

IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC SPIRITUAL (ROHIS) EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN CULTIVATING STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS CHARACTER: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY AT AN INDONESIAN PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Pembentukan karakter agama telah menjadi agenda strategis dalam sistem pendidikan nasional Indonesia, namun terbatasnya alokasi mingguan Pendidikan Agama Islam di tingkat menengah atas membatasi internalisasi nilai-nilai agama yang efektif selama masa remaja. Meskipun kegiatan ekstrakurikuler spiritual Islam (Rohis) diadopsi secara luas sebagai pelengkap pedagogis, studi sebelumnya tetap didominasi deskriptif dan jarang mengintegrasikan proses implementasi, pendukung dan hambatan kontekstual, dan hasil perilaku yang dapat diamati dalam satu kerangka analitis, terutama di sekolah umum non-metropolitan. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana program Rohis diimplementasikan dan bagaimana hal itu membentuk karakter religius siswa di SMA Negeri 7 Bungo, Provinsi Jambi, Indonesia. Desain studi kasus kualitatif digunakan selama satu semester akademik. Data dihasilkan melalui observasi peserta terhadap dua belas sesi program, wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur dengan delapan informan yang diseleksi secara sengaja (wakil kepala sekolah kesiswaan, guru Pendidikan Agama Islam, penasihat Rohis, ketua Rohis, dan empat anggota aktif), dan analisis dokumen program dan catatan lapangan. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, sementara kepercayaan dijamin melalui triangulasi sumber dan metode, keterlibatan berkepanjangan, dan pemeriksaan anggota. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Rohis dioperasionalkan melalui empat program terstruktur Tahsin (Yasinan) mingguan, Muhadarah dan Mentoring bulanan, dan peringatan tahunan hari suci Islam (PHBI) difasilitasi oleh fasilitas yang memadai, dukungan kelembagaan, dan kompetensi penasihat, tetapi dibatasi oleh kehadiran yang tidak teratur dan pengawasan guru yang tidak merata. Hasil yang dapat diamati termasuk konsistensi dalam ibadah dan pembacaan Al-Qur'an, munculnya kepemimpinan, tanggung jawab, kejujuran, disiplin, dan kerendahan hati. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kegiatan ekstrakurikuler keagamaan yang terstruktur secara terprogram, tertanam dalam ekosistem sekolah yang mendukung, berfungsi sebagai wahana strategis untuk menginternalisasi karakter keagamaan di tingkat menengah atas.

Kata kunci: Karakter Religius; Ekstrakurikuler Islam; Pendidikan Karakter; Rohis; Pendidikan Menengah Atas.

Abstract

Religious character formation has become a strategic agenda within Indonesia's national education system, yet the limited weekly allocation of Islamic Religious Education at the senior secondary level constrains the effective internalization of religious values during adolescence. Although Islamic spiritual extracurricular activities (Rohis) are widely adopted as a pedagogical complement, prior studies remain predominantly descriptive and rarely integrate the implementation process, contextual enablers and

barriers, and observable behavioral outcomes within a single analytical framework, particularly in non-metropolitan public schools. This study examines how the Rohis program is implemented and how it shapes students' religious character at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo, Jambi Province, Indonesia. A qualitative case study design was employed across one academic semester. Data were generated through participant observation of twelve program sessions, semi-structured in-depth interviews with eight purposively selected informants (vice principal of student affairs, Islamic Religious Education teacher, Rohis advisor, Rohis chairperson, and four active members), and the analysis of program documents and field notes. Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model, while trustworthiness was secured through source and method triangulation, prolonged engagement, and member checking. Findings indicate that Rohis is operationalized through four structured programs weekly Tahsin (Yasinan), monthly Muhadarah and Mentoring, and annual commemorations of Islamic holy days (PHBI) facilitated by adequate facilities, institutional support, and advisor competence, but constrained by irregular attendance and uneven teacher supervision. Observable outcomes include consistency in worship and Quranic recitation, the emergence of leadership, responsibility, honesty, discipline, and humility. The study concludes that programmatically structured religious extracurricular activities, embedded in a supportive school ecosystem, function as a strategic vehicle for internalizing religious character at the senior secondary level.

Keywords: *Religious Character; Islamic Extracurricular; Character Education; Rohis; Senior Secondary Education*

Introduction

Character education has been positioned as a strategic pillar of Indonesia's National Education System, formalized through Law Number 20 of 2003 and reinforced by the National Movement of Mental Revolution and the Strengthening of Character Education Program. Among the eighteen character values prioritized by the Ministry of Education, the religious value occupies a foundational position because it functions as the ethical and spiritual axis through which other values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, tolerance, and social care are internalized. However, contemporary educational realities reveal a persistent erosion of moral conduct among adolescents, including increased bullying, problematic gadget use, premarital relationships, and declining engagement with religious literacy. This trend coincides with the structurally limited time allocation for Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI), which typically receives only three lesson hours per week in senior secondary schools, an allocation widely considered insufficient for the simultaneous cultivation of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions of religiosity.

To bridge this gap, schools have increasingly relied on Islamic spiritual extracurricular activities, locally known as Rohani Islam or Rohis, as a structured pedagogical complement. Rohis serves as a student-led religious organization that organizes Quranic recitation (tahsin), peer mentoring, public religious speech (muhadarah), and the commemoration of Islamic holy days (PHBI), thereby providing additional contact hours for spiritual practice, conceptual deepening, and leadership formation. The repositioning of Rohis as a vehicle of value internalization is consistent with the policy direction articulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs through its religious moderation framework (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), which positions schools as front-line institutions for cultivating a balanced Islamic ethos. A growing body of scholarship has examined the contribution of Rohis and similar programs to character formation. Dahliyana (2017) identified extracurricular activities as a vehicle for strengthening the eighteen national character values, while Rohaeza (2021) and Ananda (2023) reported positive effects of Rohis on adolescents' moral attitudes (akhlak). At a conceptual level, the components of character proposed by Lickona (1991) and the social learning theory of Bandura (1977), recently revisited within the design principles of Berkowitz (2021) and the neo-

Aristotelian flourishing framework of Kristjánsson (2020), suggest that religious character is cultivated through repeated practice, modeling, and reflection within a supportive social environment. Nevertheless, three limitations persist in the existing literature. First, most studies are descriptive and tend to celebrate program existence rather than scrutinize implementation quality. Second, supporting and inhibiting factors are often listed without being situated within the dynamics of a particular school ecosystem (cf. Hefner, 2018). Third, evidence is heavily skewed toward urban and metropolitan schools, leaving the implementation of Rohis in rural or semi-urban public schools with distinct sociocultural conditions, such as those in Bungo Regency, Jambi Province, underexamined.

Addressing these gaps, the present study integrates three analytical layers—program implementation, contextual enablers and barriers, and observable behavioral outcomes—into a single qualitative inquiry conducted at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo, a public senior high school that has formally embedded Rohis within its annual academic calendar. The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to describe the implementation of the Rohis extracurricular program in shaping students' religious character; (2) to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors that condition its execution; and (3) to analyze the observable impact of Rohis on students' religious attitudes and behaviors. The study employs a qualitative case study design, drawing on participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, with data triangulated across sources and methods. The remainder of this article is organized as follows: Section 2 elaborates the research methods; Section 3 presents the findings; Section 4 discusses the findings in dialogue with prior literature; and Section 5 concludes with implications and recommendations for further research.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design with a descriptive-interpretive orientation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The case study was selected because it permits an in-depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The unit of analysis was the implementation of the Rohis extracurricular program at a single public senior high school during one academic semester, which allowed sustained engagement with the program's weekly, monthly, and annual cycles.

Research Setting and Duration

The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo, located in Tanah Sepenggal Lintas Sub-district, Bungo Regency, Jambi Province, Indonesia. Fieldwork lasted six months, from August 2023 to January 2024, encompassing 24 program sessions across the four Rohis activity types. The school was selected on three justifiable grounds: (a) Rohis is formally embedded in the school's academic calendar; (b) the school operates within a semi-urban sociocultural setting that is underrepresented in the Rohis literature; and (c) administrative access was negotiated through formal research permits issued by the local education office and the school principal.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling with maximum variation across role and exposure to the program. Eight key informants were involved, comprising one Vice Principal for Student Affairs, one Islamic Religious Education teacher, one Rohis advisor, one Rohis chairperson, and four active student members (two female, two male) representing grades X, XI, and XII. Inclusion criteria required: (a) at least one academic year of involvement

with the program for staff and students; and (b) willingness to participate after written informed consent. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the informants.

Table 1. Profile of the Research Informants

No.	Code	Role	Sex	Tenure / Grade	Years with Rohis
1	VP-01	Vice Principal, Student Affairs	Male	12 years	5
2	PAI-01	Islamic Religious Education Teacher	Female	9 years	4
3	ADV-01	Rohis Advisor	Male	7 years	3
4	CHR-01	Rohis Chairperson (Grade XII)	Male	Grade XII	3
5	STD-01	Active Member	Female	Grade XI	2
6	STD-02	Active Member	Female	Grade XI	2
7	STD-03	Active Member	Male	Grade X	1
8	STD-04	Active Member	Male	Grade XII	3

Data Collection

Data were generated through three complementary techniques to ensure methodological depth. First, participant observation was conducted across twelve sessions of weekly Tahsin (Yasinan), six sessions of monthly Muhadarah and Mentoring, and three PHBI commemorations (Maulid, Isra Mi'raj, and Islamic New Year). Field notes were recorded using a structured observation protocol covering activity content, participant behavior, advisor facilitation, and contextual conditions. Second, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with each informant, lasting 45–60 minutes per session, audio-recorded with permission using a digital recorder with sampling at 44.1 kHz to ensure transcription fidelity. The interview guide consisted of fifteen open-ended questions clustered around three thematic blocks aligned with the research objectives. Third, document analysis covered the Rohis program of work, monthly attendance records, the school's annual academic calendar, photographic documentation of activities, and the advisor's logbook for the 2023/2024 academic year.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Audio interviews were transcribed verbatim within seven days of recording. Transcripts and field notes were coded manually in two cycles following the coding manual of Saldaña (2021): an initial open-coding cycle generated 87 first-order codes, which were then collapsed into 21 second-order categories and three aggregate dimensions corresponding to the research objectives. To increase the transparency of the analytic chain, peer debriefing was conducted with two independent researchers holding doctorates in Islamic education, who reviewed code definitions and category boundaries.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness was established through four mechanisms aligned with the criteria outlined by Korstjens and Moser (2018). Credibility was enhanced through source triangulation (cross-checking statements across staff, advisors, and students) and method triangulation

(cross-referencing interviews, observations, and documents), supported by prolonged engagement of six months and member checking with five informants. Transferability was supported through thick descriptions of the school context. Dependability was secured through an audit trail of raw data, codes, and analytic memos. Confirmability was reinforced through reflexive journaling. Ethically, the study obtained institutional permission from the school principal and written informed consent from all participants; for student informants under 18, parental consent was additionally obtained. Pseudonymized codes (Table 1) were used throughout the analysis to protect participant identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Rohis Extracurricular Program

Field data indicate that Rohis at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo is operationalized through four structured programs differentiated by frequency, format, and pedagogical focus. The structure of the four programs is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Structure of the Rohis Program at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo (2023/2024)

Program	Frequency	Activity Format	Pedagogical Focus	Average Attendance
Tahsin (Yasinan)	Weekly (Friday, 07.15–07.45 WIB)	Communal recitation of Surah Yasin, tahlil, closing prayer	Habituation; Quranic literacy; punctuality	≈ 92% (whole school)
Muhadarah	Monthly (Saturday morning)	Class-rotated public religious speech	Public speaking; conceptual articulation	≈ 78%
Mentoring	Monthly (Saturday, 14.00–15.00 WIB)	Small-group discussion on fiqh, aqidah, sirah, tilawah	Conceptual deepening; reflection	≈ 65%
PHBI	Annual (Hijri calendar)	Mass commemoration with guest scholars	Collective Islamic identity; historical narrative	≈ 95%

The weekly Tahsin (Yasinan) is convened in the school courtyard with all students and teachers, led by Rohis officers and supervised by the program advisor. The activity functions as a routinized form of habituation that combines Quranic literacy practice with the cultivation of punctuality. The monthly Muhadarah follows a class-rotation system in which a designated class delivers a short religious speech under the supervision of the Islamic Religious Education teacher, providing a structured arena for adolescents to practice public speaking and the contextualization of religious concepts. The monthly Mentoring is held in the school musholla in small-group format, addressing fiqh, aqidah, sirah, and tilawah through interactive discussion, thereby creating reflective space that complements the curricular Islamic Religious

Education subject. The annual PHBI commemorates Maulid, Isra Mi'raj, and the Islamic New Year, typically involving an external scholar and the entire school community, thereby reinforcing collective Islamic identity. The four programs collectively integrate ritual, intellectual, and social dimensions of religious practice within the school cycle.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Across the eight informants, three categories of supporting factors and three categories of inhibiting factors were consistently reported and observed. The frequency distribution of these factors across informants is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Rohis Implementation (n = 8 informants)

Category	Theme	Source	Mentions / 8
Supporting	Adequacy of facilities (musholla, sound system, Qur'an copies, courtyard)	Interview, observation, documents	8 / 8
Supporting	Institutional support (school policy, calendar integration, budget)	Interview, documents	7 / 8
Supporting	Advisor competence and modeling	Interview, observation	8 / 8
Inhibiting	Irregular student attendance and tardiness	Interview, attendance log	7 / 8
Inhibiting	Low internal spiritual motivation among some students	Interview, observation	6 / 8
Inhibiting	Uneven distribution of teacher supervision during sessions	Observation, interview	6 / 8

On the supporting side, all eight informants emphasized the adequacy of facilities, including the musholla, sound system, Qur'an copies, carpets, and the school courtyard, which were observed to be functionally available across all twelve weekly sessions. Seven of eight informants underscored institutional support, including the integration of Rohis into the academic calendar, an annual operational budget, and the visible attendance of senior staff during major events. All informants identified advisor competence as central, particularly the advisor's capacity to facilitate, model religious practice, and maintain continuity of the program across cohorts. On the inhibiting side, attendance records showed that average attendance dropped from approximately 92% in the weekly Tahsin to approximately 65% in the monthly mentoring sessions, with seven informants attributing the decline to perceived schedule overload and competing extracurricular commitments. Six informants also observed that supervising teachers were unevenly distributed during sessions, particularly during the monthly Mentoring, with some sub-groups operating without teacher presence.

Observable Impact on Students' Religious Character

Triangulated data converge on four observable behavioral outcomes that materialized over the six-month period. The first is consistency in worship and Quranic recitation: students who initially struggled with tajwid demonstrated improved articulation and short-surah memorization, with the four student informants reporting independent home recitation, corroborated by parental statements relayed through the advisor's logbook. The second is the emergence of leadership and responsibility, particularly through Muhadarah and PHBI, where

students assumed roles ranging from master of ceremonies to event coordinator; observation across three PHBI events showed structured division of tasks executed by student committees with minimal advisor intervention. The third is the strengthening of honesty, discipline, and humility, traceable through the program's attendance system, peer-reminding culture, and the reported willingness of more proficient students to participate alongside beginners without demonstrating superiority. The fourth is a perceptible balance between vertical religiosity (*hablun minallah*) and horizontal social conduct (*hablun minannas*), as students reported transferring program-acquired empathy and cooperation into classroom and community settings. The aggregated thematic structure across the three research objectives is summarized in Figure 1.

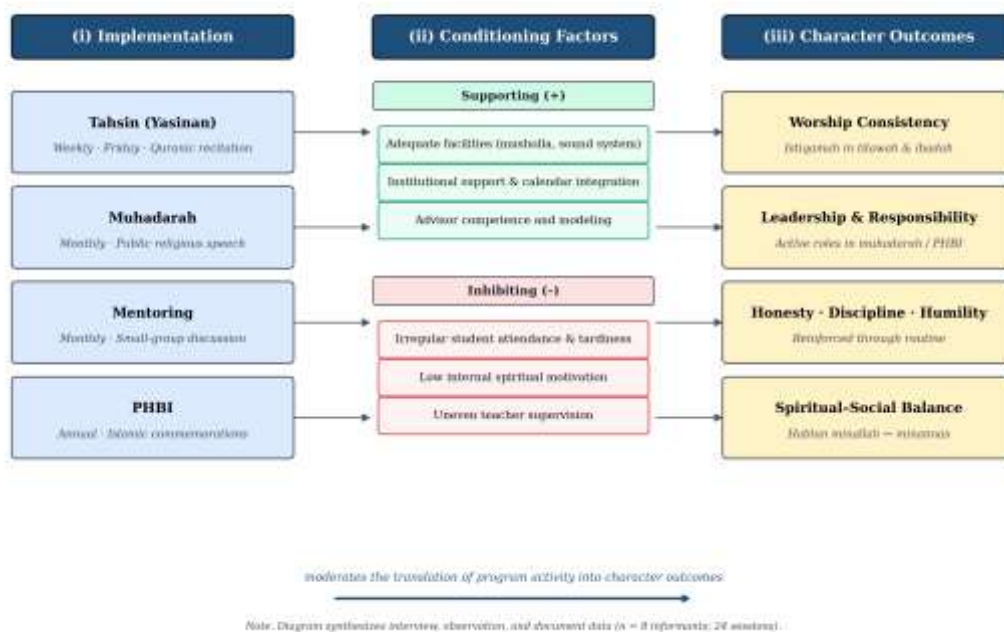


Figure 1. Aggregated Thematic Structure Of Rohis Implementation, Conditioning Factors, And Religious Character Outcomes (Author's Construction).

The findings of this study extend the existing scholarship on religious extracurricular programs in three respects. With regard to implementation, the four-program architecture observed at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo aligns with the typology of Rohis activities reported by Rohaeza (2021) at SMAN 10 Depok and by Ananda (2023) in West Java, in which weekly recitation, public speech, mentoring, and annual commemorations recur as core components. However, the present study departs from these prior accounts by documenting the structural integration of all four components within a single school calendar, accompanied by quantitative attendance markers ($\approx 92\%$ for Tahsin, $\approx 65\%$ for Mentoring). Such variation in attendance, which is rarely reported in earlier work, suggests that frequency alone does not predict participation; rather, the perceived weight of an activity in the school's normative routine matters. Tahsin, embedded in the obligatory Friday morning slot, retains near-universal attendance, while the optional Saturday mentoring drops by roughly 27 percentage points.

With regard to conditioning factors, the convergence of facilities, institutional support, and advisor competence echoes Suryobroto's (1997) early framework on extracurricular

management and Nurdin's (2018) guidelines for religious organizations in schools. Yet the inhibiting factors identified here particularly the uneven distribution of supervising teachers nuance the standard narrative in two ways. First, low internal motivation is not adequately explained by intrinsic adolescent disinterest, as suggested in some descriptive studies; rather, observational data indicate that motivation is mediated by competing extracurricular commitments and by perceived program weight. Second, supervisory unevenness reveals a managerial pattern that is rarely surfaced in prior work, in which advisor competence compensates for the limited presence of supplementary teachers. This finding suggests that Rohis sustainability depends not only on the recruitment of a strong advisor but also on a distributed model of teacher supervision.

With regard to character outcomes, the four behavioral patterns documented in this study worship consistency, leadership, honesty/discipline/humility, and spiritual–social balance are consistent with Lickona's (1991) three components of character (knowing, feeling, and acting the good) and with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, in which modeling and repeated practice within a supportive environment drive internalization. They also resonate with Berkowitz's (2021) PRIMED framework, which positions prioritization, relationships, intrinsic motivation, modeling, empowerment, and developmental pedagogy as design principles for effective character education, and with Kristjánsson's (2020) neo-Aristotelian view of flourishing as an integrated educational aim. The present findings add specificity to this conceptual literature by identifying which Rohis components map onto which character dimensions: Tahsin and Mentoring contribute primarily to knowing and feeling, while Muhadarah and PHBI contribute primarily to acting. The observed transfer of program-acquired dispositions into classroom and community settings further supports the argument advanced by Gunawan (2012) and Dahliyana (2017) that character cannot be transmitted through declarative instruction alone but requires recursive practice within an ecology of meaning, an ecology that is, in the Indonesian context, increasingly framed by the religious moderation policy of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019) and shaped by the broader sociocultural transformations described in Hefner's (2018) account of contemporary Indonesia. Comparative work in high-performing East and Southeast Asian systems (Tan, 2019) further suggests that program effectiveness is heightened when extracurricular activities are tightly aligned with school-wide value commitments rather than treated as discretionary add-ons. At the same time, the present data are bounded by a single-school case design and a six-month observation window, which constrains generalization to other public schools and to long-term outcomes; these limitations are addressed in the recommendations for further research

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Rohis extracurricular program at SMA Negeri 7 Bungo demonstrates that programmatically structured religious activities, when embedded within a supportive school ecosystem, function as a strategic vehicle for internalizing religious character at the senior secondary level. Aligned with the three research objectives, the study shows that Rohis operates through four integrated programs, is conditioned by an interaction between facility-policy-advisor support and attendance-motivation-supervision constraints, and yields observable behavioral outcomes in worship consistency, leadership, honesty, discipline, humility, and spiritual–social balance. These conclusions imply that school leaders should treat

Rohis less as a peripheral activity and more as a core component of character formation, supported by distributed teacher supervision and continuous program evaluation. Further research is encouraged to (a) compare Rohis effectiveness across public and private schools using mixed methods, (b) examine longitudinal post-graduation effects on prosocial behavior and resilience, and (c) test digital and peer-mentoring variations to enhance program relevance for Generation Z learners.

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