

Internalisation of Religious Culture Through Non-Academic Learning Process Based on Islamic Religion

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ABSTRACT: *This research aims to examine the internalisation of religious culture through non-academic learning processes at Senior High School 15 Palembang. It focuses on how these schools implement Islamic-based religious practices and values to nurture students' spiritual growth. This qualitative study employs field research with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. A descriptive qualitative analysis was conducted through data collection, reduction, presentation, and verification. The findings reveal that the internalisation of religious culture in these schools integrates Islamic values into students' behaviours and attitudes. Religious practices are primarily promoted through non-academic activities outside the formal Islamic Education, Al-Islam, and Fiqh classes. Students demonstrate these values in both school and community settings, participating in structured religious activities such as congregational prayers, Quran recitation (tadarus), Dhuha prayers, and embodying respectful behaviours such as politeness and friendliness. These practices are intended to foster students' development into morally grounded individuals who contribute positively to societal ethics. The study also highlights the need for improved facilities, such as dedicated prayer areas, to support the internalisation of religious culture further. The study focuses on three schools in Palembang, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research could expand the scope to include a variety of educational institutions and regions. This research provides insights into how religious culture can be systematically internalised through non-academic activities within Islamic educational settings. It underscores the role of leadership, habitual practices, and supportive environments in promoting the ethical and spiritual development of students, bridging modern educational goals with Islamic moral principles.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji internalisasi budaya agama melalui proses pembelajaran non-akademik di SMAN 15 Palembang. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana sekolah-sekolah ini menerapkan praktik dan nilai-nilai keagamaan berbasis Islam untuk menumbuhkan pertumbuhan spiritual siswa. Studi kualitatif ini menggunakan penelitian lapangan dengan data yang dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis kualitatif deskriptif dilakukan melalui pengumpulan, reduksi, penyajian, dan

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verifikasi data. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa internalisasi budaya agama di sekolah-sekolah ini mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Islam ke dalam perilaku dan sikap siswa. Praktik keagamaan terutama dipromosikan melalui kegiatan non-akademik di luar kelas Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI), Al-Islam, dan Fiqih formal. Siswa menunjukkan nilai-nilai ini baik di lingkungan sekolah maupun masyarakat, berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan keagamaan terstruktur seperti shalat berjamaah, membaca Al-Quran (*tadarus*), shalat Dhuha, dan mewujudkan perilaku hormat seperti kesopanan dan keramahan. Praktik-praktik ini dimaksudkan untuk menumbuhkan perkembangan siswa menjadi individu yang berlandaskan moral dan berkontribusi positif terhadap etika masyarakat. Studi ini juga menyoroti perlunya peningkatan fasilitas, seperti area sholat khusus, untuk mendukung internalisasi budaya keagamaan lebih lanjut. Studi ini berfokus pada tiga sekolah di Palembang, yang mungkin membatasi generalisasi temuan ke konteks lain. Penelitian selanjutnya dapat memperluas cakupan untuk mencakup berbagai lembaga pendidikan dan wilayah. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana budaya keagamaan dapat diinternalisasi secara sistematis melalui kegiatan non-akademik dalam lingkungan pendidikan Islam. Penelitian ini menggarisbawahi peran kepemimpinan, praktik kebiasaan, dan lingkungan yang mendukung dalam mempromosikan perkembangan etika dan spiritual siswa, menjembatani tujuan pendidikan modern dengan prinsip-prinsip moral Islam.

Keywords: *Religious Culture, Non-Academic Learning Process, Islamic Religion.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious culture is built and realised to instil religious values in students (Ali et al., 2020; Lahmar, 2020; Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022; Wening & Hasanah, 2020). This is something essential. Religious culture is one of the comprehensive educational methods (Syarnubi et al., 2023), because in its manifestation, there is an internalisation of values, setting an example, and preparing the younger generation to be independent by teaching and facilitating responsible moral decision-making and other life skills (Faizin, 2019; Sudiarni et al., 2019). Realising religious culture in schools is one of the efforts to internalise religious values in students (Ikhwan et al., 2023; Ma'rifah & Sibawaihi, 2023; Ramedlon et al., 2023). The development of Islamic religious culture in the madrasah environment is an effort to instil the values of Islamic religious teachings in students (Hambali et al., 2022; Nunzairina et al., 2021; Syarnubi et al., 2021), aiming to strengthen faith and foster individuals with spiritual awareness and noble character.

The development of Islamic religious culture is essential because this activity is a series of spiritual improvement activities to form students who believe and are devoted to Allah Swt and possess noble character (Pristine Adi et al., 2024; Siswanto, 2022). Noble morals include ethics and values, embodying religious education goals (Alfiyanto et al., 2023). Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions, especially high schools, to

internalise religious values in students by using habitual practices rooted in Islamic religious culture.

While religious values and religious culture are interconnected, they differ. Religious values serve as the foundation for religious culture. Religion is the value system with the most substantial basis of truth compared to other values (Huda et al., 2019), governing all aspects of human life. Religious values form the basis of religious culture, as without cultivating religious values, a culture cannot develop (Burga & Damopolii, 2022; Jumahir et al., 2023). Internalising religious values involves profoundly embedding them into individuals' hearts, prompting them to act in alignment with religious teachings. This internalisation occurs through a comprehensive understanding of religious teachings and a growing awareness of their importance (Nisa' et al., 2022).

Religious culture, on the other hand, is an integral and comprehensive aspect of education, serving as a foundational framework that not only nurtures the moral responsibility of the younger generation but also equips them with essential life skills, guiding their personal and social development in alignment with spiritual values (Suryani & Muslim, 2024). In schools, internalising spiritual values is part of efforts to create a religious culture in students (Achadah et al., 2022; OK et al., 2023). Culture itself has at least three dimensions: as a complex of ideas, values, norms, and regulations, as a collection of human activities in society, and as tangible products of human creativity (Levin & Mamlok, 2021). Culture thus represents the totality of human life patterns that emerge from thoughts and habits that shape a community (Davison et al., 2021; Hodgson, 2022).

The Character Education Program is one strategy for instilling character values through learning, customary practices, exemplary motivation, and enforcement (Purwaningsih & Ridha, 2024). A key theoretical framework underpinning this program is Lickona's Character Education Theory (Harmawati et al., 2022; Leung & Shek, 2021), which emphasises the development of moral values and personal integrity in students through both academic and non-academic processes. Religious values can be instilled through school policies, the teaching and learning process, religious activities, and the consistent behaviour of all school members. These efforts create a religious culture within the school environment (Dasopang et al., 2023).

Given the importance of instilling religious culture in schools, a strong and solid foundation is needed (Isom et al., 2021). Just as a building without a solid foundation will collapse under pressure, religious and cultural school values cannot endure without proper groundwork. Such foundations are essential for developing educated individuals who can navigate life with solid religious principles (Firdaus & Suwendi, 2025). The urgency of this research arises from the increasing need to establish and strengthen these foundations within the educational system, especially in the context of the rapidly changing socio-cultural environment. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how religious culture can be effectively embedded in school curricula, shaping students' values and guiding their future actions. Additionally, the Social Learning Theory emphasises that students internalise values by observing and interacting with role models within the school community, further supporting the importance of a strong foundation in the internalisation of religious culture (Ahn et al., 2020; Li et al., 2023; Proctor & Niemeyer, 2020).

However, this process is not always successful. Although teachers have made efforts to instil noble moral values and ethics, students often consider religious lessons to be a

formality. This is supported by observations made in a study at Senior High School 15 Palembang, where some students seemed hesitant to express their opinions in discussions due to low self-confidence. This lack of assertive behaviour is caused by the student's fear of expressing their ideas, as they are worried about being wrong or not being accepted by their peers. Consequently, internalising religious values has not profoundly affected their conscience, and students have not fully appreciated them. Therefore, educational institutions must make concerted efforts to internalise religious values reflected in students' behaviour. This is why a solid religious culture in schools is crucial (Biantoro, 2019; Fausi, 2020; Hayati et al., 2020; Umar & Tumiwa, 2020).

Besides achieving academic goals, it is essential to emphasise religious values in the learning process, especially since the time allotted for religious subjects such as Al-Islam is relatively tiny. Without enough focus on religious education, these values may be overshadowed by negative cultural influences. School policies, such as written regulations at Senior High School 15 Palembang, help shape students' morals and strengthen their faith. In Senior High School 15 Palembang, religious culture is applied as a strategy to internalise Islamic educational values with the guidance of teachers and homeroom teachers.

This study focuses on the habituation of religious culture through daily activities, which is expected to foster positive habits and shape students' character. For this research, we selected one school, which is Senior High School 15 Palembang. This school was chosen for its unique characteristics and approach to internalising religious values. Senior High School 15 Palembang, a public non-religious school, provides an opportunity to examine how religious culture is cultivated in a secular environment with limited religious instruction.

Previous studies have examined similar topics, such as Cahyadi et al. (2023), which explores the internalisation of religious and cultural values as part of career guidance in Islamic universities, highlighting the crucial role of religious values in shaping students' behaviour and career success. Additionally, research by Anto et al. (2023) on the integration of national and religious identity in elementary schools discusses how both identities are nurtured in schools, emphasising religious education as a key factor in fostering respect and tolerance among students. Furthermore, studies by Rahayu & Dong (2023) have shown that extracurricular activities, such as religious practices, play a significant role in character development, including the internalisation of values like honesty, discipline, and cooperation. While these studies are related, they differ in their focus, location, and methods. This study, however, focuses on how religious culture is internalised in the daily attitudes and behaviours within high schools, particularly at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang, offering a comparative understanding across different educational settings. Based on the background above, this study will delve into the internalisation of religious culture through Islamic education in Senior High School 15 Palembang, focusing on daily attitudes and behaviours both in the school environment and during Islamic Religious Education learning processes.

II. METHOD

This study discusses the internalisation of religious and cultural forms through the learning process of religious material in Senior High School 15 Palembang, and aims to find out how the process of internalising religious and cultural forms occurs in High schools. Based on the objects discussed, this research is qualitative. The researcher uses

descriptive research because the research procedure describes the phenomena at the research site (Annur, 2018; Sugiyono, 2019). Researchers try to photograph events that are the centre of attention and then explain in detail with words and sentences to get the meaning of an event, interaction, and written data from the field. Data collection techniques are a crucial step in research, as they determine the quality and relevance of the data gathered. The primary goal of research is to obtain data that meets predefined standards, and this can only be achieved by employing appropriate data collection methods. In this study, the researcher utilised three data collection techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation.

For interviews, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers, students, and school administrators at SMA Negeri 15 Palembang. These individuals were selected due to their direct involvement in the internalisation of religious culture within the school environment. The interviews aimed to explore their perspectives on how religious values are integrated into the school's daily practices. The researcher used open-ended questions focusing on participants' experiences, challenges, and strategies related to the teaching of religious culture. Face-to-face interviews were chosen to allow for in-depth discussions and follow-up questions.

In terms of observation, the researcher employed non-participant observation to observe the interactions and behaviours of students during religious activities and routine school events. The focus was on how students engaged with religious practices, such as prayer sessions, religious events, and school rituals. Observations were carried out over the course of three months, allowing the researcher to gather data on both spontaneous and structured activities related to religious culture. Finally, for documentation, the researcher analysed school policy documents, lesson plans, and records of extracurricular activities, with a focus on how religious values are incorporated into the curriculum and extracurricular programs. These documents were obtained from the school administration, and their function was to provide a formal record of the school's efforts to integrate religious education. The document analysis helped the researcher understand the alignment between official policies and the actual implementation of religious culture in the school setting.

Data analysis in this study was conducted during data collection and after the completion of data collection at Senior High School 15 Palembang. The researcher applied qualitative data analysis techniques by continuously processing the collected data interactively (Sugiyono, 2022). The analysis process included data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing (Ibrahim et al., 2024). In practice, data reduction was carried out by summarising, selecting, and focusing on relevant information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The reduced data were then presented in a structured format to facilitate interpretation. The researcher further verified the data by comparing findings from different sources and methods. The final step involved drawing conclusions based on patterns and themes that emerged from the analysis.

To ensure the validity of qualitative data, triangulation was applied by cross-checking information through various techniques, including time triangulation (re-examining data at different times), source triangulation (comparing perspectives from different informants), and method triangulation (validating findings through different data collection methods) (Ibrahim et al., 2022). This approach ensured the credibility and

trustworthiness of the findings regarding the internalisation of religious culture through non-academic learning at Senior High School 15 Palembang.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Form of Religious Culture in Learning Islamic Education Materials

Based on the data obtained through interviews, documentation, and observations, the researcher identified six forms of religious culture introduced by teachers during the Islamic Education lessons at Senior High School 15 Palembang. These six forms are:

1. Smile, greetings, and salutations

The implementation of the Smile, Greet, and Salute (*Senyum, Sapa, Salam/3S*) culture at Senior High School 15 Palembang is primarily emphasised during Islamic Religious Education lessons, particularly in materials related to moral education. According to a Islamic Education teacher;

"We always try to apply the 3S culture at school, especially in Islamic Education subjects. However, not all lesson materials directly emphasise this culture. For example, in topics such as 'Strengthening Harmony through Tolerance' or 'Ethics in Social Media,' 3S may not be the main focus. However, in lessons like 'Reflecting on Noble Character as a Reflection of Faith,' we truly encourage students to practice smiling, greeting, and showing respect to others as part of commendable moral behaviour" (Teacher, 2025).

Observations conducted during class sessions supported this statement, showing that Smile, Greet, and Salute are most visible at the beginning of lessons or when topics are related to character building. However, during theoretical or non-ethical subjects, the practice is less consistently observed.

Student feedback confirmed the selective application of the Smile, Greet, and Salute culture across different subjects and teachers. One student commented;

"Honestly, not all teachers and students practice the Smile, Greet, and Salute habit. Some teachers always greet us warmly when they enter the classroom, but others go straight into the lesson without greeting us. Among fellow students, it also depends on the individual. Some are used to it, others are indifferent" (Student 1, 2025).

Another student added that this culture is more prominent during Islamic Education lessons, especially when discussing moral behaviour;

"Usually in Islamic Education, especially when we learn about character, we are often reminded to be kind and respectful. However, in other subjects, like Math or Physics, this is rarely mentioned" (Student 2, 2025).

These findings suggest that while the 3S culture has been promoted through religious education, its influence across other subjects and school activities remains inconsistent and largely dependent on individual teacher initiative.

From the school's administrative perspective, efforts to promote the Smile, Greet, and Salute culture are underway, although implementation challenges remain. One school administrator noted;

"This culture is actually one of the values we aim to instil at Senior High School 15 Palembang. We encourage both teachers and students to get used to smiling, greeting, and saluting in their daily routines. However, we admit that its implementation still needs strengthening" (Administrator, 2025).

In response, the school has developed initiatives such as the Friday Religious Program, where students receive motivation and moral guidance, including the importance of simple acts like smiling and greeting others. Documentation from religious events, such as Islamic study gatherings and spiritual retreats, illustrates that the Smile, Greet, and Salute culture is more vividly practised in religious settings compared to general academic environments. To ensure the deeper internalisation of this culture throughout the entire school, consistent reinforcement, teacher modelling, and school-wide strategies are essential to embed Smile, Greet, and Salute into everyday student behaviour across all areas of school life.

2. Tolerance

At Senior High School 15 Palembang, Islamic Education teachers strive to instil the value of tolerance as part of promoting moderate Islam in a multicultural society. However, the emphasis on tolerance tends to be limited to specific learning materials, such as "Strengthening Harmony through Tolerance," noble character development, and Islamic marital law. One Islamic Education teacher explained;

"We always instil the value of tolerance in students, especially in materials related to social relations and moral values. However, in lessons on Islamic worship law (*fiqh*) or Islamic history, tolerance is not the main focus because the content is more about Islamic legal rulings and the historical development of the religion" (Teacher, 2025).

The teacher noted that the primary references used to teach tolerance include Quranic verses from Surah Yunus and Surah Al-Ma'idah, which emphasise mutual respect and fairness in social life.

Student interviews further revealed that lessons concerning social relations and ethics primarily shape their understanding of tolerance. One student commented;

"We are often taught that Islam promotes moderation and respect for differences. Usually, this is conveyed in moral education or when discussing interfaith relations" (Student 1, 2025).

However, students also acknowledged that tolerance is not emphasised across all Islamic Education topics. A student added;

"In subjects like Islamic history or worship law, tolerance is not really discussed. The focus is more on Islamic jurisprudence and practices" (Student 1, 2025).

Observations confirmed that tolerance is more visible in extracurricular activities or religious discussions than in formal academic interactions. In one observed class, a teacher referenced Surah Al-Ma'idah verse 8 to teach the importance of being just and fair toward all people, regardless of religious or cultural background. However, such references were absent in more legalistic or historical Islamic Education lessons. A student noted;

"In these topics, we mostly learn about worship rules and Islamic law, so tolerance does not come up much" (Student 2, 2025).

From an administrative perspective, tolerance remains a core value that the school aims to strengthen, especially given the cultural diversity among students. One school administrator stated;

"The culture of tolerance is essential here, considering our multicultural environment. We encourage Islamic Education teachers to emphasise tolerance, but we realise this is mostly discussed in certain topics rather than integrated throughout the curriculum" (Administrator, 2025).

The school has implemented programs such as Religious Fridays, seminars on moderate Islam, and interfaith dialogue forums to promote the values of pluralism. However, documentation shows that references to tolerance, such as verses from Surah Yunus (verses 40–41) and Surah Al-Ma'idah (verse 8), are only included in certain learning materials. The administrator added;

"We have tried to integrate tolerance into the Islamic Education curriculum through Quranic and hadith references, but not all subjects include this element yet" (Administrator, 2025).

While tolerance is often promoted in religious extracurriculars and interfaith events, its presence is still partial and not consistently embedded in the broader academic environment. Therefore, for more equitable internalisation of tolerance, a comprehensive strategy is needed—one that integrates this value into all aspects of education, not just specific religious topics.

3. Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays

At Senior High School 15 Palembang, the practice of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays is introduced within the Islamic Education curriculum, particularly in the topic "Reflection on Noble Character as a Mirror of Faith." Islamic Education teachers describe this type of fasting as a recommended (*sunnah*) worship practice that holds both spiritual and health benefits. However, its implementation is not emphasised as a formal or collective school activity. One Islamic Education teacher stated;

"We teach about Monday-Thursday fasting as part of noble character, but we do not require students to perform it. We understand that our school community is religiously diverse" (Teacher, 2025).

This statement reflects the teachers' efforts to respect religious pluralism, making it clear that the fasting practice is not mandated nor embedded into formal school programs.

Interviews with students reveal that while some individuals regularly observe the Monday-Thursday fast, this is not a widespread cultural norm at the school. One student noted;

"Some of my friends fast every Monday and Thursday, especially those involved in religious activities. However, most students do not, and there is no pressure from the teachers or school" (Student 1, 2025).

Observations in the classroom confirmed that teachers present the topic as an educational element, not as an appeal or directive for students to practice it. In several sessions, teachers explained the benefits of *sunnah* fasting and referred to hadiths from the Prophet Muhammad Saw that recommend fasting on these days. Still, students are

left with the freedom to choose whether to adopt the practice, making it a matter of personal spiritual initiative rather than school-driven encouragement.

Observations outside the classroom revealed that no specific programs or facilities support students who fast on Mondays and Thursdays. During breaks, fasting students remain in the canteen or classroom without any special accommodations. One student commented;

"When we fast, we just go about our day as usual. No designated area or school policy supports students who are fasting" (Student 2, 2025).

This indicates that the practice is entirely voluntary and individual, without logistical support or policy reinforcement from the school. Documentation confirms that the concept of Monday-Thursday fasting is included in the Islamic Education curriculum as part of religious knowledge, particularly emphasising the virtues and benefits cited in hadith. However, there is no evidence of school-wide programs such as communal *iftar* (breaking of fast) or awareness campaigns to promote it as a shared culture. As one school administrator noted;

"We respect students who observe Monday-Thursday fasting, but there is no official school policy that supports or regulates this practice. The school emphasises freedom in practising sunnah worship" (Administrator, 2025).

Overall, while the concept of Monday-Thursday fasting is introduced educationally, its practice at Senior High School 15 Palembang remains individual, voluntary, and not integrated into official school activities or policies.

4. *Tadarus Al-Qur'an*

The implementation of *Tadarus Al-Qur'an* at Senior High School 15 Palembang serves as a form of religious cultural internalisation through non-academic activities regularly conducted every morning before formal learning begins. Based on observations, this activity is directly led by Islamic Education teachers, who guide and supervise students in reciting the Qur'an in a *tartil* (measured and proper) manner. The *tadarus* session lasts approximately 15–20 minutes before the school bell rings and is carried out collectively in the classroom. The main goal is to help students develop the habit of reciting the Qur'an correctly and to instil Islamic values at the start of the learning day.

In an interview with one of the Islamic Education teachers, it was explained that supervision during *tadarus* is essential to ensure that students not only recite regularly but also improve their pronunciation and deepen their understanding of the verses' meanings. The teacher stated;

"We do not just supervise; we also provide corrections and motivation. This *tadarus* is not merely a routine, but part of character-building that nurtures the students' religious identity" (Teacher, 2025).

The teacher also added that the activity acts as a reflective moment, allowing students to begin their day with spiritual enthusiasm and focus.

Interviews with several students indicated that the *tadarus* sessions have helped them, particularly in improving their Qur'anic reading and memorisation. One student remarked;

“Before we had *tadarus*, I rarely read the Qur'an. However, now, since we read together every morning, I have become more accustomed and more confident” (Student 1, 2025).

Although not all students possess the same level of fluency, the supportive atmosphere and teacher guidance have created a positive environment that encourages continuous improvement. Furthermore, the *tadarus* session helps create a calm and orderly classroom environment before lessons begin, as also observed during field observations.

Activity documentation shows that *Tadarus Al-Qur'an* has become part of the school's character education program, rooted in Islamic values, integrated into the broader school culture. The daily school schedule includes a designated time before lessons begin for religious activities, including *tadarus*. Although not mandated through formal written policy, the school fully supports this activity as part of students' spiritual development. This indicates that the internalisation of religious values at Senior High School 15 Palembang occurs not only through classroom instruction but also through daily practices that consistently build positive habits among students.

5. Group prayer

Group prayer at Senior High School 15 Palembang serves as a form of religious internalisation implemented through daily non-academic activities. This practice takes place twice a day—once in the morning before lessons begin and again after classes conclude. The prayers are typically led by students on a rotating basis, under the supervision of Islamic Education teachers. The primary aim of this activity is to instil spiritual discipline, foster a reflective mindset among students, and create a calm, respectful learning environment. The morning prayer focuses on seeking ease and blessings in the learning process, while the afternoon prayer serves as a moment of gratitude for the knowledge gained.

Interviews with Islamic Education teachers revealed that group prayer is considered essential for nurturing students' spiritual growth. One teacher explained;

“We encourage students to begin and end each school day by remembering Allah. Prayer is not just a routine—it is a way to seek barakah (blessings) in their learning” (Teacher, 2025).

The teacher further noted that although the school is inclusive and serves students from diverse religious backgrounds, the prayer sessions are conducted in a respectful and accommodating manner. Non-Muslim students are invited to pray according to their own beliefs, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and inclusivity.

Student interviews echoed the positive impact of the group prayer. One student remarked;

"Praying before class helps me feel more focused and peaceful. It is something I have gotten used to since I joined this school" (Student 2, 2025).

Observations confirmed that most students participate attentively in the prayer sessions, which typically last one to two minutes. Despite their brevity, these moments contribute significantly to shaping a spiritually grounded and orderly classroom environment.

School documentation shows that group prayer has become an integral part of the school's religious culture. The student handbook encourages participation in these prayers as part of the school's values education program. Teachers are also instructed to

consistently remind students of the importance of prayer without enforcing a specific format. Instead, the school emphasises spiritual reflection and provides students with the freedom to engage in prayer in ways that align with their personal faiths. As such, the practice of group prayer at Senior High School 15 Palembang reflects an inclusive model of religious cultivation that balances Islamic teachings with respect for pluralism.

6. Dhuha prayer

The implementation of the dhuha prayer at Senior High School 15 Palembang reflects the school's commitment to supporting national character education efforts, particularly in nurturing students' religious values and discipline. The dhuha prayer, a sunnah (non-obligatory) prayer performed in the morning, has been integrated into the school's routine as a spiritual practice aimed at fostering positive character traits. Observations in the field showed that teachers, particularly from the Islamic Education department, often use moral education topics as an entry point to introduce and encourage students to observe the dhuha prayer. This approach aligns religious practice with character-building objectives, creating a meaningful learning experience for students beyond academic instruction.

An interview with the school principal confirmed the institutional importance of the dhuha prayer program. The principal stated;

“We see the dhuha prayer not only as an act of worship but also as part of our school's efforts to cultivate discipline, sincerity, and spiritual awareness among students. That is why we encourage not just students, but also teachers and staff to participate regularly” (Principal, 2025).

This shows that the dhuha prayer is not treated as a personal or optional practice, but as a school-wide cultural value. The principal emphasised that its inclusion in the school's religious agenda is intended to normalise and internalise the practice, making it a part of the students' daily habits both in and outside of school.

Further support for this program was evident in interviews with Islamic Education teachers, who described how they incorporate reminders about the dhuha prayer during class, especially in the morning hours when the prayer can still be performed. One teacher shared;

“We consistently remind students during lessons to take a few minutes to perform the dhuha prayer, even if it is just two raka'ahs. The goal is to build a habit, so they feel inclined to continue it outside the school as well” (Teacher, 2025).

Observations confirmed that students are generally receptive to these reminders, with some choosing to perform the prayer individually or in small groups during breaks. Although participation varies among students, the consistent encouragement from teachers helps promote awareness and spiritual discipline.

Documentation from the school further indicates that the dhuha prayer is listed as part of the school's religious enrichment activities, although it remains voluntary in nature. The program does not enforce compulsory participation, but its presence in the school's daily life reflects a broader strategy to instil religious culture through habitual practice. The integration of the dhuha prayer into both the formal and informal dimensions of school life illustrates a subtle yet effective method of religious internalisation. It bridges instructional content with practical application, reinforcing moral and spiritual

development as part of the holistic education model promoted at Senior High School 15 Palembang.

Internalisation of Religious Culture Through Non-Academic Learning Process

The findings of this study indicate that the internalisation of religious culture at Senior High School 15 Palembang does not occur instantaneously, but rather through a gradual and multi-layered process involving cognitive understanding, affective engagement, and behavioural habituation. This pattern aligns with value internalisation theory, which conceptualises internalisation as a progression from value knowing, to value feeling, and ultimately to value being.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), the internalisation process observed in this study is strongly mediated by modelling, habituation, and environmental reinforcement. Teachers—particularly Islamic Religious Education Islamic Education teachers—function as primary role models whose behaviours are observed and imitated by students. Practices such as Smile–Greeting–Salutation, group prayers, and Qur'anic recitation serve as repeated behavioural models that gradually shape students' religious dispositions.

However, the findings also reveal that the internalisation process remains partial and uneven. For instance, the 3S culture is explicitly emphasised in moral-themed Islamic Education lessons, but its reinforcement across other subjects and daily interactions is inconsistent. This suggests that value internalisation has reached the stages of knowing and doing, but has not yet fully developed into being, where values are enacted consistently without situational prompts. This condition supports Supadi (2024) argument that internalisation requires continuous reinforcement through both curricular integration and teacher exemplification across disciplines.

The internalisation of tolerance values further illustrates this selective process. In line with Intan et al. (2025) and Maarif et al. (2023), who found that tolerance is not taught as a standalone subject but is integrated thematically within the Islamic Education curriculum and reinforced through school activities, this study shows that tolerance at Senior High School 15 Palembang is mainly addressed in specific materials such as social ethics and interreligious harmony. However, unlike the schools studied by Intan et al. (2025) and Maarif et al. (2023), the reinforcement of tolerance in non-Islamic Education subjects at Senior High School 15 Palembang remains limited, indicating a weaker level of school-wide curricular integration.

Similarly, Suryani & Muslim (2024) study emphasises tolerance as a concrete outcome of religious programs that foster daily interreligious interaction and mutual respect. When compared to these findings, the present study demonstrates that tolerance at Senior High School 15 Palembang is still confined mainly to normative discourse within Islamic Education lessons and extracurricular religious forums, rather than being systematically embedded in everyday academic interactions. This distinction is important, as it shows that tolerance in this context functions more as a taught value than an institutionalised school culture.

In contrast, the practice of *Tadarus al-Qur'an* represents one of the most successful forms of religious internalisation identified in this study. Conducted daily and collectively, *tadarus* fulfils the key mechanisms of social learning: repetition, modelling, and reinforcement. Students not only gain technical reading skills but also develop emotional attachment and spiritual discipline, indicating a transition toward

deeper internalisation. This finding supports Alsubhaymi & Atallah (2025), who argue that routine Qur’anic practices contribute significantly to the formation of religious identity in school settings.

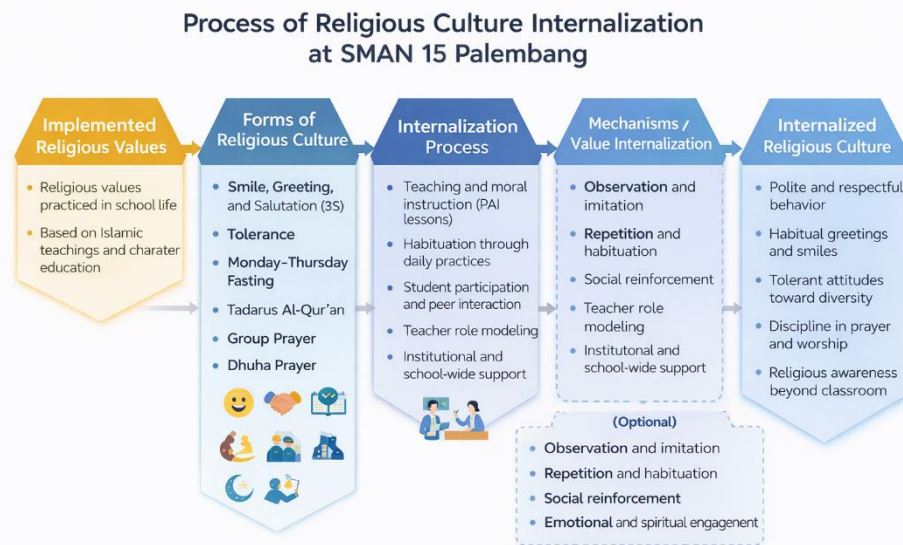


Figure 1. The process of religious culture internalisation

This figure illustrates the process of internalising religious culture at Senior High School 15 Palembang, beginning with the implementation of religious values expressed through six forms of religious culture: Smile, Greeting, and Salutation, tolerance, Monday–Thursday fasting, *Tadarus Al-Qur’an*, group prayer, and Dhuha prayer. These values are internalised through teaching, habituation, student participation, teacher role modelling, and institutional support. Through continuous practice and reinforcement, religious values become embedded in students' daily behaviour, reflected in polite interaction, tolerance, discipline in worship, and sustained religious awareness both inside and outside the school environment.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalisation of religious culture at Senior High School 15 Palembang predominantly occurs through non-academic learning processes, manifested in daily religious practices and school culture rather than formal classroom instruction alone. The implementation of six forms of religious culture—Smile, Greeting, and Salutation, tolerance, Monday–Thursday fasting, *Tadarus Al-Qur’an*, group prayer, and Dhuha prayer—demonstrates that religious values are effectively internalised through habituation, teacher role modelling, student participation, and institutional support. Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by reinforcing value internalisation theory and Social Learning Theory, showing that repeated non-academic practices function as powerful mechanisms for embedding religious values into students' character. Practically, the findings suggest that schools, particularly public schools with limited religious instructional hours, should strengthen non-academic religious programs and ensure consistent school-wide reinforcement to support students' moral and spiritual development. However, this study

is limited to a single public high school context, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to explore comparative studies across different school types and regions, as well as to examine the long-term impact of non-academic religious culture on students' attitudes and behaviour beyond the school environment.

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