

# Religious Leadership in Realizing Islamic-Based Schools at SD Islam Terpadu Al Khair and Sd Negeri 1 Barabai Darat

Azmi, M. R.<sup>\*</sup>, Susanto, D. & Yuliansyah, M.

Universitas Islam Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Banjarmasin, INDONESIA

\*Corresponding Author: [Muhammadrizkyazmi4@gmail.com](mailto:Muhammadrizkyazmi4@gmail.com)

**To Cite This Article:** Azmi, M. R., Susanto, D., & Yuliansyah, M. (2025). Religious Leadership in Realizing Islamic-Based Schools at SD Islam Terpadu Al Khair and Sd Negeri 1 Barabai Darat. *ICCCM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(Special Issue), 99–103. <https://doi.org/10.53797/iccmjssh.v4isp.17.2025>

**Received** 15 September 2025, **Revised** 29 September 2025, **Accepted** 10 October 2025, **Available online** 25 October 2025

**Abstract:** This research was conducted at SD Islam Terpadu Al Khair and SD Negeri 1 Barabai Darat to analyze the implementation of religious leadership in building Islamic-based schools. The research approach used in this study was a descriptive qualitative approach, designed to explore an in-depth understanding of religious leadership and its role in building Islamic-based schools. In collecting data, the researcher conducted interviews, observations, and document analysis with research subjects including school principals, teachers, students, and parents. The results of this study indicate that the leadership of school principals who apply religious values in leading (trustworthiness, justice, wisdom, exemplary conduct, forgiveness, deliberation, and loyalty) has a significant influence on shaping Islamic-based schools. This can be seen from their leadership behavior and the school programs implemented. The school programs implemented include the habituation of prayer (sholat), Friday piety (Jumat Taqwa), congregational midday prayer (sholat dzuhur berjamaah), congregational morning prayer (sholat dhuha berjamaah), memorization of short surahs, and the celebration of Islamic holidays. School principals who implement religious values in their leadership and the school programs are the reasons why Islamic-based schools can be established.

**Keywords:** religious leadership, Islamic-based schools

## 1. Introduction

The world of education in the current era of globalization faces various challenges as a result of advances in science and technology that can have both positive and negative impacts (Bakhtiari & Shajar, 2006). According to Arifin (2025) the very rapid flow of information brings diverse information from all corners of the world, providing easy access for individuals, which presents a significant challenge in maintaining the moral and spiritual values held by Indonesian society. The entry of foreign cultures that are not in line with religious values and local culture can influence the behavior of Indonesia's younger generation (Riany et al., 2017). The current condition demands that the world of education not only focus on producing students who excel academically and intellectually, but also must have strong character and good morals. Islamic education in elementary schools is very necessary so that the younger generation not only has academic knowledge but also possesses moral guidance, character, and practices religious teachings (Idhar, 2024).

The leadership of the school principal plays a crucial role in determining the direction and quality of education at the elementary school level (Sunaengsih et al., 2019). Amidst the increasingly complex dynamics of change in the world of education, school principals are required to have adaptive, collaborative leadership abilities based on noble values relevant to the local context. In the ever-evolving world of education, the leadership of the school principal holds a very important role. The school principal is not just an administrator but also an educational leader responsible for creating a conducive learning environment, motivating teachers and staff, and improving the quality of education at their school. In this era of globalization, school principals are required to have a clear vision, high adaptability, and competent managerial skills (Mulyasa, 2022).

This research aims to explore how a school principal can establish an Islamic-based educational climate within their educational unit. The implementation of Islamic-based education is expected to address the challenges of changing times so that students can possess morals, ethics, and character in accordance with the teachings of Islam.

## 2. Problem Formulation

- How is religious leadership implemented in building Islamic-character schools?
- What are the obstacles faced by school principals in realizing Islamic-character schools?
- What strategies are implemented by school principals to build and maintain the application of Islamic-character schools?
- What is the teachers' response to the religious leadership of the school principals?

## 3. Research Objectives

This research aims to:

- Analyze the implementation of religious leadership in building Islamic character. This research will explore how school principals apply leadership principles based on Islamic values in managing schools and shaping student character.
- Identify the obstacles faced by school principals in realizing Islamic-character schools. This objective aims to understand the internal and external barriers that influence the implementation of religious leadership in schools.
- Explain the strategies implemented by school principals to build and maintain the application of Islamic-character schools. This research will detail the approaches used by school principals to address challenges and strengthen the implementation of Islamic values in schools.
- Reveal the views, perceptions, and experiences of teachers in their daily interactions with school principals who implement a religious leadership style, including the extent to which this leadership influences their motivation, work ethic, and role in the educational process.

## 4. Literatur Review

Leadership is essentially the activity of leading through the process of influencing subordinates or others. According to Nawawi & Hadari (2000), leadership can be defined as the ability or intelligence to encourage a number of people (two or more) to cooperate in carrying out activities directed towards a common goal.

Husna (2017) explains that in the history of educational development in the Islamic world, leadership models were certainly greatly influenced by the central figures of that era. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the main figure of educational leadership was undoubtedly the Prophet Muhammad SAW. During his leadership, it can be said that the leadership model he implemented was a situational leadership model. This is a leadership model that consistently combines autocratic, permissive, and participative leadership models.

Religious leadership can be defined as a form of leadership that integrates religious and spiritual values into the decision-making process and social interactions within the educational environment. In the context of education, the school principal as a religious leader functions not only as a manager but also as a builder of student character and morality. Latta (2020) explain that religious leaders lead by setting a good example and inspiring staff and students to adhere to religious values in their daily lives. This role is crucial in creating a school atmosphere that is not only academically oriented but also prioritizes ethical and moral values that underpin Islamic character.

The impact of effective religious leadership can be seen in the positive changes that occur in the school environment. A study conducted by Haryati et al. (2024) shows that schools led by principals who implement religious values tend to have higher levels of discipline and learning motivation among students. This positive school environment not only contributes to academic achievement but also to the better development of student character. Students become more empathetic, tolerant, and have a high sense of responsibility towards their surroundings. Therefore, religious leadership is not only an important factor in school management but also in shaping a generation with character and high moral integrity.

Mulyani (2022) mentions that the characteristics of Islamic leadership according to Buya Hamka are: (1) adhering to religion, (2) trustworthy and honest, (3) loving justice, (4) generous, (5) wise, (6) possessing intelligence and broad thinking, (7) self-confident, (8) having a compassionate heart towards fellow human beings, (9) steadfast in hardship, (10) brave, (11) loyal, (12) having a healthy physique, (13) forgiving.

A school is an educational institution that intentionally, regularly, and systematically carries out guidance, education, and teaching (Umar, 2011). Education implemented in schools is dynamic, hierarchical, and divided into specific time periods ranging from kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school to university. Meanwhile, an Islamic-based school is an institution engaged in the world of education; Islamic educational institutions (Islamic-based schools) play an important role in improving quality human resources and producing cadres of national leaders who possess high Islamic and nationalistic values (Effendi, 2008).

The existence of Islamic education is not merely an activity of transferring and inheriting knowledge (transfer of knowledge) or an activity of transferring training and teaching (transfer of training), which is only based on the spirit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but lacks transcendent values within it. Meanwhile, the educational process in

Islam is deeper than these two aspects, where it is a system structured on the foundation of tawhid (firm faith) in Allah SWT and piety (a servant who is obedient and has noble character), namely a system directly related to God.

## **5. Research Methodology**

### **5.1 Research Method**

The research approach used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, designed to explore an in-depth understanding of religious leadership and its role in building Islamic-character schools at SD Islam Terpadu Al Khair and SD Negeri 1 Barabai Darat.

The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide more complex and contextual insights into the experiences, perceptions, and views of school principals, teachers, students, and parents regarding the implementation of Islamic values and their roles and contributions in the educational process (Kalman, 2020). Through this approach, researchers can capture nuances that might be missed in a quantitative approach, such as emotions, motivations, and the social context that influences educational practices.

### **5.2 Data Collection Techniques**

According to Taherdoost (2021) data collection in this research will be carried out using several techniques designed to obtain comprehensive information regarding the implementation of religious leadership and the implementation of Islamic character values at SD Islam Terpadu Al Khair and SD Negeri 1 Barabai Darat. These data collection techniques include:

- a. In-depth Interviews. In-depth interviews will be conducted with school principals, teachers, students, and parents. This technique allows researchers to explore detailed information regarding the experiences, views, and expectations of each informant related to religious leadership and Islamic character values.
- b. Direct Observation. Direct observation will be carried out in the school environment to observe the interactions between teachers and students as well as the application of Islamic character values in teaching and learning activities.
- c. Document Analysis. Official school documents will be analyzed to assess the alignment between the vision, mission, and curriculum with the principles of Islamic character education.

## **6. Results and Discussion**

### **6.1 Religious Leadership Implemented in Building Islamic-Character Schools**

School principals who apply religious values in leading (trustworthiness, justice, wisdom, exemplary conduct, forgiveness, deliberation, and loyalty) has a significant influence on shaping Islamic-based schools. This can be seen from their leadership behavior.

From the interview results, it can be seen that the school principal, in making decisions, always involves the teacher council and other related parties. The principal is not only a leader but also an example for teachers and students, which aligns with one of the characteristics of religious leadership. In managing school finances, the principal upholds honesty and accountability, which in this case corresponds to the values of Trustworthiness and honesty. When facing various problems, the principal does not directly judge right and wrong but rather looks at them from various perspectives and listens to different opinions before making a decision, demonstrating their wisdom.

The school programs implemented include the habituation of prayer (sholat), Friday piety (jumat taqwa), congregational midday prayer (sholat dzuhur berjamaah), congregational morning prayer (sholat dhuha berjamaah), memorization of short surahs, and the celebration of Islamic holidays. School principals who implement religious values in their leadership and the school programs are the reasons why Islamic-based schools can be established.

### **6.2 Obstacles faced by school principals in realizing Islamic-character schools**

A significant hurdle in establishing an Islamic-character school is the limited engagement of parents in supporting religious initiatives, compounded by the varied Islamic upbringings of the student body. While the school has actively tried solutions, including large parent gatherings and social media outreach, parental collaboration remains weak. Furthermore, the diverse religious comprehension among students presents a challenge to the uniform implementation of Islamic principles. The school is actively working to mitigate this through enhanced guidance via routine activities like communal prayer, memorization, and religious lessons, emphasizing teacher role-modeling, consistent with character education principles. Nevertheless, the inconsistent practice of Islamic values by students outside the school environment remains a notable challenge.

### **6.3 Strategies implemented by school principals to build and maintain the application of Islamic-character schools**

The school principal instills Islamic values through activities such as congregational prayer, religious studies, and the integration of relevant local content. To avoid disrupting academic activities, scheduling is carefully done. Furthermore, synergy with parents is strengthened through regular meetings and grand parenting events to support the development of students' Islamic character, by prioritizing a collaborative approach and support from various elements.

The school principal serves as an example in both behavior and the implementation of school programs. During congregational prayers, the principal participates and assists in their execution. Similarly, in matters such as maintaining cleanliness, the principal is the first person to dispose of trash in its proper place. In speech, the principal must demonstrate polite language and must not use inappropriate grammar, as a school principal is a role model for both teachers and students.

#### **6.4 Teachers response to the religious leadership of the school principals**

In supporting the school principal's religious leadership, teachers play a central role through their role modeling for students. Beyond their teaching duties, teachers are also required to internalize Islamic values in every action, including emotional control and making wise decisions when facing problems. Teachers underscore the importance of harmony between firmness and wisdom to create an Islamic school atmosphere. The concrete example of teachers in practicing Islamic values is a key element in shaping student character, aligning with Lickona's view that role modeling is the essence of character education. Through this role, teachers also strengthen the implementation of religious leadership and build an Islamic culture within the school environment.

### **7. Conclusion**

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that religious leadership at SD IT Al Khair and SD Negeri 1 Barabai Darat has successfully realized Islamic-based schools through the application of Islamic values in the School Principal's leadership. School programs such as the habituation of prayer (sholat), Friday piety (jumat taqwa), congregational midday prayer (sholat dzuhur berjamaah), congregational morning prayer (sholat dhuha berjamaah), memorization of short surahs, and the celebration of Islamic holidays are key elements in building an Islamic culture. Another factor is the School Principal's commitment to implementing Islamic values, with the support of teachers greatly assisting in the implementation of these values.

### **Acknowledgement**

The authors would like to thank the fellow authors and organizations whose intellectual properties were utilized for this study.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### **References**

- Arifin, N. (2025). Pendidikan Karakter di Era Digital. Penerbit Tahta Media. Retrieved from <https://tahtamedia.co.id/index.php/issj/article/view/1386>
- Bakhtiari, S., & Shajar, H. (2006). Globalization and education: Challenges and opportunities. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)*, 5(2).
- Efendi, A. (2008). Peran strategis lembaga pendidikan berbasis Islam di Indonesia. *el-Tarbawi*, 1(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.20885/tarbawi.voll.iss1.art1>
- Haryati, S., Sukarno, S., Siswanto, S., & Trisnowati, E. (2024). Trends in Religious-Based School Selection: Analysis of Parental Motivation. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 16(4), 4439-4449. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i4.5329>
- Husna, F. (2017). Kepemimpinan islami dalam meningkatkan mutu lembaga pendidikan islam. *MISYKAT: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Al-Quran Hadits Syari'ah dan Tarbiyah*, 2(2), 131-154. <https://doi.org/10.33511/misykat.v2n2.131-154>
- Idhar, I. (2024). Revitalisasi pendidikan dasar berbasis nilai Islam: Mewujudkan generasi cerdas dan berakhlak. *Fashluna*, 5(2), 117-130. <https://doi.org/10.47625/fashluna.v5i2.810>
- Kalman, M. (2020). School Improvement and Contextual Factors: A Qualitative Case Study on Educators' Perceptions and Experiences. *Pedagogical Research*, 5(4).
- Latta, G. F. (2020). Modelling the interaction of leadership, culture and power in higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 44(9), 1188-1206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2019.1669770>
- Mulyani, S. (2022). Karakteristik Kepemimpinan Islami Menurut Prof Hamka Dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar. *Ar-Ribhu: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Keuangan Syariah*, 3(1), 65-73.
- Mulyasa, H. E. (2022). Manajemen dan kepemimpinan kepala sekolah. Bumi Aksara.
- Nawawi, H., & Hadari, H. M. (2000). Administrasi Personel Untuk Peningkatan Produktivitas Kerja, Edisi Revisi, Penerbit CV. Haji Masagung.
- Riany, Y. E., Meredith, P., & Cuskelly, M. (2017). Understanding the influence of traditional cultural values on Indonesian parenting. *Marriage & Family Review*, 53(3), 207-226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01494929.2016.1157561>

- Sunaengsih, C., Anggarani, M., Amalia, M., Nurfatmala, S., & Naelin, S. D. (2019, April). Principal Leadership in the Implementation of Effective School Management. In Elementary School Forum (Mimbar Sekolah Dasar) (Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 79-91). Indonesia University of Education. Jl. Mayor Abdurachman No. 211, Sumedang, Jawa Barat, 45322, Indonesia. Web site: <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/mimbar/index>.
- Taherdoost, H. (2021). Data collection methods and tools for research; a step-by-step guide to choose data collection technique for academic and business research projects. International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM), 10(1), 10-38.
- Umar, B. (2011). Ilmu Pendidikan Islam, Jakarta.