

## UNVEILING VIRTUE: A CHARACTER VALUE ANALYSIS OF THE KHATAM QUR'AN TRADITION

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### Abstract

The tradition of completing the Qur'an is one of the traditional ceremonies carried out as a form of gratitude and appreciation for children who have been able to read the Qur'an and complete it. In the tradition of completing the Qur'an, there are many character values that can be taken and used as a medium for character education in schools. This study aims to determine the character values contained in the tradition of completing the Qur'an. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative method, which was carried out at SDN 14 Pekanbaru. The research subjects consisted of 1 principal, 1 Islamic Religious Education teacher, and 6 grade VI students who had participated in this tradition. Data collection techniques were observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the tradition of completing the Qur'an has several stages of activity, namely preparation activities, consisting of meetings to determine the schedule and place and preparation of equipment. Furthermore, the implementation activities consist of a parade, reading the Qur'an by students, and wearing samir and giving certificates. Finally, the closing activity consists of reading prayers and cleaning the activity environment. The activity of completing the Qur'an can bring out several characters, namely religious character, cooperative character, hard-working character, democratic character, independent character, creative character, responsible character, mutual respect character, tolerance character, and environmental care character. This study can be concluded that the tradition of completing the Qur'an has several characters that can be used as a reinforcement of character education in elementary school students.

**Keywords:** khatam qur'an tradition; character education; elementary school

### Abstrak

Tradisi khatam Al-Qur'an merupakan salah satu upacara adat yang dilaksanakan sebagai bentuk rasa syukur dan penghargaan kepada anak yang telah mampu membaca Al-Qur'an dan mengkhatamkannya. Dalam tradisi khatam Al-Qur'an terdapat banyak nilai-nilai karakter yang dapat diambil dan dijadikan media pendidikan karakter di sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui nilai-nilai karakter yang terkandung dalam tradisi khatam Al-Qur'an. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif deskriptif, yang dilaksanakan di SDN 14 Pekanbaru. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari 1 kepala sekolah, 1 guru Pendidikan Agama Islam, dan 6 siswa kelas VI yang telah mengikuti tradisi ini. Teknik pengumpulan data yaitu observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tradisi khatam Al-Qur'an memiliki beberapa tahapan kegiatan yaitu kegiatan persiapan, terdiri dari rapat untuk menentukan jadwal dan tempat serta persiapan perlengkapan. Selanjutnya kegiatan pelaksanaan terdiri dari pawai, pembacaan Al-Qur'an oleh siswa, serta pemakaian samir dan pemberian sertifikat. Terakhir kegiatan penutup terdiri dari pembacaan doa dan pembersihan lingkungan kegiatan. Kegiatan mengkhataamkan Al-Qur'an dapat memunculkan beberapa karakter yaitu karakter religius, karakter kerjasama, karakter pekerja keras, karakter demokratis, karakter mandiri, karakter kreatif, karakter bertanggung jawab, karakter saling menghargai, karakter toleransi, dan karakter peduli lingkungan. Penelitian ini dapat disimpulkan bahwa tradisi mengkhataamkan Al-Qur'an memiliki beberapa karakter yang dapat digunakan sebagai penguatan pendidikan karakter pada siswa sekolah dasar.

**Kata Kunci:** tradisi khatam al-qur'an; pendidikan karakter; sekolah dasar

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## Introduction

Character education is a fundamental aspect of human resource development in Indonesia. The national education curriculum has emphasized the importance of instilling character values such as religion, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and mutual cooperation since the primary education level. However, various studies show that the implementation of character education in primary schools still faces challenges, both in terms of pedagogical approaches and the integration of these values into students' daily practices (Handoko et al., 2024; Anggraini & Kusniarti, 2016). In this context, cultural and religious traditions living in Indonesian society can be a potential source of values to strengthen character education.

Education needs to bridge the gap between general knowledge and local wisdom (Sotero et al., 2020; Hariyono et al., 2023). Culture, which is the result of the learning process, is inseparable from human biological inheritance, but rather is knowledge passed down within a particular ethnic group (Putra, 2021). Diverse perceptions in a cultural context allow individuals to better understand and recognize their environment (Majumdar & Chatterjee, 2021), which in turn can enrich one's cultural literacy (Sakti et al., 2024; Mahrinasari et al., 2024). The local wisdom approach plays an important role as a mediator to bridge the gap between traditional cultural values, local knowledge, and contemporary challenges (Asmayawati et al., 2024). One of the cultural manifestations in Malay society is the tradition of khatam Al-Qur'an, a sacred ceremony as a sign of a child's success in completing the recitation of the Al-Qur'an. This tradition is not only a religious rite, but also loaded with character values such as seriousness, discipline, spirituality, and appreciation for the results of efforts.

In the context of basic education, the tradition of khatam Al-Qur'an can be an effective cultural-religious approach to instill character values in students. This tradition reflects the link between religious education, local culture, and the formation of students' personalities in a holistic manner. Children who follow this procession not only demonstrate the ability to read the Qur'an with the correct tajweed and makhraj (Tanjung et al., 2022), but also experience the process of internalizing values through habituation, role models, and appreciation from the surrounding environment. These values are latent, but consistently form positive habits and strengthen children's Islamic character.

Character refers to basic moral values such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect for self and others (Birhan et al., 2021). Casali et al (2024) added that character strengths help individuals overcome adversity, making them more resilient to negative effects, and better able to recover and interpret challenges positively. This plays an important role in forming a harmonious, cultured, and morally conscious society (Sakti et al., 2024). Character includes aspects of human relationships with God, self, others, nature, and the state, which are reflected in thoughts, attitudes, speech, and actions based on religious and social values. In the framework of cultural theory, character can be seen as the result of internalizing symbolic values that live in the tradition of society (Geertz, 1973). Meanwhile, in character education theory, approaches based on local social and cultural contexts are important strategies in building students' personalities (Lickona, 2015; Nucci et al., 2014).

However, research on the contribution of local traditions such as khatam Al-Qur'an to character education in primary schools is limited. The majority of studies focus more on formal character education programs without exploring the potential of cultural-religious traditions as a source of value. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by analyzing the character values contained in the khatam Al-Qur'an tradition at SDN 14 Pekanbaru and its implications for student character building. By exploring cultural-religious practices that have taken root in the

community, this study is expected to contribute to the development of a local wisdom-based character education model in elementary schools.

### **Research Methods**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to understand social and humanistic phenomena in depth, especially regarding the character values contained in the Khatam Al-Qur'an tradition. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate to explore the meanings, values, and perceptions that arise from the subjective experiences of students, teachers, and communities directly involved in the tradition. Qualitative research seeks to produce a comprehensive picture of a phenomenon by revealing in-depth views from informant sources in a natural context (Sugiyono, 2019). Meanwhile, descriptive methods allow researchers to describe in detail the events, activities, and socio-cultural contexts observed (Kornadi, 2019).

The participants in this study consisted of grade VI students who had participated in the Khatam Al-Qur'an tradition, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and principals at SDN 14 Pekanbaru. The selection of participants was carried out using purposive sampling technique, namely the selection of informants based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives. The number of participants was 1 principal, 2 religion teachers, and 6 students (3 boys and 3 girls) who were considered capable of providing in-depth information about their experiences in the tradition. This number was considered sufficient because the data obtained had reached saturation point, where the information collected had been repeated and no longer showed new findings.

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made directly during the implementation of the Khatam Al-Qur'an tradition, using a structured observation sheet that includes aspects of character values. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with a flexible but directed question guide. Meanwhile, documentation was conducted by collecting photos, videos, and supporting documents such as the implementation schedule, list of participants, and text of speeches or remarks in the event. All data collection instruments were developed based on character value indicators from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2018), and reviewed by experts to ensure suitability with the research objectives.

Data analysis was conducted using the analysis model from (Miles et al., 2014), which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the data reduction stage, researchers selected, simplified, and organized data from interviews, observations, and documentation into categories of relevant character values. Furthermore, the classified data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic matrices to facilitate interpretation. The final stage was inductive inference, namely by formulating meaningful findings based on patterns, trends, and relationships between data, and triangulating to test the validity of the data. Triangulation was done by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation to ensure consistency and credibility of information.

### **Result and Discussion**

The Khatam Qur'an tradition carried out at SDN 14 Pekanbaru is an annual routine activity that is full of spiritual, cultural, and character education meaning. Through this research, it was revealed that the activity is not only a thanksgiving event for students who have completed reading the Qur'an but also a strategic space to instill various character values in all students.

This activity is carried out in stages and in a structured manner, involving various parties ranging from teachers, students, and parents to the surrounding community. Each stage of the activity contains moral messages and values that contribute to the formation of students' personalities, both in terms of religiosity and social responsibility towards the environment.

The stages of implementing the Khatam Qur'an tradition at SDN 14 Pekanbaru can be explained as follows:

1. Preparation Activities

The preparation activities for the Khatam Qur'an tradition began with a meeting between teachers and students. The purpose of this meeting was to determine the schedule of implementation, the right location, and the equipment needed for the Khatam event. In each meeting, the teacher led the discussion and ensured that all aspects of the preparation were discussed well. Students were given the opportunity to express their opinions and suggestions regarding the schedule, place, and equipment so that they felt involved in the process. Through active student participation, it is hoped that the decisions taken can reflect the needs and desires of all parties. The meeting and discussion activities can be seen in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1.** Preparatory Meeting Activities

Based on Figure 1, the activity shown is the process of student deliberation in preparation for Khatam Qur'an activities at SDN 14 Pekanbaru. It can be seen that students sit in a circle and discuss with each other accompanied by the teacher. This activity shows that the deliberation process takes place in a democratic atmosphere. Each student was given the opportunity to express their opinions, refute, and make suggestions to the ideas that emerged. The teacher does not dominate the discussion but acts as a facilitator who encourages the active participation of all students.

This atmosphere reflects the cultivation of democratic values, tolerance, and mutual respect, because each student respects the opinions of his or her friends even though they are different. In addition, students learn about responsibility because they are given the mandate to carry out the tasks they choose themselves in the activity.

One teacher shared her observations of the changes in students' attitudes:

*"I see them becoming more caring, more cooperative. Usually there are those who like to wait to be told first, now many offer to help. This shows their responsibility is starting to grow."*

This quote shows that deliberation not only results in technical decisions in activities, but also becomes a real means of shaping students' personal responsibility, cooperation and initiative.

In addition to the teacher, one of the students also shared his experience:

*"During the discussion, it was the first time I dared to speak in front of my friends. I was nervous, but happy because my friends were listening. Now I am more confident when I am told to speak in class."*

The student's statement reflects the development of confident character, courage to express opinions, and mutual respect that grows through direct experience.

After the meeting stage, teachers and students together prepare equipment for the Khatam Qur'an event, such as egg flowers, pennants or manggar mayang parade, red eggs, and a stage for reading the Qur'an. This activity is carried out collaboratively between teachers and students, thus creating a positive atmosphere of cooperation. Each student plays an active role in preparing the equipment, which not only increases their involvement but also builds a sense of responsibility. The activity of making this equipment can be seen in Figure 2 below:



**Figure 2.** Making equipment for the tradition of completing the Qur'an

Based on Figure 2, it can be seen that students work in groups to prepare equipment for Khatam Qur'an activities. Each group has specific responsibilities, such as preparing egg flowers, parade flags, red eggs, and stage decorations. This activity shows that students are not only physically involved, but also emotionally and socially active, as they seem enthusiastic, compact, and help each other in completing the task.

Through this activity, students showed strong cooperation character values. They shared tasks, discussed strategies, and supported each other when facing obstacles. The value of creativity is also seen when students are asked to make decorations from simple materials but with aesthetic results. In addition, this activity shapes discipline, as students must follow the predetermined training schedule and division of tasks. The values of responsibility and independence also stand out, as students are required to complete tasks without being constantly directed by the teacher.

One student shared her experience:

*"I learned responsibility because I had to practice reading every day. I also learned cooperation when I made the equipment and joined the parade. And most importantly, I feel closer to God."*

This statement shows that the activity not only shapes social values such as cooperation and responsibility but also strengthens students' religious values. The feeling of closeness to God felt by students is an indicator that this activity touches the spiritual aspect deeply.

One of the teachers also emphasized the impact of this activity:

*"They are more disciplined, can complete tasks without much prompting. Those who used to be shy are now more courageous in taking roles. Some even offer creative ideas when decorating the stage."*

This quote from a teacher reinforces that preparation activities not only shape individual character, but also foster initiative, creativity and collaboration skills.

## 2. Implementation Activities

The implementation stages in the Khatam Qur'an tradition are the core of the entire series of activities. At this stage, there are three main activities carried out sequentially, namely: (a) a parade or procession around the school environment, (b) reading of the Qur'an by students, and (c) installing samir and giving certificates. These three activities not only function as a form of ceremony but also contain very strong character values, such as religiosity, discipline, hard work, appreciation for effort, and social solidarity.

### a. Parade

The implementation of the Khatam Qur'an tradition begins with a parade involving students who have completed reading the Qur'an, together with teachers and parents. This parade is not just a ceremony but a symbol of gratitude for the students' spiritual achievements and a form of appreciation for their efforts and perseverance. Wearing traditional clothes or the best Muslim clothing, the students line up neatly and walk enthusiastically, while teachers and parents accompany them by providing supervision and moral support.

This parade takes place around the school environment, presenting a lively but orderly atmosphere. Throughout the journey, the students chant prayers together, creating a touching religious nuance. On the other hand, the surrounding community also welcomes with enthusiasm and prays for the students, making this activity a means of education and a glue for social relations between the school and the surrounding community.

Through this activity, religious and cultural values are introduced directly to the community, especially to the younger generation. The parade activity is a form of actualization of the values of religiosity, togetherness, and hard work, while also building a sense of solidarity between students, their families, and their social environment. Students who participate feel proud and appreciated, which in turn will motivate them to continue learning and achieving.

In an interview, one of the teachers at SDN 14 Pekanbaru explained:

*"We always emphasize that this parade is not just walking together. This is a real form of gratitude to Allah and also motivation for children to be enthusiastic about completing the Qur'an."*

One of the participants also shared his experience:

*"During the parade I felt very proud. Everyone looked at us and congratulated us. I felt that my efforts to memorize and read the Qur'an all this time were truly appreciated."*

Thus, the parade in the Khatam Qur'an tradition not only celebrates achievements but also becomes a medium for the formation of students' character as a whole, strengthening spiritual enthusiasm, building self-confidence, and bringing religious values to life in a warm and happy atmosphere. Here is a picture of the students during the parade:





**Figure 3.** Procession before the Koran khatam tradition

Based on Figure 3, it can be seen that students follow the parade activities by marching neatly while carrying the parade flag. The line is led by students in the front row, followed by teachers and parents behind them. The parade route goes around the school neighborhood, creating a festive yet solemn atmosphere, accompanied by the chanting of prayers that echo harmoniously along the way.

The parade symbolizes a spiritual celebration of the students' success in completing the recitation of the Qur'an. This activity is not only an expression of joy, but also full of meaning in shaping religious character values. The chanting of prayers together creates a sense of gratitude and solemnity, strengthens students' spiritual awareness, and instills respect for religious teachings. This activity also raises the values of cooperation and concern for the social environment. Students are not only the perpetrators of the activity, but also part of the surrounding community who witness and support this activity.

b. Reading of the Qur'an by students.

After the lively but solemn parade, the Khatam Qur'an activity continued to the core of the event, namely the reading of the holy verses of the Qur'an by the students. This moment symbolizes the peak of the entire series of learning processes that they have gone through, an end point of long efforts, hard work, and perseverance in completing the reading of the Qur'an from beginning to end.

The activity was carried out in the school hall, which had been decorated with an Islamic and sacred nuance. Students who participated in Khatam Qur'an sat neatly, then took turns reading short surahs from the last juz, starting from Surah Ad-Dhuha to Surah An-Naas. A silent and solemn atmosphere enveloped the room. Each student read with *tartil*, paying attention to *tajwid* and maintaining accurate pronunciation. They did not only read with their voices but with their hearts to express their appreciation and gratitude for the blessings they had received.

The implementation of this activity is illustrated in Figure 4, which shows the atmosphere of the Al-Qur'an recitation room where students sit in an orderly manner and recite the holy verses with great solemnity. From the picture, it can be seen that students read attentively, follow the rules of *tajweed* correctly, and show a serious attitude in the reading process. The atmosphere of silence and solemnity emphasizes that this activity is carried out not just a formality, but as a form of respect for the holy book.

This activity reflects the character value of high responsibility. The students realize their obligation to read the Qur'an correctly and maintain its sanctity, both in terms of pronunciation and attitude when reading. Time discipline and independence are also seen in the readiness of

students to participate in activities without much direction.



**Figure 4.** Implementation of the tradition of completing the Qur'an

In an interview, one of the supervising teachers said:

*"We always teach children not only to read the Qur'an correctly but also to internalize it. They learn not to perform but to build closeness to Allah SWT. We want them to understand that the Qur'an lives in the heart, not just on the tongue."*

This moment also brought special emotion to the parents who were present. Not a few of them shed tears of pride, watching their children recite the holy verses fluently and with full appreciation. For parents, this is not just about memorization but about the values and hopes embedded for the future of their children.

One of the students also shared his experience:

*"At first I was very nervous, afraid of making mistakes. But I remembered my teacher's message, 'Read with your heart, not just with your voice.' When I started reading, I felt calm. It turned out to be smooth. I was pleased."*

This Qur'an reading activity was not only the end of the formal learning process but also opened a deeper spiritual path. From here, students learn to glorify the word of Allah, hold the responsibility as a Muslim, and make the Qur'an an inseparable part of life. This tradition not only commemorates an achievement but also instills strong roots of religious values in the hearts of students.

c. Wearing a samir and giving a certificate

As the culmination of a series of Khatam Al-Qur'an tradition activities, the procession of installing samir necklaces and handing over certificates to students who have successfully completed the reading of the Al-Qur'an as a whole. This activity is a form of real appreciation for the efforts, perseverance, and commitment of the students during the learning process until they reach the khatam stage.

In Figure 5, there is a solemn atmosphere in the school yard, where students are lined up neatly waiting for their names to be called. One by one, they came forward to receive the samir necklaces and certificates handed over by the principal, religious teachers and invited guests. The students' faces radiated pride, gratitude and happiness, while the parents were busy capturing this precious moment as a proud memory.



This activity contains various important character values. First, this award is a form of reinforcement of the value of hard work, as students are rewarded for their consistent efforts in completing the recitation of the Qur'an. Secondly, the submission of certificates also represents students' responsibility towards the religious duties that have been set. Third, the expressions of happiness and gratitude seen from the students reflect the value of religiosity and spiritual awareness, that their achievements are not only academic, but also spiritual.



**Figure 5.** Wearing the samir necklace and giving the certificate

This procession is not just a ceremony. It is a sign that the long and challenging learning process has been completed well. The Samir necklace worn is not only a symbol of graduation but also a symbol of honor for a child's spiritual and moral achievements in studying the words of Allah.

In an interview with the principal, he said:

*"We want to instill in children that completing the Qur'an is a great achievement. This is not just about completing the reading but about forming their morals, discipline, and love for the Qur'an. The certificate is a symbol, but the values they learn are much deeper."*

The atmosphere became full of emotion when the Samir necklace was worn around the students' necks, accompanied by the awarding of specially printed certificates as proof that they had completed the reading of the Qur'an. Applause, smiles, and even tears of joy accompanied the moment. Many students felt that this was one of their greatest achievements while in elementary school.

One of the students participating in Khatam Qur'an shared his experience:

*"It felt like a graduation. When my name was called and I was given a samir, I was very happy. I want to continue studying because I saw my parents were very proud."*

This activity not only strengthens students' self-confidence and motivation to continue studying but also instills important values such as hard work, appreciation for the process, and a spirit of achievement in the field of religion. As conveyed by Feblyna & Wirman (2020), awards have a positive influence in encouraging individuals to continue to improve their behavior and increase their efforts. Therefore, this procession is expected to be able to encourage other students to be more active in learning to read and memorize the Qur'an.

Through the installation of Samir and the awarding of this certificate, character values such as religiosity, discipline, hard work, and responsibility are increasingly embedded in students. They not only feel recognized but are also encouraged to make the Qur'an a guide to life and part of their spiritual journey in the future.

#### d. Closing Activities

After the entire series of Khatam Al-Quran tradition activities was completed, the event was closed with a joint prayer. This prayer was led by a religious teacher or local religious figure and followed solemnly by all participants, teachers, parents, and invited guests. The prayer that was said was not only an expression of gratitude for the smooth running of the activity but also contained the hope that the knowledge gained from reading the Qur'an would be a blessing and beneficial for the lives of the students. In the prayer, there was a request that the students who had completed the Qur'an would always be under the protection of Allah SWT, given the strength of faith and steadfastness in carrying out the teachings of Islam. Prayer is also a spiritual moment to strengthen the students' intentions so that they are able to become a generation that is not only ritually obedient but also able to spread benefits and be an inspiration to the surrounding environment.

After the prayer procession, the activity continued with real actions that reflected the character of social concern and responsibility, namely cleaning the school environment. The students and teachers worked together to collect trash, tidy up equipment, and clean the hall and schoolyard used for activities. Although simple, this activity carries an important message that responsibility does not stop after the event is over. In fact, this is where students are invited to internalize character values in real life, including a love of cleanliness and concern for the environment.

This cleaning activity is also an effective means of character education. As conveyed by Siskayanti & Chastanti (2022), schools have an important role in forming students who have a high concern for the environment. A clean and comfortable school environment will have a positive impact on students' enthusiasm for learning, creativity, and achievement. Character education instilled through activities like this involves various elements of education, from family to school to society, and will only be successful if supported by continuity and harmony in the educational environment.

Through this closing activity, students not only learn about the importance of spirituality through prayer but also foster a sense of social responsibility through real action. These two values (religious and caring for the environment) are proof that the Khatam Al-Qur'an tradition is not just a ceremonial activity but a comprehensive character-building process. From start to finish, students are invited to undergo meaningful experiences that shape them into individuals who are faithful, responsible, and care about others and their environment.

Other character values contained in the tradition of completing the Quran are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Character values in the Qur'an khatam tradition

No	Activity Stages	Sub-activities	Emerging Character Values
1	Preparation Activities	a. Deliberation to determine the schedule and place	– Democratic – Cooperation – Creative
		b. Making equipment (decorations, red eggs, manggar mayang, etc.)	– Responsibility – Independent – Mutual respect – Tolerance – Religious – Environmental care

2	Implementation Activities	a. Parade	–	Religious
		b. Quran reading	–	Discipline
		c. Pinning of samir and awarding of certificates	–	Hard work
3	Closing Activities	a. Joint prayer	–	Religious
		b. Environmental cleaning activities	–	Environmental care
			–	Cooperation

Table 1 has previously detailed the character values that appear at each stage of the activity. The following explanation outlines the meaning of each character value that has been identified in the implementation of the Khatam Qur'an tradition.

Democratic values are reflected in the deliberation to determine the schedule and location for the implementation of Khatam Qur'an involving students, teachers, and parents. This process teaches children to actively participate, respect the opinions of others, and seek joint decisions through open dialogue. In the context of education, student involvement in decision-making like this encourages the growth of a sense of ownership and responsibility for school activities. This tradition not only teaches religious values but also develops a democratic culture from an early age.

Cooperation is a fundamental character that appears in almost all series of activities. In the preparation stage, cooperation is seen in activities to decorate the place, make traditional equipment, and divide tasks. During the implementation and closing, cooperation is shown in coordination between students during the parade, reading the Qur'an in turns, and cleaning the environment. This shows that the success of the tradition cannot be separated from the collective spirit, where students learn to help each other, contribute, and appreciate teamwork.

The Khatam Qur'an tradition also opens up space for students to channel their creativity, especially in the visual and artistic aspects. They participate in making and arranging equipment such as red eggs, manggar mayang, and typical event decorations. This activity stimulates imagination, trains motor skills, and develops a sense of aesthetics that is in line with local cultural values. The creativity honed in this tradition becomes an important provision for the development of students' personalities and self-expression.

Responsibility is a character value that is honed naturally through this activity. Students who participate in parades, read the Qur'an, or serve on committees learn to complete tasks with sincerity and commitment. They are required to prepare themselves independently, arrive on time, and maintain manners in each session. This value of responsibility teaches the importance of fulfilling obligations as part of the process of achieving spirituality and moral maturity.

Students' direct involvement in various aspects of activities trains their independence. They are given the trust to prepare themselves without having to always be guided intensively by teachers or parents. From preparing readings and maintaining costumes to preparing decorations—all are done with awareness and their own efforts. This experience strengthens students' self-confidence and ability to manage personal tasks well.

This tradition is also an important vehicle for instilling the value of mutual respect. Students learn to respect their friends who perform, give congratulations, and listen carefully when others read the Qur'an. The attitude of mutual respect is also reflected in the role of teachers and parents who show appreciation for the efforts of children. This strengthens social relationships and forms ethical manners in social interactions.

Tolerance in this context is not only related to religious differences but more to differences in abilities and backgrounds of students. They are taught not to mock friends who are not yet

fluent in reading and to appreciate every progress achieved. This attitude of mutual acceptance strengthens a positive and supportive learning climate, where each individual is valued in their diversity.

Religious values are the soul of the entire series of activities. Starting from the process of practicing reading the Qur'an, carrying out the parade while reciting prayers, and reading surahs with correct tajwid to the closing prayer—all of which strengthen students' spirituality. They learn to draw closer to God, internalize the meaning of holy verses, and understand that spiritual achievement has a very high value in life. Religious values formed through this tradition become a solid moral foundation for the development of noble morals.

At the closing stage, students together clean the school area after the activity is finished. This activity teaches that maintaining cleanliness is part of faith. The value of caring for the environment is developed through direct action, thus instilling an awareness that responsibility for the environment is an integral part of religious practice. This attitude strengthens the understanding that spirituality is not only manifested through worship but also through everyday life attitudes.

Discipline is highly emphasized during the implementation of the tradition. Children are trained to be on time, follow the flow of activities in an orderly manner, and maintain good manners during the event. In reading the Qur'an, they must obey the rules of reading, tartil, and not rush. Consistent practice before the activity is also a form of discipline education that forms perseverance and sincerity in undergoing the learning process.

Success in completing the Qur'an is the result of a long process that involves hard work, perseverance, and repeated practice. Children are encouraged to train themselves to read correctly, memorize the surah, and understand the contents of the reading. When they finally receive the samir and certificate, it is not just a symbol of achievement but an acknowledgment of the long efforts they have made. This tradition clearly teaches that success is not achieved instantly, but through hard work and high commitment.

Cultural values mean a general concept that is organized and influences the behavior of a particular society, which is related to the correlation between humans and the environment, knowledge, law, and customs and is passed down from generation to generation (Nugraha & Hasanah, 2021). According to Rosyadi, cultural values are something that is considered good and valuable by individuals and ethnic groups of other ethnic groups because cultural values limit and characterize a society and culture (Marhadi & Erlisnawati, 2017). The cultural values that are targeted to be instilled through character education in schools include religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the homeland, respect for achievement, friendliness, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, care for society, and responsibility (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2018 concerning Strengthening Character Education in Educational Units) (Nugraha & Hasanah, 2021).

Character building is an important part of today's education world. Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states that the goal of national education is to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the life of the nation (Setiowati, 2020). Character values cannot be formed quickly but must go through a long, careful, and systematic process. According to Kohlberg and Marlene in Kallang (2019), there are four stages of character education that need to be carried out, namely: Habituation as the beginning of the development of children's character. Understanding and reasoning about the values of behavior and character of

students/children. Application of various behaviors and actions in everyday reality. Meaning, which is a stage of reflection through an assessment of all attitudes and behaviors that they have understood and done and how their impact and benefits are in life, both for themselves and others.

The tradition of Khatam Qur'an has a significant influence on students in increasing their interest in reading the Qur'an. In addition, this tradition also functions as a means of broadcasting the Islamic religion. The activity of Khatam Qur'an leaves a deep impression on the environment and society because the religious messages conveyed during the ceremony provide real and relevant concepts. Even though the event is over, its impact is still felt, encouraging people to reflect on the good and bad in their lives (Rahman et al., 2023). The values contained in the tradition of Khatam Qur'an are recognized and appreciated by the local community, serving as a reference in daily behavior. Khatam Qur'an is a form of expression of obedience to Allah SWT, which teaches students about the importance of togetherness and support in the context of family and society. Through this tradition, students learn to be grateful for the blessings given by Allah SWT, especially the blessings of knowledge and the opportunity to study the Qur'an. The preparation and implementation of the Qur'an completion event teaches the values of tolerance and cooperation, where students must collaborate with others to achieve common goals. In addition, this tradition also allows students to understand and preserve local culture, making the completion of the Qur'an a part of the cultural identity of the Riau Malays.

The tradition of Khatam Qur'an has a significant role in strengthening character education for elementary school students because it reflects various character values that develop during the implementation process. Religious character values are the most prominent in this tradition. Research by Apriati et al (2022) shows that during the implementation of Khatam Qur'an religious values such as worship, gratitude, love for God Almighty, and the Prophet Muhammad SAW (faith and piety), alms, discipline, and role models are very apparent. These values are rooted in Islamic teachings and serve to bring students closer to Allah SWT while also forming positive character in their daily lives.

Religious character in the context of Islamic education is defined as behavior and morals that are in accordance with the teachings taught in education (Sholikhah, 2021). Students who have a religious character base all aspects of their lives on the values of the religion they adhere to. In the tradition of Khatam Qur'an these religious character values can be observed through various activities, such as processions accompanied by prayers, reading of the Qur'an by students, and reading of prayers. In these moments, students demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that reflect the religious values taught in Islamic education.

In addition to religious characters, the tradition of Khatam Qur'an at SDN 14 Pekanbaru also highlights other important character values, namely cooperation, hard work, democracy, independence, creativity, responsibility, mutual respect, tolerance, and caring for the environment. These values are manifested in three main stages of the tradition of completing the Qur'an: preparation, implementation, and closing.

1. Preparation Stage In this stage, students collaborate with teachers to prepare event equipment. This activity encourages student cooperation, responsibility, and creativity because they must plan and execute the tasks given well.
2. Implementation Stage During the implementation, values such as hard work and mutual respect emerge when students carry out the procession and read the Qur'an. The atmosphere of togetherness and support between students, teachers, and parents strengthens the sense of tolerance and togetherness.



3. Closing Stage At this stage, the garlanding and awarding of certificates to students provide awards for their efforts. This activity not only instills a sense of gratitude and appreciation but also strengthens democratic values by involving all parties in the award process.

Thus, the tradition of Khatam Qur'an not only strengthens religious values but also successfully instills various other positive character values in students. This tradition helps students develop into better individuals in spiritual, social, and cultural contexts. Through various activities in this tradition, students learn the importance of cooperation, responsibility, and tolerance and internalize the values of goodness that will guide them in their daily lives. In addition, the experience enriches students' understanding of their cultural identity and increases their sense of gratitude for the blessings given.

### Conclusion

The Khatam Qur'an tradition is not just a religious ceremony, but a character education process that is rich in meaning and value. Through three main stages: preparation, implementation, and closing. This activity shapes students' character concretely. In the preparation stage, students learn the value of responsibility and independence when following the training schedule and making equipment such as red eggs and manggar mayang decorations with their parents. At the implementation stage, the values of religiosity, discipline, and hard work are seen when students take part in the parade, read the holy verses with tartil, and maintain solemnity. Meanwhile, at the closing stage, when they receive the samir and certificate, the values of self-appreciation, gratitude, and the spirit of achievement grow strong. This tradition strengthens social engagement and the value of mutual cooperation between students, teachers and the community, and shows that local culture can serve as a vehicle for character education that is relevant and contextual. This is in line with previous studies both in Indonesia and other countries such as Malaysia and Brunei which show that local religious traditions can be an effective strategy in instilling moral and spiritual values in students from an early age. Thus, the Khatam Qur'an tradition is a strategic medium that integrates cultural heritage with character education as a whole.

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