# Implementation of the Principal's Leadership Strategy to Improve Religious Culture Through Friday Imtaq Activities

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## Abstract

The principal's strategy in improving religious values must start as early as possible since the declaration of programs and activities is carried out. It must also be accompanied by the cohesiveness of employees, teachers, students, and all related stakeholders. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Principal's strategy to improve religious culture and describe the Friday imtaq activities implemented, as well as examine the factors that affect the implementation of Friday imtaq at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggen This research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the Principal's strategy to improve religious culture through Friday Imtaq activities as well as recommendations for enhancing the implementation of the principal strategy schools in improving religious culture. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The research subjects involved school principals, teachers, and students. Data analysis techniques are done through data reduction, presentation, and verification. This study results in the conclusion that the implementation of the principal's strategy in improving religious attitudes in students through habituation strategies, exemplary strategies, and partnership strategies. The implementation of Friday imtaq is in the form of reading the Qur'an, Sholawat, reading Asmaul Husna, Religious Lectures, Do'a together and the implementation of the Commemoration of Islamic Holidays, and the fact that is an obstacle to the implementation of Friday imtaq is electricity that often does not turn on, difficulty in finding speakers, and difficulty in water to carry out dhuha prayer activities which begin with ablution first.
**Keywords:** strategy implementation; religious culture; imtaq activity

**Introduction**

The role of the principal is very important in determining a school's progress because the principal is responsible for managing the school's resources. In this case, the management of human resources (HR) is a vital element in achieving the goals and educational values that want to be instilled in the school environment.[1] More broadly, as in the context of a country's progress, even though a country has abundant natural resources if quality human resources do not support it, then the country will not be able to develop optimally. Therefore, many experts argue that human resources are the central factor in the survival of an organization or institution, including in the education sector.[2]

Schools, as educational institutions, have a vision that must be achieved through a clear mission. To realise the vision and mission, synergy is needed from all elements involved in it, be it educators, staff, and students themselves. Although educational organizations or institutions need various resources such as infrastructure, costs, technology, and information, human resources remain the most important resource. Therefore, HRM in schools should be seen as a strategic process that not only includes attracting and retaining a qualified workforce but also ensuring that every individual in the organization can work optimally to achieve educational goals.[3]

The role of the principal as a manager and leader in the school is very important in managing human resources. The principal is not only responsible for formulating educational policies and strategies but must also be able to manage various resources,

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[1] Alfif Alfiyanto, Ivan Riyadi, and Fitri Hidayati, "Komunikasi Interpersonal Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Kerja Guru Di SMP Negeri 23 Palembang," *Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Jurusan Tarbiyah Ftik Iain Palangka Raya*, 2021; Zul Asman and Zahara Tussoleha Rony, "Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan Transformasional Terhadap Produktivitas Kerja : Studi Analisis Tinjauan Literatur Sistematik," *Jurnal Bisnis Dan Ekonomi* 1, no. 1 (July 2023): 68–87, https://doi.org/10.61597/jbe-ogzrp.v1i1.5; Melysa Ristianti, Saipul Annur, and Maryamah Maryamah, "Peran Kepala Sekolah Sebagai Educator Dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Teknologi Informasi Dan Komunikasi," *Studia Manageria* 3, no. 2 (2021): 161–72, https://doi.org/10.19109/studiamanageria.v3i2.8403; Diwut Setiadi and Saipul Annur, "Peran Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah SMP Negeri 9 Talang Ubi Kabupaten PALI Dalam Meningkatkan Efektifitas Kinerja Guru," *Dirasah* 5, no. 1 (2022): 100–113.

[2] H Hidayat and I Ibrahim, "Kepemimpinan Kepala Madrasah Dalam Mengembangkan Mutu Sumber Daya Tenaga Pendidik," *Jambura Journal of Educational …*, 2023.

[3] Ahsantudhonni and Muhammad Arif Syihabuddin, *Landasan Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, *Jurnal Cendekia*, vol. 11 (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2019), https://doi.org/10.37850/cendekia.v11i1.99.

including teaching staff and other staff, properly.[4] As a leader, the principal must create a supportive environment, establish good communication with all staff, and ensure that all components involved in the educational process can collaborate effectively. In management, the principal's role includes the ability to build a solid team and direct and motivate teachers and staff to give their best contribution to the school's progress.

Effective human resource management in schools requires a deep understanding of human behavior and how to manage it well. Principals must have leadership skills, not only in terms of administration but also in managing relationships between individuals in the school environment.[5] In addition, in an era that is increasingly developing with the rapid development of technology and information, principals must also be able to adapt to these changes. The human resources needed today are those who not only have technical expertise but are also able to adapt quickly to changes and have high integrity to compete in the era of globalization.[6]

The importance of the principal's role in human resource management has been recognized since the beginning of the Republic of Indonesia's independence, as stated in the 1945 Constitution. The articles of the constitution underline the importance of education as a basic right of every citizen.[7] The Indonesian government has committed to realizing a national education system that can provide equal opportunities for all citizens to obtain a quality education.[8] In this case, the principal's role as a leader who can align the school's vision with national goals is crucial to improving the quality of education throughout Indonesia.

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[4] Mustamim, Didin Sirojudin, and M Saat Ibnu Waqfin, "Manajemen SumberDaya Manusia (SDM) Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Di Sma 1 Darul Ulum," *Jurnal Education and Development* 8, no. 4 (2020): 275–80.

[5] Abu Choir, "Urgensi Manajemen Pendidikan Dalam Pengembangan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam," *J-MPI (Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam)* 1, no. 1 (2016): 1–12.

[6] Husaini Usman, *Manajemen: Teori, Praktik, Dan Riset Pendidikan Edisi 4* (Bumi Aksara, 2022).

[7] Ibrahim Ibrahim, Choirun Niswah, and Putri Maharany Ramlah, "Pengawasan Kepala Sekolah Tentang Kedisiplinan Guru Di MTs Ilham Palembang," *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal* 5, no. 1 (2024): 10–21, https://doi.org/10.54373/imeij.v5i1.383.

[8] Era Kurnia Ningsih, Happy Fitria, and Yessi Fitriani, "Pengaruh Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dan Konsep Diri Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *Journal of Education Research* 1, no. 2 (2020): 100–105, https://doi.org/10.37985/joe.v1i2.7.

The case study taken from SDN 20 Talang Ubi Suryabumi Agrolanggeng provides a clear picture of how the principal's strategy can be applied to improve the quality of education, especially in terms of strengthening religious values through Friday Imtaq activities. SDN 20 Talang Ubi Suryabumi Agrolanggeng is unique in that it has a close relationship with PT Suryabumi Agrolanggeng. This company not only provides financial support but also provides various facilities to improve the quality of education and the welfare of teachers and school staff. This support includes the provision of welfare benefits, free transport for students, and various forms of rewards for outstanding teachers and students.

The principal's strategy for improving religious values through the Friday Imtaq program in this school shows how important the role of the principal is in designing and implementing programs that focus not only on academic achievement but also on the character and moral formation of students.[9] These activities involve teachers, students, and the surrounding community, thus creating an environment conducive to student character development. In this context, the principal acts as a manager who must ensure that all elements in the educational organization work together to achieve a common goal, namely the strengthening of religious and moral values among students.[10]

Supportive conditions, in terms of fair compensation, a conducive work climate, and high commitment from all parties, greatly affect the performance of teachers and staff. This, in turn, will affect the quality of the implementation of programs in the school, including the enhancement of religious values.[11] Therefore, this study will further explore how the principal of SDN 20, Talang Ubi Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, implements her managerial strategies to improve the quality of education through Friday Imtaq activities

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[9] Mulastin Mulastin, "Pengaruh Manajemen Pendidik Dan Pemberian Kompensasi Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *Lembaran Ilmu Kependidikan* 42, no. 2 (2013): 68–75.

[10] Afif Alfiyanto and Fitri Hidayati, "Tenaga Pendidik Dan Literasi Digital: Tantangan Pembelajaran Di Era Industri 4.0," *Ikhtisar: Jurnal Pengetahuan Islam*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.55062//ijpi.2022.v2i1.45; Alfiyanto, Riyadi, and Hidayati, "Komunikasi Interpersonal Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Kerja Guru Di SMP Negeri 23 Palembang."

[11] Aan Rubiyanto, "Pengaruh Motivasi Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Karyawan Dengan Kepemimpinan Dan Pemberdayaan Sebagai Variabel Moderasi," *Majalah Ilmiah Gema Maritim* 21, no. 1 (2019): 70–78, https://doi.org/10.37612/gema-maritim.v21i1.9.

and how factors such as compensation, work climate, and commitment influence the success of these strategies.

**Method**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type to explore the role of the principal in managing human resources (HR) and implementing religious value-based education strategies at SDN 20 Talang Ubi Suryabumi Agrolanggeng.[12] Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with principals, teachers, staff, and students to gain a comprehensive perspective on the policy and its impact on the quality of education and strengthening students' character. Direct observation of Imtaq Friday activities will also be conducted to understand the interactions and practices that take place in the school. In addition, documents related to managerial policies, educational programs, and activity evaluation will be analyzed to enrich the research findings.[13]

To ensure validity, the researcher uses several steps of source and method triangulation by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documents obtained. This process will be complemented by member checking, where the interim findings will be confirmed to the interviewees to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation.[14] Data analysis will be conducted using a thematic approach, identifying the main themes that emerge from the collected data. The findings will then be analyzed and linked to relevant theories to understand the dynamics of policies implemented by school principals.[15] The study's results are expected to provide a clear picture of the successes or challenges in implementing religious value-based education policies and their contribution to improving the quality of education in schools.

**Analysis of the Implementation of the Principal's Strategy to Improve Religious Culture at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng**

At SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the principal has implemented several strategies to improve religious culture among students. These strategies include

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[12] Robert K. Yin, *Studi Kasus: Desain Dan Metode* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2015).

[13] John W Creswell, "Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset," *Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar*, 2015, 1–634.

[14] Dr. Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R&D*, I (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018).

[15] Yin, *Studi Kasus: Desain Dan Metode*.

Habituation, Exemplary, and Partnership approaches, which collectively aim to cultivate positive religious attitudes and behaviors. Each strategy is supported by various methods that reflect both traditional Islamic values and modern educational strategies.

1.  Habituation Strategy

    The habituation strategy is based on the consistent reinforcement of religious practices. According to observations and interviews, the school has emphasized the importance of worship habits, such as regular prayer sessions, the recitation of religious texts, and proper behavior towards teachers and peers. The involvement of parents is integral to this process, with a focus on raising awareness and shaping the personality of students. This aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory,[16] Which highlights the role of repeated behavior and environmental influences in shaping individual habits and attitudes. The school's regular monitoring, memorization achievements, and award system are examples of positive reinforcement Mc Diarmid that aims to strengthen these religious habits.[17]

2.  Exemplary Strategy

    The exemplary strategy focuses on modeling appropriate behavior by the school principal and staff. It is rooted in Transformational Leadership Theory,[18] This suggests that leaders who demonstrate integrity, discipline, and enthusiasm for religious practices can inspire their followers.[19] Observations show that when students violate school rules, such as delinquency or improper behavior, they are given appropriate tasks, including cleaning duties or memorizing Qur'anic verses, as a form of corrective discipline. This approach reflects the educational principle of restorative justice Zehr, where the focus is on rehabilitation rather than punishment.[20] At the same time,

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[16] Albert Bandura, "Social-Learning Theory of Identificatory Processes," *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research* 213 (1969): 262.
[17] Troy A McDiarmid, Alex J Yu, and Catharine H Rankin, "Habituation Is More than Learning to Ignore: Multiple Mechanisms Serve to Facilitate Shifts in Behavioral Strategy," *BioEssays* 41, no. 9 (2019): 1900077.
[18] Bernard M Bass and Ronald E Riggio, *Transformational Leadership* (Psychology press, 2006).
[19] Gloria Chen et al., "Chang Gung Forum: An Exemplary Strategy for Implementing a Multidisciplinary Network of Experts in Craniofacial Anomalies," *Annals of Plastic Surgery* 92, no. 1S (2024): S60–64.
[20] Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated* (Simon and Schuster, 2015).

students who exhibit positive religious behaviors are recognized and rewarded, thus reinforcing the value of discipline, honesty, and mutual respect.

3.  Partnership Strategy

    The partnership strategy emphasizes collaboration with external stakeholders, such as parents, community leaders, and local authorities. This strategy underscores the importance of a community-based approach to educational success.[21] The school faces challenges, particularly in engaging parents and some teachers in religious activities, which may limit the full potential of this partnership. According to Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement, effective school-community partnerships require clear communication and shared responsibility.[22] By involving parents and local authorities in monitoring student behavior both inside and outside the school, the principal seeks to create a supportive environment for fostering religious values.

**Friday IMTAQ Activities at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng**

    The IMTAQ program implemented every Friday is a key initiative aimed at nurturing students' spiritual development. It includes a range of activities such as Qur'anic recitation, Duha prayer, recitation of Asmaul-Husna, and religious lectures.

1.  Qur'anic Recitation: Students are encouraged to participate in Tadarus, though there are still some challenges regarding correct tajweed and makers. This aligns with the theory of Cognitive Apprenticeship, where students learn complex tasks through guided practice and feedback from more skilled individuals.

2.  Duha Prayer: This daily activity aims to create a calm and focused atmosphere before lessons begin. According to Mahmud's research, regular engagement in ritual prayers contributes to emotional regulation and helps students feel more prepared for learning.[23]

3.  Recitation of Prayers and Asmaul-Husna: Reciting prayers such as the Badar Prayer and Nasuha Repentance Prayer, as well as the Asmaul-Husna, enhances students'

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[21] Anthony S Bryk, "Organizing Schools for Improvement," *Phi Delta Kappan* 91, no. 7 (2010): 23–30.

[22] Graham Epstein et al., "Missing Ecology: Integrating Ecological Perspectives with the Social-Ecological System Framework," *International Journal of the Commons* 7, no. 2 (2013): 432–53.

[23] Wahiduddin Mahmud and Simeen Mahmud, "5 Development, Welfare and Governance," *Development and Welfare Policy in South Asia*, 2014, 65.

spiritual connection and mindfulness. These activities are consistent with Mindfulness Theory Zeidan, which posits that such practices improve focus and emotional well-being.[24]

4. Religious Lectures: Students are tasked with preparing and delivering religious lectures. This not only reinforces their understanding of Islamic teachings but also boosts their self-confidence and public speaking skills, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and peer learning in cognitive development.

5. Commemoration of Islamic Holidays: The school also celebrates various Islamic holidays, organizing religious competitions and lectures. These events provide students with a deeper understanding of Islamic history and values, further solidifying their religious identity.

Despite the successes, the implementation of these strategies has not been without challenges. The lack of active participation from some parents and the continued violations of school rules by some students indicate that there are areas for improvement. Parental involvement has been identified as a critical factor in promoting positive educational outcomes Henderson & Mapp, and the school may need to develop more effective communication strategies to engage parents fully. Additionally, there is a need for more consistent teacher discipline, particularly in terms of attendance and involvement in school activities, as this sets the tone for students' behavior and attitude toward religious culture.[25]

In conclusion, the principal at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng has implemented a multifaceted strategy to improve the religious culture at the school. By combining habituation, exemplary leadership, and partnerships with external stakeholders, the school seeks to create a nurturing environment for students' spiritual growth. However, the challenges faced in engaging parents and teachers, as well as maintaining discipline among students, suggest that more effort is required to maximize the potential of these strategies fully. Future research could focus on exploring more effective ways to involve parents and increase the consistency of religious practices both inside and outside the school setting.

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[24] Fadel Zeidan et al., "Mindfulness Meditation Improves Cognition: Evidence of Brief Mental Training," *Consciousness and Cognition* 19, no. 2 (2010): 597–605.

[25] Anne T Henderson and Karen L Mapp, "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. Annual Synthesis, 2002.," 2002.

The principal at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng has made significant efforts to improve students' religious integrity, but several obstacles have hindered the full implementation of these strategies. The primary challenges identified in this study are related to facilities, negative environmental influences, and lack of collaboration with parents and community stakeholders. These factors must be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of the strategies being implemented.

1. Lack of Facilities

One of the major obstacles identified is the insufficient facilities available at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng. The school has only two buildings that are not located in the same complex, making it difficult to create a cohesive educational environment. Additionally, the school lacks a dedicated mashallah (prayer room) and relies on a mosque outside the school compound for worship activities. This issue is consistent with findings from previous studies on the importance of school infrastructure in supporting religious practices. According to research by Lavy,[26] The availability of proper facilities—such as prayer rooms, libraries, and classrooms— plays a crucial role in shaping students' behaviors and attitudes. The absence of adequate religious books in the library further compounds this issue, as students do not have access to comprehensive resources that could enhance their religious education.

2. Negative Environmental Influences

The influence of the family and community environment is another significant barrier to improving religious integrity among students. In the case of SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the lack of parental participation in religious activities and a generally negative influence from the surrounding community are key factors undermining the principal's efforts. In particular, students are often exposed to outside cultures through technology, such as smartphones, which promote values that conflict with the religious principles being taught at school. This reflects the concerns highlighted by Belsky,[27] Who argues that modern technology can be a double-edged

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[26] Victor Lavy, Olmo Silva, and Felix Weinhardt, "The Good, the Bad, and the Average: Evidence on Ability Peer Effects in Schools," *Journal of Labor Economics* 30, no. 2 (2012): 367–414.

[27] Jay Belsky, "Differential Susceptibility to Environmental Influences," *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy* 7 (2013): 15–31.

sword, influencing young people's attitudes and behaviors in ways that challenge traditional cultural values?

Furthermore, the instability in the students' personal development—such as their ability to make moral decisions and maintain religious discipline—also complicates efforts to instill religious values.

3. Cooperation and Partnership with External Stakeholders

The partnership strategy implemented by the principal at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng involves collaboration with various external stakeholders, including parents, local authorities (such as the police chief and the military), and the community. This partnership is essential for supporting students' religious education both inside and outside the school environment. However, the effectiveness of this strategy is hindered by the lack of cooperation from parents and some community members. As Mamonto (2020) emphasizes, successful school-community partnerships require active participation and clear communication. In the case of SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the absence of consistent engagement from external stakeholders makes it difficult to monitor students' behavior and provide the necessary support for improving religious integrity.

Additionally, Saleh's research has shown that effective collaboration with parents and the community can create a supportive ecosystem for students' development.[28] However, the absence of strong partnerships at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng highlights the need for more structured approaches to involving these key stakeholders in the educational process.

4. Challenges in Implementing the Friday IMTAQ Program

The Friday IMTAQ activities at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, which include Qur'anic recitation, Duha prayers, recitation of Asmaul-Husna, and religious lectures, are a central part of the school's efforts to enhance students' religious integrity.

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[28] Asmalina Saleh et al., "Collaborative Inquiry Play: A Design Case to Frame Integration of Collaborative Problem Solving with Story-Centric Games," *Information and Learning Sciences* 120, no. 9/10 (2019): 547–66.

While these activities have been implemented regularly and have contributed positively to students' spiritual development, several challenges have been identified:

a. Electricity and Sound System Issues: The lack of a reliable power supply has resulted in disruptions during activities, particularly when the microphone is unavailable. This is consistent with research by Thompson,[29] Who argues that technical problems such as poor infrastructure can significantly hinder the smooth execution of educational programs.

b. Monotony and Lack of Engaging Speakers: Another challenge is the difficulty in finding engaging speakers, which sometimes leads to monotonous delivery of religious material. As noted by Reiser and Dempsey,[30] The effectiveness of educational programs often depends on the ability of teachers or speakers to engage students and make the material compelling. In the case of SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the lack of trained speakers may result in decreased student interest and participation.

c. Water Supply Issues for Ablution: The school faces difficulties in providing adequate clean water for ablution, which is a critical aspect of religious practice. The problem stems from a broader issue in the region, where the PDAM Tirta Lematang water supply is insufficient. The lack of basic resources for performing ablution, as well as the unreliable availability of water, poses a significant obstacle to the proper implementation of religious rituals. This situation highlights the research by Hannafin,[31] This indicates that logistical challenges can detract from the overall effectiveness of educational and religious programs.

The principal's strategy for improving students' religious integrity at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng faces several significant challenges. The lack of facilities, including adequate worship spaces and resources, combined with negative environmental

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[29] Frances E Thompson et al., "Need for Technological Innovation in Dietary Assessment," *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 110, no. 1 (2010): 48.

[30] Robert A Reiser and John V Dempsey, *Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technology* (Pearson Boston, 2012).

[31] Michael Hannafin et al., "Video Analysis and Teacher Assessment: Research, Practice, and Implications," in *Digital Video for Teacher Education* (Routledge, 2014), 164–80.

influences such as the pervasive impact of technology and the lack of external cooperation, all impede the successful implementation of religious programs. Moreover, practical challenges such as electricity outages and water supply issues further hinder the effectiveness of religious activities. Addressing these obstacles requires a multi-faceted approach that involves improving school infrastructure, fostering stronger partnerships with parents and the community, and ensuring more engaging and reliable implementation of religious activities.

To overcome these barriers, future research could focus on strategies for improving school-community collaboration and exploring ways to incorporate more effective technological tools in religious education. Additionally, improving facilities and addressing logistical challenges will be essential for enhancing the quality of religious education at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng.

**Conclusion**

In an effort to improve students' religious integrity at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the principal has implemented various strategies involving habituation, role modeling, and partnerships with external parties. Although these strategies have a positive impact on shaping students' religious character, several obstacles hinder their optimal implementation. The main obstacles found in this study are limited facilities, negative environmental influences, and lack of cooperation with parents and community stakeholders.

Inadequate facilities, such as the lack of mashallah and non-integrated classrooms, hinder the implementation of worship activities and religious learning. In addition, environmental factors, especially the influence of technology and lack of parental participation contribute to the deterioration of students' religious development. Previous research has also shown that effective cooperation between schools and communities is essential in supporting better religious education. However, at SDN 20 Suryabumi Agrolanggeng, the lack of participation from parents and the community reduces the effectiveness of this collaboration. The Friday IMTAQ program implemented at the school has contributed significantly to improving students' religious awareness despite technical

challenges, such as electrical problems, difficulties in finding interesting speakers, and constraints on water supply for ablutions, which affect the optimal implementation of the program. Overcoming these obstacles requires a multi-faceted approach that includes improving school infrastructure, strengthening partnerships with parents and communities, and increasing the effectiveness of religious activities by using more effective technology and bringing in more competent speakers. Future research needs to focus on developing strategies to strengthen cooperation between the school and the community and finding solutions to overcome logistical and facility problems.

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