



THE FORMATION OF STUDENTS' QUR'ANIC CHARACTER THROUGH TAPAK SUCI EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity in shaping students' Qur'anic character at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan. The research focuses on how Islamic values are internalized through Tapak Suci as a response to the moral decline challenges in the era of globalization. A descriptive qualitative approach with a field research design was employed, utilizing interviews, observations, and documentation for data collection. The findings reveal that Tapak Suci, as a mandatory activity in Muhammadiyah schools, plays a significant role in cultivating Qur'anic values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, and respect. The internalization of these values is reinforced through consistent Islamic practices integrated into each stage of training and supported by a religious school environment. Nevertheless, the study also identifies obstacles, including differences in students' socio-economic backgrounds and negative external influences. Overall, Tapak Suci serves as a strategic instrument in developing Islamic character education, as it not only enhances students' physical abilities but also strengthens their mental and spiritual dimensions, ultimately fostering a generation with faith and Qur'anic character.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In essence, education should not only focus on academic achievement but must also emphasize the formation of students' character. Within the context of Islamic education, the primary goal of education is to foster obedience to Allah SWT through the practice of noble morals exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (Sudadi, 2025). This is affirmed in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Qalam verse 4:

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character." (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020)

According to Tafsir Jalalain, this verse emphasizes that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) possessed noble character (Al-Mahalli & As-Suyuthi, 2018). His morals serve as the standard for Muslims in shaping a Qur'anic character, reflecting values such as honesty, compassion, patience, and responsibility that must be emulated by students. This is reinforced by a hadith narrated by Al-Baihaqi in Sahih Bukhari No. 273:

"Indeed, I was sent only to perfect noble character." (Bukhari, 1956)

According to Ibn al-'Arabi, the Prophet was granted the ability to complete the moral virtues of previous prophets, making ethics the essence of his da'wah. Teachers, therefore, hold a strategic role in shaping students' character by introducing moral values and noble conduct. By demonstrating exemplary behavior in daily life, teachers can positively influence students' personality and faith (Putri et al., 2025).

Character education is increasingly important in the era of globalization and digitalization, which poses significant challenges in the form of moral decline. Instant culture, shifting values, and the flood of information often contribute to the degradation of morality among the younger generation. While digitalization and automation bring innovations that make life more convenient and limitless, they also create complex challenges, including the demand for new and multifaceted skills (Bahtiar et al., 2023).

Character building is a process of shaping one's soul into a unique and distinct identity, much like letters of the alphabet that are never the same (Baidowi & Putri, 2024). Character education can be obtained through both academic activities and extracurricular programs. One such extracurricular activity that contributes to character formation is Tapak Suci, a Muhammadiyah martial arts program.

In Tapak Suci, Islamic education plays a vital role in instilling moral values that are essential for achieving academic excellence. Relying solely on knowledge without noble character would leave individuals unable to control themselves (Azzahra & Mavianti, 2024).

However, the reality of education in Indonesia shows that the goals outlined in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System have not been fully achieved. Many students still lack discipline, responsibility, empathy, and respect for diversity. This situation requires strategic solutions to instill Qur'anic values within students.

The failure of moral education cannot be separated from various factors that weaken faith and manners, often hindering or even halting the moral development process. Challenges such as the influence of digital media, limited teacher competence, and insufficient involvement of families and communities have triggered a character crisis among the younger generation (Andini & Fadilah, 2023).

At SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan, Tapak Suci extracurricular activities are used as a solution to these challenges. Being a compulsory program in all Muhammadiyah schools, it serves as an important platform for instilling discipline, resilience, sportsmanship, and reliance on Allah based on Islamic teachings. In practice, Tapak Suci emphasizes not only cognitive and psychomotor aspects but also affective aspects, such as behavior, attitude, and personality. These values are reflected in students' sportsmanship, mutual respect, discipline, humility, and perseverance. This aligns with the motto of Tapak Suci: "With faith and morals, I become strong; without faith and morals, I become weak." Thus, Tapak Suci can serve as an effective means of shaping students' character in line with Islamic values.

Previous studies show that Tapak Suci extracurricular activities significantly influence students' character development. Rizal et al. (2021) explain that Tapak Suci improves students' self-confidence through discipline and courage. Safa & Utomo (2023) emphasize that Tapak Suci develops discipline, sportsmanship, and religiosity. Ma'arif (2023) found that Tapak Suci extracurricular activities at Muhammadiyah Junior High School Pakem Sleman strengthen students' discipline, while Pratama & Hidayah (2025) demonstrate its effectiveness in enhancing discipline and interest among students. However, studies that specifically examine how Tapak Suci extracurricular activities shape students' Qur'anic character at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan remain limited.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the implementation of Tapak Suci extracurricular activities and their role in shaping students' Qur'anic character at Muhammadiyah 48 Private Junior High School Medan, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with the type of field research, as its main focus is to describe how the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity contributes to the formation of students' Qur'anic character at Muhammadiyah 48 Private Junior High School Medan. The research was conducted at Muhammadiyah 48 Private Junior High School, located on Tangguk Bongkar X Street, Gg Sekolah No. 2 Medan, during the period from April 2025 to June 2025. The location was chosen because Tapak Suci is not only one of the school's flagship extracurricular programs but also a distinctive characteristic of Muhammadiyah schools, making it highly relevant to the theme of this study.

The data collection techniques used in this research consisted of three main methods: interviews, observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing the researcher to have a clear direction in questioning while still giving informants the flexibility to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives. The informants consisted of one Islamic Education teacher, one Tapak Suci instructor, and three students actively participating in Tapak Suci activities (from grades 7, 8, and 9). Observations were carried out during the Tapak Suci extracurricular sessions and within the broader school environment to assess the extent to which Qur'anic character values, such as discipline, responsibility, and brotherhood (*ukhuwah*), were internalized by the students. Documentation was employed to complement the data through notes, photographs, and archival records relevant to the study.

The data in this study were analyzed qualitatively using the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were selected and categorized to identify patterns of meaning relevant to the research focus. The validity of the data was strengthened through source and method triangulation to ensure the credibility and reliability of the research findings.

To ensure the validity of the information, the study applied triangulation techniques by cross-checking and comparing data from multiple sources, including the Tapak Suci instructor, the Islamic Education teacher, and several student participants. In addition, triangulation was reinforced by combining multiple data collection methods—interviews, observations, and documentation—so that the data obtained were more reliable, in-depth, and reflective of the actual field conditions in an objective manner.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation of Tapak Suci Extracurricular Activities at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan

The observations show that the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan is conducted regularly every Wednesday. This activity is mandatory in accordance with Muhammadiyah school policies, which designate Tapak Suci as a medium for physical training as well as Islamic character development. This aligns with the guidelines of the Muhammadiyah Council for Primary and Secondary Education (Majelis Dikdasmen Muhammadiyah, 2024) Article 43, which states that “Schools/Madrasahs and Non-Formal Education institutions are required to conduct scouting and martial arts extracurricular activities.”

The Tapak Suci training at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan is carried out systematically, beginning with prayer, warming up, motivational sessions, technical training, evaluation, and closing prayers. This structure reflects the integration of both physical and spiritual aspects. These findings are consistent with the study at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Blora (Ginanjari et al., 2019), which revealed that the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity not only emphasizes physical training but also serves as a medium for character development through the cultivation of honesty and discipline.

Similarly, the Tapak Suci instructor, Mr. Adi Surya, explained:

“The Tapak Suci activity at this school is held through regular training every Wednesday, involving martial arts techniques, physical development, and mental training, with a focus on discipline and teamwork among students. Tapak Suci is mandatory, especially in Muhammadiyah schools such as Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan.”

This statement indicates that the Tapak Suci activity is not merely recreational but has become an integral part of the Muhammadiyah educational system. Furthermore, Tapak Suci is positioned as an instrument for shaping Islamic character, consistent with Muhammadiyah’s vision of nurturing knowledgeable, faithful, and virtuous generations. Through the integration of physical exercises and spiritual guidance, Tapak Suci serves as an

effective medium for fostering discipline, responsibility, and brotherhood, aligning with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the Pancasila Student Profile grounded in Qur'anic values.

In its implementation, each Tapak Suci training session is not only focused on martial arts skills but also incorporates the habituation of Islamic values. Before training begins, students are encouraged to recite prayers and read selected verses from the Qur'an as a form of spiritual preparation. During practice, the instructor consistently instills values such as sincerity, patience, and responsibility. For instance, students who arrive late are given light disciplinary tasks while being reminded of the importance of fulfilling responsibilities. This approach transforms Tapak Suci into more than just physical training—it becomes a medium for the internalization of Qur'anic values through habituation and moral example.

In addition, the implementation of character values is also reflected in non-training activities such as internal championships, joint training with other Muhammadiyah schools, and religious social activities such as community service. Through these programs, students learn cooperation, respect for opponents, and the practice of Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*). The school also provides recognition in the form of certificates or awards for students who demonstrate exemplary discipline, morality, and achievement. These efforts strengthen the role of Tapak Suci as a comprehensive medium for developing Qur'anic character—not only enhancing physical ability but also nurturing faith and noble character.

B. The Process of Forming Qur'anic Character of Students through Tapak Suci Extracurricular Activities

The formation of Qur'anic character in Tapak Suci proceeds through the habituation of Islamic values embedded in every activity. These values include discipline, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, religiosity, and self-control. The process occurs through exemplary modeling by instructors, routine prayer, regular training, and the assignment of responsibilities to students. This discipline has proven to influence students' daily lives both at school and at home. This was confirmed by Rizky, an eighth-grade student, who stated:

"Yes, brother, I now feel more disciplined after joining Tapak Suci."

Reza, a seventh-grade student, added:

"For me, since I just joined about a month ago, I've learned a lot about discipline and responsibility, brother. I used to be undisciplined and careless back in elementary school, but now, alhamdulillah, I've changed."

In addition to discipline, a sense of responsibility also develops through assigned roles, such as leading prayers or organizing small groups. Honesty and respect are instilled through manners toward the coach and fellow members. Students also experience increased solidarity as they learn to cooperate and help each other during training. Dani, a ninth-grade student, shared his personal experience:

"For me, brother, alhamdulillah, I've learned a lot—from self-defense techniques, discipline, mental training, to responsibility. Just like Tapak Suci's motto, 'With faith and morality, I am strong; without faith and morality, I am weak.'"

Dani's statement demonstrates that the values of discipline, responsibility, and religiosity are successfully internalized through Tapak Suci. This aligns with the findings of Hikam et al. (2023), which revealed that Tapak Suci plays an important role in shaping students' discipline, responsibility, and religious character through habituation of prayer, pledges, and routine practice. Each movement reflects humility and glorification toward Allah SWT.

Mr. Adi Surya added:

"The methods used to form students' Qur'anic character include spiritual training, moral education through stories, and the application of discipline in every training session — for example, during the belt upgrading camp (mabit)."

The Islamic Education teacher, Mr. Malik, also acknowledged positive behavioral changes:

"I noticed significant behavioral improvements among students who actively participate in Tapak Suci. They tend to be more disciplined, value their time better, and show mutual respect in the classroom."

These findings confirm that Tapak Suci functions as an instrument of Qur'anic character education. As emphasized by Lickona (1991), effective character education must involve moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Within Tapak Suci, students do not merely learn Qur'anic values cognitively but also experience and practice them in real life.

The success of Qur'anic character formation through Tapak Suci can also be understood from the perspective of Islamic education. According to Al-Ghazali, education must develop the physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects in a balanced manner. Physical training in Tapak Suci strengthens endurance and courage, mental training fosters discipline and responsibility, while spiritual formation reinforces faith and morality.

These findings correspond with the perspective of Nata (2018), who asserts that Islamic character education is effective when it involves the internalization of values through habituation and role modeling rather than mere theoretical instruction. In Tapak Suci, Qur'anic values are embedded through practical activities—prayers, discipline, cooperation, and respect for instructors—which create an integration between cognitive and affective moral dimensions. This supports Muslich's (2011) argument that Islamic character education requires the "transformation of values into real actions within students' lives."

However, some scholars offer a more critical view. Marzuki (2015) warns that character development through extracurricular activities must be accompanied by continuous spiritual supervision, ensuring that physical discipline does not overshadow sincerity and moral consciousness. Meanwhile, Zubaedi (2017) emphasizes that Islamic character education should integrate both formal and non-formal learning environments to maintain consistent moral guidance. In this regard, the role of Tapak Suci instructors and Islamic teachers at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan is crucial in ensuring the sustainability of Qur'anic values between training sessions and students' daily lives.

C.Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Formation of Qur'anic Character through Tapak Suci at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan

In its implementation, there are supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the effectiveness of Tapak Suci as a means of character formation. The supporting factors include full support from the school and Islamic Education teachers who are directly involved in the activities, the requirement for all students to participate in Tapak Suci which increases their commitment, and the religious school environment that facilitates the internalization of Qur'anic values. In addition, additional programs such as mabit (spiritual overnight activities) during belt promotion further strengthen the students' spiritual aspect.

On the other hand, there are inhibiting factors such as differences in students' family backgrounds that cause unequal acceptance of values, and the lack of consistency among some students in attending training sessions. This aligns with the statement of the Tapak Suci instructor, Mr. Adi Surya, who explained:

“The challenges in fostering Qur'anic character through Tapak Suci include differences in students' backgrounds, difficulty maintaining training consistency, and external environmental influences that are not always supportive. For example, there was a new student who rebelled against the instructor because of family problems at home, so the instructor had to resolve the issue using a psychological approach.”

From the description above, it can be concluded that the Tapak Suci extracurricular program at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan plays a strategic role in shaping students' Qur'anic character. This finding is reinforced by Pratama and Hidayah (2025) in their research at the At-Taqwa Muhammadiyah Islamic Boarding School in Miri Sragen, who identified supporting factors such as good coordination among instructors, students, and parents, adequate facilities and funding, and the presence of competent trainers. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors found include a lack of instructor consistency and limited human resources. This condition is relevant to the situation at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan, where school support and the role of instructors are key to successful character development, while family background differences and limited human resources remain challenges in the internalization of Qur'anic values.

This activity successfully integrates physical, mental, and spiritual development, allowing students to grow into disciplined, responsible, honest, and cooperative individuals. Despite some challenges, the effectiveness of Tapak Suci in forming Qur'anic character remains strong, supported by the religious Muhammadiyah school system and the active participation of Islamic Education teachers. Thus, Tapak Suci is not merely a martial arts activity but also an Islamic educational instrument that remains relevant to contemporary educational challenges.

These findings are consistent with Marzuki (2015), who emphasized that effective Islamic character formation requires synergy between the school, family, and community environments. In the context of Tapak Suci, strong institutional support represents a conducive educational atmosphere for the internalization of Qur'anic values. Zubaedi (2017) also highlighted that character education succeeds when moral values are not only taught cognitively but also practiced through real-life activities such as extracurricular programs

that promote discipline and responsibility. Therefore, the success of Tapak Suci at Muhammadiyah Private Junior High School 48 Medan demonstrates that non-formal education can serve as an effective complement to formal religious education in fostering Qur'anic character.

However, different perspectives are offered by Lickona (2013) and Muslich (2018), who argue that extracurricular activities such as martial arts will only positively impact character development when accompanied by intensive moral guidance and measurable behavioral assessment. Without continuous supervision and spiritual reflection, physical activities may instead cultivate excessive competitiveness or aggression. This implies that although Tapak Suci contributes to Qur'anic character formation, its effectiveness largely depends on the instructors' and teachers' ability to integrate Islamic moral values into every aspect of the training. Hence, this study reinforces the argument that faith-based character education requires not only structured activities but also reflective, pedagogical, and continuous strategies.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it can be concluded that the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan plays a very important role in shaping students' Qur'anic character. This is because Tapak Suci is able to address educational challenges in the modern era, which are marked by moral crises and the degradation of ethics due to globalization, instant culture, and the influence of social media. Tapak Suci not only develops physical strength but also nurtures mental resilience, noble morals, and strong spirituality, thus aligning with the main goal of Islamic education, namely to form a generation that is faithful, pious, and Qur'anic in character. Through descriptive qualitative research with a field research approach, data were obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles & Huberman model and tested for validity through source, technique, and time triangulation. The findings show that Tapak Suci activities are carried out routinely and systematically, starting from opening prayers, warming up, core training, to closing prayers. This process not only trains martial arts skills but also instills Qur'anic values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, solidarity, and respect for teachers and peers. These values are formed through consistent Islamic habituation applied in every stage of training, thus bringing real changes in students' behavior both at school and outside of school. This success is supported by factors such as strong school support, the involvement of Islamic Studies teachers, the obligation for all students to participate in Tapak Suci, and a religious school culture. Nevertheless, there are also challenges such as differences in family backgrounds, inconsistency of some students in attending training, and negative influences from the external environment. Therefore, the existence of Tapak Suci in Muhammadiyah schools functions not only as an extracurricular activity but also as a strategic solution in fostering the younger generation to develop a strong Islamic identity, uphold morality, and be prepared to face global challenges without losing their identity as Muslims.

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