordered, and others (skills) can be learned. Students are able to stand for 8 hours, for example at alfamart. The point is that we are required to produce "yes man" children, ready to be ordered, ready to work (w.I2).

The practice of Taruna activities in the physical field has been demonstrated to provide a beneficial balance to both the physical and mental states of the individual. The development of physical endurance represents a form of bodily preparedness for the undertaking of activities, enabling the individual to engage in these activities to the fullest extent possible. The cultivation of moral values serves to reinforce the formation of character, a process that is continuously undertaken with the objective of establishing a religious culture (W.I3).

3. Key Values

SMKN 1 Geger Madiun has established a set of core values that serve as a framework for the school's academic community. The

school community upholds the values espoused by the culture. The aforementioned core values serve as a framework for conducting various activities within the school and beyond. The core values include the following: moral ethics, which demonstrate the 5S attitude (smile, greeting, politeness, courtesy, and excellence), honesty to oneself and others, togetherness, responsibility (duties and functions), transparency, a winning spirit in competition, and hard work. Ultimately, all of our efforts and endeavours are submitted to Allah SWT.

The implementation of the aforementioned core values by members of the school community in their interactions with one another. Moral ethics pertains to a friendly and polite attitude towards others. A guard post is situated in close proximity to the school gate. Here, security personnel and students are responsible for assisting with the administration of the student's Book of Offences (BCP) and the introduction of guests. The officers at the guard post display a demeanor of familiarity and respect towards all individuals who pass in front of them. Upon the arrival of a guest, one of the officers promptly approaches the guest, greeting them and inquiring about their needs. Subsequently, one of the guards facilitates the guest's transportation to the room of the individual in question (O.L1).

Once the morning roll call has concluded, students are expected to adhere to the tenets of Islamic spiritual guidance as outlined in the Taruna programme. All Taruna students engage in the practice of Dhuha prayer, the reading of the Qur'an, and the listening of tausiyah, with the exception of those who are unable or non-Muslim. The coach assumes the role of imam for the Dhuha prayer, recites the prayer and joins the students in their collective prayer. One of the students assumes the role of reciter of the Qur'an, with other students following in succession. The theme of the tausiyah varies on a daily basis, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of the participants. One illustrative example is the threefold choice of goodness: "Today must be better than yesterday, and tomorrow must be better than today." They will engage in introspection regarding their actions thus far, contemplating whether they are fortunate, unfortunate, or damaged. These are authentic circumstances that arise in the course of everyday life (O.L2).

The objective of the Taruna activities is to cultivate attitudes, both mental and spiritual, as well as physical. Islamic religious

education materials place significant emphasis on the importance of habituation in terms of worship, as well as the application of attitudes and behaviours in diverse social interactions. Religious activities are conducted on a regular basis for the Tarunas. The school has implemented a policy that the Taruna programme is to be carried out for a full day and is to be attended by all students from scheduled classes. Following a series of religious activities at the mosque, all Taruna participants gather in the field to engage in physical exercise activities. The Taruna activity is guided by the motto "Ready physically strong spiritually" (O.L2).

Contribution of Taruna Program to Build Religious Culture

The Taruna Program represents a pivotal strategy for the reinforcement of religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun. This objective is pursued through the implementation of two discrete field programmes, namely a spiritual field programme and a physical field programme. The objective of the programme in the field of spirituality is to encourage students to integrate religious teachings into their daily lives within the school environment. Learners are provided with the opportunity to develop their potential and abilities in the cultivation of religious culture. The reinforcement of religious culture is accomplished through activities conducted outside the conventional classroom setting, which constitute an integral component of the learning process in Islamic religious education subjects. This activity is integrated with the physical field programme. Both contribute to the enhancement of physical and mental-spiritual well-being.

The spirituality programme represents a strategic step in the process of religious acculturation. An increase in religious knowledge and the application of religious principles in community life. The Taruna spiritual activities place an emphasis on the implementation of worship procedures, sunnah worship, training in rhetorical skills, and the memorisation of the Qur'an. Students are instructed in the principles of worship. Training in rhetorical skills serves as a vehicle for Islamic preaching. Learners are prepared to gain a deep understanding of religious knowledge and to convey religious messages effectively. Students are encouraged to read the Qur'an and memorise selected passages, equipping them with the ability to become leaders in worship. This activity is also carried out with a

view to maintaining and applying ethical standards in worship and social relations.

The Taruna programme model, which integrates spiritual and physical strength, is a distinctive feature of SKMN 1 Geger Madiun. Spiritual strength is demonstrated through the application of religious teachings in daily life at school. The consistent practice of religion can facilitate the establishment of a religious culture. Religious culture becomes the ingrained habit of devout individuals, both spiritually and socially. Physical strength is achieved through physical conditioning exercises that enable the completion of daily activities to their fullest potential. Physical conditioning enhances the physical and mental health of the body. The integration of spiritual and physical development programs represents a strategic step in the formation of a physically and mentally strong religious culture.

Strengthening Religious Culture and its Implications in Vocational High Schools

The religious aspect has, thus far, been perceived as a responsibility of religious subjects, such as PAI. However, the concept of PAI learning that can facilitate the realisation of student religiosity is in fact highly diverse. One concrete example of an approach that can be developed is a cooperative or collaborative model.[28] Furthermore, not only does this learning take place in a face-to-face setting, even now blended learning represents one of the most effective options for organising enjoyable PAI learning.

As stated by Koentjoroningrat, as cited by Sahlan, cultural development initiatives should be implemented at three distinct levels: the level of values embraced, the level of daily practices, and the level of cultural symbols.[29] The development of religious culture through Taruna activities at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun is consistent with Koentjoroningrat's conceptual framework. At the level of espoused values, religious values are formulated, agreed upon, and need to be developed in schools. At the level of daily practice, the agreed religious values are manifested in the form of daily attitudes and

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[28] Iskandar Tsani and Sufirmansyah Sufirmansyah, "Construction of PAI Learning Model Based on Knowledge Society at UIN Satu Tulungagung and IAIN Kediri, Indonesia," *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Agama* 15, no. 1 (May 9, 2023): 305–26, https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v15i1.2155.

[29] Asmaun Sahlan, *Mewujudkan Budaya Religius Di Sekolah: Upaya Mengembangkan PAI Dari Teori Ke Aksi* (Malang: UIN-Maliki Press, 2010), 85.

behaviours by all school members. While in the strategy related to cultural symbols, Taruna, as a place to develop religious culture, indirectly becomes a symbol in daily life.

It can be reasonably deduced that the long-term influence of religious culture will prove instrumental in fostering the creation of an optimal academic environment.[30] In addition, the Taruna activities at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun employ a combination of strategies to reinforce the religious culture. Some of these approaches are in accordance with Muhaimin's description of the various approaches that can be employed in the development of religious culture. The initial approach is experiential, whereby a moral and religious foundation is established to instill religious values. Secondly, the habituation approach provides opportunities for students to practise Islamic teachings and noble morals. Thirdly, the emotional approach aims to evoke positive sentiments in students, fostering appreciation and belief in Islamic teachings. This motivates them to internalise and act upon these teachings. Fourthly, the rational approach provides a logical comprehension of Islamic teachings. Fifthly, the functional approach elucidates the practical benefits of Islam in daily life. Sixthly, the exemplary approach presents exemplars and positive role models for students to emulate.[31]

As with the implementation of a programme in an educational institution, a number of factors may act as either supporting or inhibiting elements. The principal, teachers, parents and students themselves, who have a commitment agreement to build a religious culture, are the main sources of support. In addition, the village apparatus and a number of external stakeholders also provide support in the form of facilities or infrastructure assistance in developing a religious culture.

The principal's support is seen in the supervision and dialogue with students about the consistency of students in performing worship, either at home or at school. The support of the teachers is in the form of their participation and involvement in the development

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[30] Iskandar Tsani, Asna Lu'Lu'in Nisa', and Sufirmansyah Sufirmansyah, "Evaluation of Academic Atmosphere Formation in Islamic Junior High School Through Digital Learning System," *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 (May 19, 2023): 352–67, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i2.436.

[31] Muhaimin and Nur Ali, *Paradigma Pendidikan Islam: Upaya Mengefektifkan Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012), 174.

of a religious culture. In the implementation of the educational process, teachers embed religious messages or connect various general lesson theories with various information in the Qur'an. This indicates that the school seeks to erode the dichotomy of general and religious sciences by applying the organismic paradigm in education. Parents and students are very cooperative and fully supportive. Initially, the formation of a religious culture is prescriptive but over time it changes through a learning process that stems from awareness in cultural actors.[32]

The development of a religious culture does not proceed in accordance with the anticipated trajectory. A number of factors act as impediments to progress. The inhibiting factors include the negative influence of science and technology, particularly in the context of the misuse of gadgets and the internet. Furthermore, some parents believe that extracurricular activities in the afternoon prevent students from assisting with their studies. Furthermore, the influence of peers from other schools who attempt to dissuade students from participating in Taruna activities represents an additional inhibiting factor.

The religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun has a significant impact on students, including the fostering of an istiqamah attitude in worship, the formation of a generation of Islamic leaders, the provision of a forum for talent development, and the minimisation of various forms of juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, religious culture has a beneficial impact on parents and families of students. They gain insight and guidance through observation of their children's devotional practices, such as prayer and recitations, and receive guidance on how to support their children's spiritual journey at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun.

In accordance with the tenets of the behaviouristic school of thought, the act of repeating a particular action at the same time will result in the formation of a habit. Similarly, the development of a religious culture at SMKN 1 Geger Madiun can be attributed to this phenomenon. The implementation of guidance and habituation based on Islamic law has resulted in students developing a robust Islamic foundation, thereby fostering their commitment to the practice of

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[32] Taliziduhu Ndraha, *Teori Budaya Organisasi: Pegangan Belajar Bahan Diskusi* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2019), 24.

worship. At this juncture, the act of worship is no longer perceived as an obligation to remember, but rather as a fundamental human need.

The integration of religious culture in educational institutions has also been observed to contribute to a reduction in juvenile delinquency. This phenomenon can be attributed to the internalisation of religious values that promote love for others, equality of rights and obligations, and an understanding of the existence of consequences, both positive and negative, resulting from actions taken. Additionally, students have the opportunity to develop their artistic talents.[33]

The positive impact of religious culture is evidenced by its various functions, which include: a) the development of students' faith and piety to Allah SWT; b) value planting; and c) mental adjustment to adapt to one's environment and to effect change in that environment. In addition, Islamic teachings facilitate the repair of deficiencies in student belief, understanding and experience of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, they serve to prevent negative influences from the environment or other cultures. Additionally, they provide instruction in religious knowledge and channel special talents in the field of Islam.[34]

In order to achieve these positive outcomes, it is essential that teachers consider the psychological aspects of their students in order to develop a religious culture. This can be achieved through an understanding of adolescent development and the stages of development of the religious soul. As Fowler's theory of belief development indicates, adolescents are in a synthetic-conventional state, whereby they begin to challenge their comfort zone and explore their identity. Furthermore, they seek guidance on how to live their lives in accordance with the teachings of God. It is therefore imperative that educators provide direction and support in a manner that is engaging and conducive to learning.

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[33] Emna Laisa, "Optimalisasi Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah Melalui Pengembangan Budaya Religius (Studi pada SMK Darul Ulum Bungbungan Bluto Sumenep)," *Islamuna: Jurnal Studi Islam* 3, no. 1 (July 1, 2016): 77–94, https://doi.org/10.19105/islamuna.v3i1.949.

[34] Muhaimin, *Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah, Madrasah, Dan Perguruan Tinggi* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2010), 40.

Conclusion

Vocational schools are considered to be the optimal setting for the acquisition of expertise. Nevertheless, the integration of religious teachings into the curriculum provides a balanced approach to expertise and religious studies. Vocational schools have been shown to play a role in reinforcing religious beliefs and practices, thereby facilitating religious acculturation. The school has a distinctive identity and set of attributes that collectively serve to reinforce its cultural identity. Vocational schools facilitate the formation of a religious culture through a number of different means. These include the advancement of specialised disciplines, the implementation of the PAI curriculum, the administration of disciplinary measures, the oversight of Taruna-an activities, the coordination of extracurricular pursuits, and the integration of religious observances. The school culture is constituted and directed by the primary values, which are collectively agreed upon and implemented with the intention of achieving shared objectives.

From a sociological perspective, vocational high schools have facilitated the formation of school communities that demonstrate a high level of solidarity and the effective implementation of religious activities. The integration of religious activities into the school's routine serves to foster the development of a religious climate. The incorporation of religious activities into the school's routine follows a pattern that is used and preserved as a school culture. The incorporation of spiritual activities into the curriculum of vocational schools represents an effort to acculturate the religiosity of the academic community. The incorporation of religious activities into the curriculum represents an additional strategy for the formation of student character, alongside the subject matter covered in the classroom as part of the PAI curriculum. Students are provided with extensive access to fields of expertise, thereby enabling them to pursue their interests and talents. The incorporation of religious activities into the curriculum enables the formation of robust skill acquisition patterns.

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