

INTEGRATING ISLAMIC EDUCATION INTO FULL-DAY SCHOOLING: CHARACTER FORMATION AT AN ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN MAKASSAR, INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study examines how Islamic education is integrated into a full-day school program and how this integration is experienced as contributing to character formation among students at SMA IT As-Sunnah Makassar, Indonesia. Although extended school time creates additional opportunities for educational intervention, the duration of schooling alone does not guarantee character development; the pedagogical quality, consistency of modelling, habituation, school culture, and family support remain consequential. A qualitative field study was conducted at one integrated Islamic senior high school. Data were generated through observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis involving the principal, curriculum leadership, teachers, homeroom teachers, and students. Data were analyzed through the interactive processes of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, with source and method triangulation used to strengthen credibility. The findings indicate four interrelated implementation mechanisms: (1) integration of national and Islamic curricula, (2) routine religious habituation, (3) an Islamic school culture reinforced through teacher modelling and institutional rules, and (4) religious and character-oriented extracurricular activities. Participants and observations associated these practices with the development of religiosity, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social concern, and independence. However, the findings also show that character formation is not attributable to full-day schooling alone; peer environments, family practices, prior experiences, individual differences, and students' digital environments may facilitate or constrain internalization. The study contributes a context-sensitive account of how extended school time can function as a character-education ecology when learning, habituation, modelling, and school-family collaboration are aligned.

Keywords: Islamic education, full-day school, character education, Islamic school culture, habituation, Indonesia

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana pendidikan Islam diintegrasikan ke dalam program sekolah sehari penuh dan bagaimana integrasi tersebut dirasakan berkontribusi terhadap pembentukan karakter di kalangan siswa SMA IT As-Sunnah Makassar, Indonesia. Meskipun perpanjangan jam sekolah menciptakan peluang tambahan untuk intervensi pendidikan, lamanya waktu sekolah saja tidak menjamin perkembangan karakter; kualitas pedagogis, konsistensi teladan, pembiasaan, budaya sekolah, dan dukungan keluarga tetap memegang peranan penting. Sebuah studi lapangan kualitatif dilakukan di salah satu sekolah menengah atas Islam terpadu. Data dikumpulkan melalui

observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan analisis dokumen yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, pimpinan kurikulum, guru, wali kelas, dan siswa. Data dianalisis melalui proses interaktif berupa kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan/verifikasi, dengan menggunakan triangulasi sumber dan metode untuk memperkuat kredibilitas. Temuan menunjukkan empat mekanisme implementasi yang saling terkait: (1) integrasi kurikulum nasional dan Islam, (2) pembiasaan keagamaan secara rutin, (3) budaya sekolah Islam yang diperkuat melalui teladan guru dan aturan kelembagaan, serta (4) kegiatan ekstrakurikuler yang berorientasi pada agama dan karakter. Para peserta dan hasil pengamatan mengaitkan praktik-praktik ini dengan pengembangan keagamaan, disiplin, tanggung jawab, kejujuran, kepedulian sosial, dan kemandirian. Namun, temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan karakter tidak semata-mata disebabkan oleh sistem sekolah sehari penuh; lingkungan teman sebaya, praktik keluarga, pengalaman sebelumnya, perbedaan individu, dan lingkungan digital siswa dapat memfasilitasi atau menghambat internalisasi. Penelitian ini memberikan penjelasan yang peka terhadap konteks mengenai bagaimana waktu sekolah yang diperpanjang dapat berfungsi sebagai ekologi pendidikan karakter ketika pembelajaran, pembiasaan, teladan, dan kolaborasi sekolah–keluarga selaras.

Kata kunci: pendidikan Islam, sekolah sehari penuh, pendidikan karakter, budaya sekolah Islam, pembiasaan, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Education is expected to develop more than academic competence. It also provides a social and moral environment in which young people learn how to regulate conduct, relate to others, and translate values into everyday action. Character education is therefore concerned with the development of moral understanding, affective dispositions, social competencies, and behavior rather than the transmission of ethical information alone (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Lickona, 1991). Contemporary evidence likewise suggests that school-based programs can improve students' social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes when implementation is systematic and developmentally appropriate (Durlak et al., 2011; Brown et al., 2023).

Within Islamic education, character formation is closely connected with the cultivation of akhlaq, responsibility, discipline, and religious dispositions through learning, habituation, exemplification, and participation in communal practices. The school is not simply a place where Islamic concepts are taught; it can become an environment in which religious and moral values are repeatedly enacted. Recent Indonesian scholarship similarly emphasizes curriculum integration, positive school culture, habituation, and collaboration among educational stakeholders as important dimensions of character formation in Islamic educational settings (Arif et al., 2024; Hidayatulloh et al., 2024; Munawir et al., 2024).

The full-day school model is potentially relevant to this agenda because it increases the amount of time during which students remain within a structured educational environment. However, a longer school day should not be equated automatically with better educational outcomes. A systematic review by Patall et al. (2010) found that the consequences of extending school time depend substantially on how additional time is

used and noted limitations in the causal evidence. More recent evidence similarly indicates that extended school time is most meaningful when it is pedagogically structured rather than treated simply as an increase in instructional duration. Thus, the key question is not whether students spend more hours at school, but what educational experiences occupy those hours and how coherently those experiences support development.

For Islamic schools, this question is particularly important because extended time can be used for activities that are not always available within conventional schedules, including congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, religious study, character mentoring, community service, and structured social interaction. Indonesian studies of full-day schooling report similar patterns, with religious habituation and teacher modelling emerging as recurring mechanisms of character development (Nasucha et al., 2022; Juniani & Dora, 2024). However, these studies also suggest that the quality of implementation, rather than duration itself, is central to character outcomes.

A useful theoretical lens is Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Bandura (1986, 2001) conceptualizes human learning as occurring through reciprocal relationships among personal factors, behavior, and environmental conditions. Observational learning, modelling, reinforcement, self-regulation, and human agency are particularly relevant to character formation because students encounter values through the behavior of significant adults, peers, institutional routines, and consequences attached to behavior. Character education research also identifies modelling, interactive pedagogy, social-emotional learning, and a supportive school environment as recurring features of more promising interventions (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Brown et al., 2023).

The school environment is especially important because school climate encompasses relationships, norms, values, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures that shape students' everyday experiences (Cohen et al., 2009). Thapa et al. (2013) similarly identify safety, relationships, teaching and learning, institutional environment, and school improvement processes as central dimensions of school climate. From this perspective, Islamic school culture can be understood not merely as a collection of religious activities but as an ecological setting in which students repeatedly observe, participate in, and receive feedback on expected ways of behaving.

The family dimension should also be considered. Character development is embedded in multiple social contexts, and the consistency—or inconsistency—between school expectations and family practices can influence whether values are sustained beyond school. A developmental-systems perspective emphasizes that supportive relationships and coherent learning environments across contexts are important for healthy development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). This is particularly relevant in full-day schooling because the school assumes a larger share of students' daily social experience, while parents remain important partners in reinforcing or contesting school-based expectations.

Despite this growing literature, an empirical gap remains. Much Indonesian research discusses full-day school in terms of academic achievement, religious character, or program implementation, while fewer studies examine the mechanisms through which an integrated Islamic full-day environment is experienced by secondary-school students across curricular, habitational, cultural, and extracurricular domains. The present study addresses this gap through an in-depth qualitative case study at SMA IT As-Sunnah Makassar. The study asks three questions: (1) How is Islamic education integrated into the full-day school program? (2) How do school participants describe the contribution of this integration to students’ character formation? and (3) What conditions support or constrain the implementation?

The study contributes in three ways. First, it shifts attention from school-day duration to the educational processes that make extended time meaningful. Second, it connects Islamic character education with a social-cognitive and school-ecology perspective, emphasizing modelling, habituation, reinforcement, relationships, and institutional culture. Third, it provides a contextually grounded account from an integrated Islamic senior high school in Makassar, while explicitly avoiding the claim that observed character development can be causally attributed to full-day schooling alone.

The analytical framework combines three complementary perspectives. First, Social Cognitive Theory explains how students may acquire and reproduce behavior through observation, modelling, reinforcement, self-regulation, and reciprocal interaction between person, behavior, and environment (Bandura, 1986, 2001). Second, character education research emphasizes the importance of explicit values, opportunities for practice, social-emotional competencies, and adult modelling (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Brown et al., 2023). Third, school-climate scholarship highlights the role of relationships, norms, institutional structures, and the quality of everyday school life in shaping student development (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013).

Table 1. Analytical framework used to interpret the qualitative findings.

DOMAIN	MECHANISM	EMPIRICAL INDICATOR IN THIS STUDY	ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION
CURRICULAR INTEGRATION	Meaning-making through instruction	Islamic values connected to subject learning	Values are embedded beyond Islamic Education lessons
RELIGIOUS HABITUATION	Repetition and behavioral practice	Prayer, Qur’anic recitation, dhikr, religious routines	Repeated practice creates opportunities for internalization

TEACHER MODELLING	Observational learning	Teacher conduct, discipline, fairness, religious practice	Students encounter values as enacted behavior
SCHOOL CULTURE	Environmental reinforcement	Rules, routines, communication , shared expectations	Institutional reinforces conduct context desired
PEER AND EXTRACURRICULAR INTERACTION	Social reinforcement and practice	Collaborative activities, social programs, religious extracurriculars	Character is practiced in relational settings
FAMILY SUPPORT	Cross-context consistency	Parental involvement and reinforcement	School-based values may be sustained beyond school

METHOD

Research design and setting

The study employed a qualitative field-research design to understand the implementation of Islamic education within a full-day school program in its natural institutional context. A qualitative design was appropriate because the study focused on processes, meanings, practices, and interactions rather than on estimating a statistical effect of full-day schooling. Case-oriented qualitative inquiry is particularly suitable when a contemporary educational phenomenon is examined within its real-life context and when contextual conditions are integral to interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The case was SMA IT As-Sunnah Makassar, an integrated Islamic senior high school that combines the national curriculum with Islamic educational content and provides structured academic and non-academic activities throughout the school day. The study focused specifically on how Islamic education was enacted through curriculum, habituation, school culture, and extracurricular activities and how these practices were understood in relation to students' character formation.

Participants and sampling

Participants were selected purposively because they had direct knowledge of, or experience with, the full-day school program and student character development. The participant categories reported in the source study comprised the school principal, the

vice-principal responsible for curriculum, Islamic Education teachers, general-subject teachers, homeroom teachers, and students. Purposive sampling was used to prioritize information-rich participants rather than statistical representativeness. In accordance with qualitative research principles, the analytical value of the data was considered in terms of relevance, depth, and variation of perspectives rather than sample size alone (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015).

Because the source manuscript does not report the exact number of participants, age distribution, interview duration, or saturation/information-power criteria, these details are not fabricated in this revision. They should be added from the researchers' field records before submission to a journal that requires full qualitative reporting.

Data generation

Three data-generation techniques were used: semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. Interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions of curriculum integration, religious routines, teacher modelling, character expectations, supporting conditions, and implementation challenges. Observations focused on classroom activities, religious routines, student interactions, school rules, and other practices through which character expectations became visible. Documents included materials relevant to the full-day school program and its religious and character-education components. Using multiple sources enabled comparison across what participants said, what occurred in practice, and what was institutionally documented.

The researcher functioned as the primary research instrument, supported by interview guides, observation protocols, and documentation sheets. The source study reports source triangulation, methodological triangulation, persistent observation, peer debriefing, and member checking as strategies for strengthening credibility. These procedures are consistent with established qualitative standards emphasizing transparency, credibility, reflexivity, and coherence between data, interpretation, and claims (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tracy, 2010).

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Analysis proceeded iteratively rather than as a strictly linear sequence. Initial coding focused on recurring practices and meanings related to curriculum integration, religious habituation, teacher modelling, school culture, character behaviors, family support, peer influence, and digital-environment challenges. Codes were then compared and clustered into broader categories, which were interpreted in relation to Social Cognitive Theory and character-education scholarship.

The final interpretation was organized around four themes: (1) curricular integration as the structural foundation; (2) religious habituation as repeated behavioral practice; (3) teacher modelling and Islamic school culture as social-learning mechanisms; and (4)

supporting and constraining conditions beyond the school timetable. The analysis deliberately distinguishes participants' and observational accounts from causal claims. In particular, the study does not treat students' observed character as a measured outcome attributable exclusively to the full-day program.

Ethical and reporting considerations

The source manuscript indicates that research permission was obtained and that the study involved direct engagement with students. However, it does not report an institutional ethics approval number, parental consent procedure, student assent procedure, or a detailed protocol for protecting minors' confidentiality. These details are essential for international journal submission and should be inserted from the original research records. No participant-identifying information is reproduced in this manuscript.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Curricular integration: from separate religious instruction to an integrated learning environment

The first finding is that Islamic education was not confined to the Islamic Education subject. The school combined the national curriculum with an Islamic curriculum and encouraged teachers to connect subject learning with religious, ethical, and character-related values. In this arrangement, Islamic education functioned as a cross-curricular orientation rather than as an isolated subject. The integration was visible in the way teachers connected academic content with values associated with faith, responsibility, conduct, and akhlaq.

This pattern is important because character education becomes more difficult to sustain when values are presented only as abstract content. The literature on character education emphasizes that students require repeated opportunities to encounter, discuss, practice, and enact desired values (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Brown et al., 2023). Similarly, Indonesian research on Islamic schools highlights curriculum and school-program integration as a recurring condition for strengthening character education (Arif et al., 2024; Hidayatulloh et al., 2024). In the present case, curricular integration created the structural conditions for Islamic values to appear across the school day rather than only during formal religious lessons.

Religious habituation: repetition as an everyday mechanism of character formation

The second finding concerns the extensive use of religious habituation. Students participated in congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, daily dhikr, Islamic study, social activities, communal work, and school routines governed by Islamic norms. These practices were not treated as occasional events; they were incorporated into the daily rhythm of school life. As a result, students repeatedly encountered expectations concerning religious observance, time management, responsibility, cooperation, and respectful conduct.

From a social-cognitive perspective, repeated practice provides opportunities for behavioral regulation and feedback (Bandura, 1986, 2001). From a character-education perspective, habituation can create the conditions under which values move from conceptual knowledge toward observable practice. Indonesian evidence similarly describes religious habituation as a mechanism for strengthening religious character in school settings (Nurizah & Amrullah, 2024; Munawir et al., 2024). The contribution of the present case is to show how habituation was embedded within an extended school schedule, thereby making religious practice part of the institutional routine rather than an isolated intervention.

Teacher modelling and Islamic school culture

The third finding is the central role of teachers and school culture. The source study identifies teacher example, institutional commitment, and a conducive Islamic environment as important supporting factors. Students encountered character expectations not only through verbal instruction but also through teachers' conduct, punctuality, religious participation, communication, and responses to student behavior. This is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory, in which observed models can influence learning and subsequent behavior, particularly when the model is socially meaningful to the learner (Bandura, 1986).

School culture amplified this modelling process. Rules, routines, interpersonal expectations, and religious activities collectively communicated what the school regarded as appropriate conduct. This is consistent with school-climate research showing that norms, relationships, organizational structures, and teaching practices jointly shape students' school experiences (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013). The case therefore suggests that character education is more plausibly understood as an ecology of repeated messages and experiences than as a single instructional technique.

The observed character dimensions included religiosity, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social concern, and independence. The source manuscript reports improvements or stronger expressions of these behaviors, including adherence to school rules, management of time, religious practice, and positive social interaction. Because the study is qualitative and lacks a pre–post measurement design, these observations are interpreted as evidence of perceived and observed contribution rather than quantified program effects.

Extracurricular activities and social practice

The fourth finding concerns non-academic activities. Religious study, social activities, communal work, and other extracurricular programs extended opportunities for students to practice values in collective settings. Such activities matter because character is partly relational: students must learn how to cooperate, take responsibility, manage disagreement, and contribute to a group. Research on social-emotional learning similarly shows that school-based interventions can support social and behavioral development

when students receive opportunities to practice skills in structured settings (Durlak et al., 2011).

In the present case, extracurricular activities complemented classroom and habituation practices. They created additional settings in which students could enact responsibility and social concern. The contribution of full-day schooling therefore appears to lie less in additional hours per se than in the possibility of organizing a coherent sequence of learning, practice, reflection, and social participation across the day.

Supporting and constraining conditions

Four supporting conditions were repeatedly identified: institutional commitment, teacher competence and modelling, a supportive Islamic school environment, and parental involvement. These conditions suggest that implementation depends on organizational coherence. When school leaders, teachers, and families communicate compatible expectations, students encounter a more consistent developmental environment. This interpretation is compatible with developmental-systems scholarship emphasizing supportive relationships and coherent learning environments (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Three major constraints were also identified: differences in students' backgrounds, peer and social influences outside school, and insufficiently controlled use of digital technology. These constraints are theoretically important because they demonstrate that the school is only one part of the environment in which character develops. Students move between school, family, peer, community, and digital contexts, and these contexts may communicate different behavioral norms. The finding therefore qualifies any simple assumption that increasing time at school automatically produces stronger character.

The study also identified alternative explanations for observed character development, including parenting, prior educational experiences, family religiosity, individual characteristics, and peer groups. These factors should be treated as contextual influences rather than residual noise. A major implication is that full-day school should be evaluated as part of a broader developmental ecology, not as an isolated treatment.

Table 2. Summary of qualitative findings and interpretive boundaries

THEME	CORE FINDING	CHARACTER-RELATED PROCESS	BOUNDARY OF INTERPRETATION
CURRICULAR INTEGRATION	National and Islamic curricula were integrated across learning	Values become visible across subjects and school routines	Integration is described qualitatively; no fidelity score was measured

RELIGIOUS HABITUATION	Daily worship and religious routines were institutionalized	Repetition supports practice, self-regulation, and value enactment	No longitudinal measure establishes causal change
TEACHER MODELLING & SCHOOL CULTURE	Teachers and institutional norms modelled expected conduct	Observation, social reinforcement, and shared expectations	Student responses were not quantified
EXTRACURRICULAR/SOCIAL PRACTICE	Religious and social activities created practice opportunities	Responsibility, cooperation, social concern	Effects may overlap with peer/family influences
SUPPORT & CONSTRAINTS	Leadership, teachers, family support facilitated implementation; peers/digital contexts constrained it	Cross-context consistency or inconsistency shapes internalization	Findings are context-specific to one school

DISCUSSION

Full-day schooling as an educational ecology rather than a time-allocation strategy

The central contribution of the study is to reposition full-day schooling from a question of duration to a question of educational ecology. The case shows that additional school time becomes educationally meaningful when it is filled with coherent learning, habituation, modelling, social interaction, and character-oriented participation. This interpretation is consistent with the broader evidence on extended school time, which cautions that additional hours do not automatically generate better outcomes and that the use and quality of time are critical (Patall et al., 2010).

This distinction matters for Islamic schools. A full-day structure may create a stronger opportunity for integration between academic learning and religious formation, but it can also increase students' exposure to institutional routines without necessarily guaranteeing internalization. The present findings indicate that the perceived contribution to character formation emerged from the coherence among curriculum, routines, teachers, school culture, and social activities. Thus, the pedagogical architecture of the day appears more important than its length alone.

Modelling, habituation, and reinforcement

The findings are strongly compatible with Social Cognitive Theory. Teachers functioned as observable models, religious routines provided repeated behavioral practice, and the

school environment supplied feedback and expectations. Bandura's (1986, 2001) framework helps explain why these processes may operate together: students are not passive recipients of religious information but participants who observe others, interpret social cues, regulate their behavior, and act within an environment that can reinforce or discourage particular responses.

The finding also resonates with character-education research. Berkowitz and Bier (2007) identified modelling, interactive pedagogy, explicit attention to character, social-emotional competencies, and community-oriented practice among recurring features of effective programs. Brown et al. (2023), in a large meta-analysis, found a small positive average effect across character-education interventions while also noting methodological heterogeneity and potential selection bias. These findings support a cautious interpretation of the present case: the observed mechanisms are theoretically plausible and consistent with broader evidence, but the case does not establish an independent causal effect of the full-day program.

School culture as the mediating environment of character formation

The study further suggests that school culture is the environment through which curriculum and habituation acquire practical meaning. A religious activity can remain a ritual requirement, or it can become part of a broader culture in which students experience responsibility, mutual respect, discipline, and social concern. Cohen et al. (2009) and Thapa et al. (2013) emphasize that school climate includes relationships, norms, teaching and learning, and institutional structures. The present case extends this perspective into an integrated Islamic school by showing how religious routines can become part of the school's everyday normative environment.

This is also consistent with Indonesian scholarship that emphasizes positive school culture and integrated character education in Islamic schools (Arif et al., 2024; Hidayatulloh et al., 2024). The distinctive point in the present case is not that religious activities exist—they are common in Islamic schools—but that their cumulative function across the extended school day creates an environment in which academic, religious, behavioral, and social expectations are continuously connected.

Family, peers, and digital environments as boundary conditions

The findings concerning parental support, peer influence, and digital technology are particularly important because they challenge a school-centric account of character. Developmental science emphasizes that children and adolescents develop through relationships and environments rather than through isolated instructional encounters (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). When school and family reinforce similar expectations, students may encounter greater consistency; when peer or digital environments provide competing norms, the continuity of school-based character education becomes more difficult to sustain.

This finding also clarifies why the full-day school model should not be interpreted as a protective enclosure. More time within school may provide additional structured opportunities, but students remain members of multiple social and media environments. Consequently, a sustainable character-education strategy requires school–family communication, digital citizenship education, and opportunities for students to exercise judgment across contexts rather than only within tightly regulated school routines.

Implications for Islamic education and school counselling

The findings have practical implications for Islamic education and school-based guidance and counselling. First, Islamic values should be translated into observable behavioral expectations across subjects rather than confined to Islamic Education lessons. Second, habituation programs should be accompanied by explanation, reflection, and opportunities for students to understand why a practice matters. Third, teachers require professional development on modelling, relational pedagogy, and consistent classroom management. Fourth, school counsellors can use the school's character culture as a preventive resource by integrating religiosity, responsibility, self-management, social concern, and digital behavior into personal-social guidance programs.

The role of the family should also be institutionalized rather than treated as informal support. Parent communication can focus on continuity of expectations, students' digital environments, and ways of reinforcing responsibility and self-management at home. These implications are consistent with the wider evidence that effective character education is not a single lesson but a coordinated school ecology involving adults, students, relationships, and institutional practices (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Durlak et al., 2011).

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered. First, the study examines one integrated Islamic senior high school, so transferability to other Islamic schools should be assessed cautiously. Second, the qualitative design provides contextual understanding but does not quantify the magnitude of character change or establish causal effects. Third, the source manuscript does not report exact participant numbers, interview durations, or a formal saturation/information-power rationale. Fourth, the findings rely partly on participant perceptions and researcher observation, creating potential for social desirability and interpretive bias despite triangulation and member checking. Fifth, the study does not include systematic measurement of family practices, peer networks, or digital exposure, although these factors emerged as relevant contextual conditions. Future research could combine qualitative case studies with longitudinal measures of character development and comparative designs across different school models.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Islamic education at SMA IT As-Sunnah Makassar is implemented within the full-day school program through an interconnected system of curricular

integration, religious habituation, teacher modelling, Islamic school culture, and religious or social extracurricular activities. Within the case, these practices were associated with the development and expression of religiosity, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social concern, and independence. The findings suggest that the value of full-day schooling lies not simply in the additional hours students spend at school, but in whether those hours are organized into a coherent developmental environment.

Theoretically, the study demonstrates the usefulness of Social Cognitive Theory for interpreting character formation in an Islamic school context: students encounter values through observation, repeated practice, social feedback, self-regulation, and interaction with their environment. Practically, the study indicates that character education is strengthened when curriculum, teacher behaviour, school culture, student activities, and family support communicate compatible expectations. At the same time, the study cautions against attributing character development exclusively to full-day schooling because students' development is also shaped by family, peers, prior experiences, individual differences, and digital environments.

Future research should therefore move beyond descriptive case studies toward longitudinal and comparative designs that examine how different configurations of school time, Islamic education, school culture, family involvement, and digital citizenship contribute to character development. Such work would allow the promising mechanisms identified in this study to be tested more systematically without reducing character formation to the amount of time students spend at school.

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