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## Spiritual Learning Strategy in Forming Students' Character in State Elementary Schools (SDN) Indragiri Hilir District

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze spiritual learning strategies in shaping students' characters in Public Elementary Schools (SDN) in Indragiri Hilir Regency. A qualitative approach is used to explore the effectiveness of learning methods that integrate spiritual values into the curriculum. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of this strategy is able to increase students' spiritual awareness, religious behavior, and moral values. Supporting factors include the active role of teachers, routine religious activities, and parental involvement. However, challenges such as limited resources and diverse student backgrounds are obstacles that need to be overcome. This study concludes that collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to creating an educational ecosystem that supports the formation of students' characters holistically.

**Keyword:** Spiritual Learning Strategies, Student Character, Moral And Spiritual Values

### INTRODUCTION

Through the observations made, there are still problems with the character of students at the State Elementary School of Indragiri Hilir Regency, it does not mean that overall students have low character, but through this observation there are still students who are low in their character. The low character of students is often influenced by various factors, including parents who still do not provide moral guidance and character values to their children so that it can make students less understand the importance of good character, such as discipline, responsibility, and empathy (Rahman & Mahbubi, 2024).

The negative influence of technology and social media has exposed many students to content on social media or the internet that is not educational and even damages their character. Coupled with the lack of control and supervision, because without adequate supervision, students tend to spend a lot of time with digital devices that do not provide positive moral values. Furthermore, the environment of peers who have bad behavior can influence students to do negative things. Another factor that also attracts attention is low self-understanding, meaning that students who experience an identity crisis or do not understand who they are tend to be confused in building their own character (Purwadhi, 2019). The low character of students is a complex phenomenon that requires active roles from various parties,

including parents, schools, communities, and the government to overcome it. Joint efforts in providing consistent and comprehensive character education can help reduce this problem (Dewi & Sudarsana, 2018).

In the past, present and future, education will always experience development and change along with the development of the times, both social, cultural, and the development of science and technology. Education as a complex activity requires handling to improve its quality, both in a comprehensive manner and in certain components only (Ndoa & Hulu, 2023). On the impact of social developments on education, such as changes in societal values, job demands, and the evolution of social structures. Education can adapt to meet the changing needs of society. Viewed from the cultural aspect can involve understanding how cultural values, norms, and traditions influence the education system. This can include efforts to preserve and integrate cultural heritage into the curriculum or education policy. On the development of science and technology relates to how education uses it. Integration of technology into learning, research, and educational administration may be a focus, as well as how innovations in science and technology can change teaching and learning methods (Latif, 2020).

Science and technology as the main drivers of change are currently experiencing extraordinary progress and development, especially in relation to information and communication technology (Nurhayati et al., 2022). The influence of the rapid development of science and technology has positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is the increasing openness and spread of information throughout the world, penetrating the boundaries of space and time. The negative impact is the occurrence of changes in values, rules and morals of life that are contrary to those that already apply. People's lives continue to experience changes as a result of advances in science and technology, including education (Angga et al., 2022). It is necessary to anticipate these changes to prepare human resources who are able to compete in the wider community. Education is a process of human maturity and personal formation that is very important in human life that lasts throughout life (Suhaida & Syarifah, 2019).

Education in the family is an important aspect in shaping a person's behavior. Generally, education in the family is carried out by instilling religious values, ethics that include morals, ways, behavior that must be done in everyday life (Nurhayati et al., 2024). Family education is important in shaping a person's behavior. Usually, family education is carried out by conveying religious and ethical values, including morals and behavioral norms that must be carried out in everyday life. Thus, the family plays a significant role in shaping the character and behavior of individuals through the application of moral and ethical values in the context of everyday life. So that students can prepare themselves to interact well in society (Nurhayati, 2024).

Education consists of several components, namely students, teachers, and curriculum. The value of monotheism should be reflected in each of these components (Nurhayati & Rosadi, 2022). The value of monotheism must color the personality of students and teachers as well as the interaction or communication between the two. Teachers should appear as individuals who believe in monotheism, which is reflected in their behavior, speech, thoughts, and feelings. Everything must be colored by monotheism, as seen in the personalities of the prophets from Adam AS to Muhammad SAW. Likewise, students; they should be seen as a community seeking the values of monotheism. So all learning activities and interactions between teachers and students must not conflict with the nuances of monotheism.

One of the important factors in building the quality of education is the quality of educators in designing and implementing learning. The new paradigm of education requires educators to play a role not only in transferring knowledge to students or simply memorizing, but also as facilitators, learning designers, mediators, and even as managers in the classroom.

Students are expected not only to memorize, understand, and master the contents of learning, but also to be able to apply, analyze, evaluate, and even create something that is needed in the real world (Halawa & Mulyanti, 2023).

Teachers do not only play a role in teaching in formal education, but more than that, teachers are all those who have the authority to be responsible for developing students and providing individual or class guidance at school and outside of school (Nurhayati et al., 2022). Considering the enormous responsibility that is the responsibility of a teacher, a teacher must be able to realize that he/she is an educator who works as a field worker because he/she directly carries out education and provides teaching to students and teachers as the spearhead of the success of education at present or in the future.

Character education is one of the main focuses in the Indonesian education system, especially at the elementary school level. In the era of globalization, challenges to moral and spiritual values are increasing, so an effective approach is needed to shape students' character (Khusnia, 2023). Spiritual learning strategies offer solutions by integrating religious and moral values into the learning process. Indragiri Hilir Regency, which has cultural and religious diversity, is an ideal place to implement this strategy. By involving teachers, parents, and the community, spiritual learning is expected to be able to create a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also spiritually resilient and has noble morals. However, the implementation of this strategy faces various challenges, such as limited resources and diverse student backgrounds. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of spiritual learning strategies in shaping student character at SDN Indragiri Hilir Regency.

## METHOD

This type of research includes field research with a qualitative approach (Arikunto, 2014). In the implementation of field research, observations, documentation and interviews are carried out. Qualitative research has various meanings. One of them is according to Kontjaraningrat, who states that qualitative research is research in the field of humanity with activities based on scientific discipline to collect, explain, analyze, and interpret facts, as well as the relationships between natural facts, society, and human behavior to find new knowledge (Koentjaraningrat, 1997). Meanwhile, Bogdan and Taylor say that qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from informants and observed behavior (Safarudin et al., 2023).

The place and location of this research is at the State Elementary School of Indragiri Hilir Regency-Riau. In qualitative research that focuses on spiritual learning strategies (Spiritual Learning) in shaping student character, the author chooses several relevant informants to gain comprehensive insights. Research informants can include: Principals, and Teachers.

The subject of this study is the Learning Strategy (*Spiritual Learning*) in Forming Student Character. The object of this study is the State Elementary Schools of Indragiri Hilir Regency. The population in this study consists of all State Elementary Schools in Indragiri Hilir Regency, Riau Province, totaling 463, while the number of Private Elementary Schools is 61. In addition, the population also includes all teachers and principals who teach and lead in these schools. This population was chosen to get a comprehensive picture. The number of State Elementary School Teachers in Indragiri Hilir Regency is 4,779 people. The number of principals is 524. While the number of students is 66,956 people. Because the population is very large, the author took a sample of state schools based on a regional map with each region 1 Elementary School, so the author took 4 State Elementary Schools. There are two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data.

Data collection techniques in this qualitative research are observation, interviews and documentation (Sugiyono, 2017). Data analysis techniques are carried out by identifying,

interpreting, and organizing data thematically. Qualitative data analysis requires precision and openness to see the themes that emerge in depth (Gultom & NABABAN, 2021). It is also important to maintain data integrity and transparency of the analysis process so that research results can be relied upon.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of spiritual learning in character formation of students in Public Elementary Schools of Indragiri Hilir Regency so far.**

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of Elementary School 012 Teluk Kelasa regarding learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out at the school, the learning program related to spiritual learning carried out at the school based on the results of the author's interview with teachers can be explained that the school does not have a special program for spiritual learning.

The teacher said that the school does not have a special program for spiritual learning. However, several routine activities such as yasinan every Friday morning, kultum, and reading of sholawat have become part of the habit. This activity is carried out to instill spiritual values in students, although it is not directly included in the formal program or curriculum. The advantage of this approach lies in the ease of implementation. Activities such as yasinan and sholawat are simple to implement without requiring a lot of resources, and provide benefits in building religious habits and a consistent spiritual atmosphere. This can help students to recognize and practice religious values in their daily lives.

However, this approach has weaknesses because of its tendency to be routine without the support of planned or in-depth concepts. These activities risk becoming mechanical activities without providing significant impact on students' broader spiritual understanding. The absence of a structured program also makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of spiritual learning and its integration with moral values and daily life. As a solution, schools can design a more integrated and planned spiritual learning program. This program can include activities that not only emphasize religious aspects, but also universal values such as empathy, compassion, and self-reflection (Liswandari, 2022). For example, schools can include value discussions in religious studies, hold community service activities, or involve students in meditation and contemplation activities. In addition, special training for teachers to teach spiritual aspects holistically is also needed so that this learning is more meaningful and impactful. Thus, spiritual learning is not only limited to habituation, but becomes an integral part of the broader educational process.

In addition, schools can develop extracurricular programs that support spiritual values, such as community service activities, social service, or spiritual training camps. These programs provide students with opportunities to practice values such as empathy, caring, and compassion in real contexts. On the other hand, training for teachers is also important to improve their understanding of holistic spiritual approaches, so that they can deliver this material in a relevant and interesting way. With these steps, spiritual learning in schools can move from being merely routine to a more focused, in-depth program that has a long-term impact on students' character development. This approach not only instills religious values, but also helps students understand and apply spiritual principles in their lives as a whole.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of State Elementary School 001 Tembilahan City about learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out in schools, the author can explain that learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out in schools can be explained that the program is carried out, for example learning to reflect on the creation of Allah SWT in the material section on faith in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons. Learning programs that focus on the spiritual dimension in this school, especially in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects, aim to shape students' character and deeper understanding of the aspects of divinity and the diversity of

religious teachings. One example of the application of a learning program related to spirituality is the material on faith that invites students to reflect on the creation of Allah SWT. This material does not only convey basic concepts about faith, but also invites students to reflect on the universe created by Allah, which in turn helps them to realize the greatness of God. Learning that leads to spiritual understanding is more than just providing theoretical information. This process involves a deeper approach, where students are invited to absorb and reflect on every creation around them as a form of sign of God's greatness. In this case, the learning program at this school not only provides academic knowledge about religion, but also fosters a sense of piety and appreciation for the universe as God's creation that must be protected and maintained.

Therefore, it can be concluded that spiritual learning implemented in this school, especially in the material of faith, does provide an answer to the goal of developing students' spiritual awareness. This learning serves not only to deepen religious knowledge, but also to strengthen students' relationship with God through understanding and appreciation of His creation. With this approach, the learning program in this school can be considered successful in responding to the need for spiritual-based learning, which is more than just cognitive education, but also forms the character and spiritual depth of students.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of Elementary School 010 Teluk Pinang regarding learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out in schools, that the learning program related to spiritual learning carried out in schools shows that the program exists, but is not yet optimal. Spiritual learning in this elementary school is for the educational process based on students' needs to believe in and be pious to Allah SWT. So it can be concluded that the teacher's answer is that the teacher said that the spiritual learning program already exists and is part of the educational process in schools. The main focus is to meet students' needs to believe in and be pious to Allah SWT. This shows that the school has included the spiritual dimension into its curriculum or learning activities. The teacher wants to emphasize that the aspects of faith and piety are important foundations in the formation of students' character from an early age.

However, from the answer, it is implied that the implementation of the program is not optimal. This can be interpreted that even though there is a spiritual learning program, its effectiveness has not achieved the desired results. There is potential for further development so that this program really has an impact on student character. Notes regarding the program not being optimal when the teacher mentions that the program is not optimal, this indicates that there are obstacles or aspects that still need to be improved. The following are some possible causes of the program not being optimal, including the concept of faith and piety is often conveyed abstractly, making it difficult for elementary school students who are still at the stage of concrete thinking to understand. Learning methods may not be varied and creative enough, so students are less enthusiastic or do not understand the spiritual meaning in depth. Spiritual learning may still stand alone, not integrated with other subjects or daily activities. As a result, spiritual values are only understood as part of religious lessons, not as principles of life.

The program may lack intensive support from teachers, especially in helping students apply spiritual values in everyday life. Evaluation of the program's success may also not be carried out routinely, making it difficult to measure its real impact on student character. The school environment may not be fully supportive, for example the lack of interesting spiritual activities, facilities such as prayer rooms, or extracurricular programs based on religious values. Support from parents and the community may also not be optimal, so that the spiritual values taught in schools are not in line with what happens outside of school.

Optimization can be done by improving teaching methods, integration with other subjects, and intensive mentoring so that spiritual values truly become part of students' characters. More creative and contextual programs can also increase their effectiveness so

that students not only understand spiritual concepts, but also apply them in everyday life. Furthermore, it can also be done through visualization and practice, namely using aids such as videos, images, or direct activities (eg congregational prayer, sharing with others) to help students understand spiritual concepts. Integrate spiritual values into all subjects, such as teaching honesty in mathematics or protecting the environment in science, so that students see the relevance of spirituality in real life. This also requires supporting activities, one of which is by holding daily or weekly programs, such as morning sermons, religious studies, or joint reflections, to instill spiritual habits repeatedly. Involve parents and the community through activities such as spiritual-based parenting classes or student social actions. Furthermore, schools also need to conduct evaluations and mentoring by conducting routine evaluations of program implementation to determine obstacles and successes. Teachers need to be role models in demonstrating spiritual values, because students tend to learn from the behavior they observe.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of State Elementary School 012 UPT VII Sapta Mulya Jaya about learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out in schools, that learning programs related to spiritual learning carried out in schools indicate that the program exists, but is only programmed in Islamic Religious Education learning. The teacher said that the spiritual learning program in the State Elementary School does exist, but is only integrated in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This means that spiritual values are considered an exclusive part of religious education only, so they are less integrated into other subjects or school activities as a whole. This answer indicates two important things: first, there is an effort by the school to present spiritual education. Second, the approach is still limited to certain subjects, so it is possible that spiritual values have not fully touched various aspects of students' lives.

Spiritual learning that only focuses on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) tends to be perceived by students as just lesson material, not life principles that are applied in all aspects of life (Haiqal & Amiruddin, 2024). As a result, spiritual values may be considered less relevant outside the classroom. Students may feel that spirituality is only related to the religious aspect, without any connection to everyday behavior. The lack of internalization of spiritual values in other subjects, for example, subjects such as science, mathematics, or art should also be a place to instill spiritual values. For example: teaching gratitude through science lessons about the wonders of nature or the importance of honesty when working on math problems. By limiting it to Islamic Religious Education (PAI), this opportunity is missed. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects usually only get a limited time allocation in a week. This makes the space for spiritual learning inadequate compared to the needs of students to build character consistently.

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The challenges that will arise occur if this program is only in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning where spirituality is separated from holistic learning. In fact, spiritual education is ideally inherent in every teaching and learning activity in schools. Teachers who teach non-PAI subjects may feel no obligation to integrate spiritual values into their teaching. This makes the spiritual program lose the opportunity to be strengthened by all

teaching staff. It can also be done by increasing Non-Curricular activities such as activities such as social action, humanitarian programs, and competitions based on religious values can strengthen spiritual learning outside of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). For example, activities such as sharing food with the underprivileged can provide students with direct experience of the values of kindness and caring. Next, by empowering teachers. Non-PAI teachers need to be involved in the implementation of spiritual learning so that religious and moral values can spread to all aspects of learning. Training for all teachers on the importance of spirituality in shaping student character.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers at Elementary School 012 Teluk Kelasa regarding the objectives of spiritual learning carried out in schools, the objectives of spiritual learning carried out in schools are so that students can develop deeper religion, practice good habits. The teacher's answer at this Elementary School regarding the objectives of spiritual learning reflects a focus on religious development and the formation of good habits in students. According to him, spiritual learning aims for students to be able to deepen their religion and at the same time train them to practice positive behavior in everyday life. This school has advantages, namely describing concrete goals that can be easily understood. Efforts to help students deepen their religion are in line with the role of education in forming character based on moral and spiritual values. In addition, the emphasis on training good habits reflects the intention to have a direct impact on student behavior, both in the school environment and outside.

However, there are weaknesses that need to be considered. This answer feels narrow because it only emphasizes two aspects of religious deepening and good habits without covering the broader spiritual dimension. Spiritual learning is not only related to religion, but also involves the development of self-awareness, empathy, self-control, and harmonious relationships with fellow human beings and the environment. In addition, it is not explained how this religious deepening and good habit training are measured or realized in daily practice at school. As a solution, broader spiritual learning goals can be formulated by emphasizing the development of students' personality aspects holistically. This approach not only focuses on religious deepening and good habit training, but also includes other aspects such as self-awareness, social relationships, emotional balance, and responsibility towards the environment. To support the achievement of this goal, schools can create an environment that allows students to internalize spiritual values through daily activities.

For example, learning spiritual values can be integrated into the subject in a relevant and contextual way. Teachers can relate lessons to real-life examples that show how these values are applied in life. In addition, reflective activities such as sharing experiences, moral discussions, and moments of reflection can help students understand more deeply the meaning of spirituality in their lives. Schools can also provide activities outside the classroom that encourage students to practice values such as caring and empathy. For example, social activities such as community service or environmental campaigns can be a means to connect the spiritual dimension with real actions. In this way, students not only learn about spiritual values, but also see their impact in their daily lives.

Teacher training is also an important part of this solution. Teachers need to have a deep understanding of an inclusive spiritual approach, so that they can be effective role models and facilitators. In this way, spiritual learning can run in a focused manner and have a broad positive impact, both on the development of student character and on the life of the school community as a whole. With this approach, the main goal of spiritual learning is to foster a sense of closeness, gratitude, and awareness of God's presence in every aspect of life. Not only providing religious knowledge, this learning aims to strengthen students' faith and piety, and guide them to live a life in harmony with religious values.

## **Obstacles to the implementation of Spiritual Learning in Public Elementary Schools in Indragiri Hilir Regency**

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers at Elementary School 012 Teluk Kelasa regarding the main challenges faced in teaching spiritual learning to students, the author can explain that the main challenge is that there are still some students who lack curiosity, which causes them to be slow to understand it. The teacher's answer highlights one of the fundamental challenges in the world of education, namely the lack of curiosity among students, which has a direct impact on the speed and effectiveness of their understanding of the material being taught. This statement has a deeper meaning related to the psychological and pedagogical factors that influence the teaching and learning process. Curiosity is one of the key elements in effective learning. Students who have an intrinsic drive to explore and understand a concept tend to be quicker in capturing and processing information. Conversely, if students do not have enough curiosity, they tend to be passive in receiving the learning material. This can cause them to have difficulty understanding the concepts being taught because they are less motivated to ask questions, dig deeper, or look for connections between the material being studied and everyday life.

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On the other hand, a less supportive learning environment can also exacerbate this problem. If the teaching method used is not interesting or interactive enough, students can lose interest in exploring further. Learning that is too one-way, such as a monotonous lecture method without involving active student participation, can make them feel bored and less motivated to ask questions or explore further. In addition, the family and social environment also play an important role in fostering curiosity. If students are not accustomed to the culture of asking questions or do not get support from their parents in exploring science, they may grow up with a passive attitude towards learning. The impact of this lack of curiosity is certainly very significant on students' academic development. The process of understanding

becomes slower because they do not actively seek out or try to understand more complex concepts. They may only memorize without really understanding the meaning behind the information they learn. This can have an impact on their difficulty in applying the knowledge gained in real situations, because their understanding is not deep and conceptual, but only superficial.

Therefore, it is important for educators to find strategies that can increase students' curiosity in the learning process. Teachers can use more interesting teaching methods, such as project-based learning, interactive discussions, or hands-on experiments that allow students to be actively involved. In addition, providing relevant challenges and motivating students to think critically and solve problems can also help them develop a higher sense of curiosity. By fostering a supportive learning environment, both in and outside the classroom, it is hoped that students can be more encouraged to have a high curiosity. This attitude will not only accelerate their understanding of the subject matter, but will also shape the character of lifelong learners who are ready to face challenges in the future.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of State Elementary School 001 Tembilihan City about the main challenges faced in teaching spiritual learning to students, the challenge faced is the lack of student learning motivation so that a fun spiritual learning strategy is needed. In an interview with a teacher regarding the main challenges in teaching spiritual learning to students, it was revealed that the lack of learning motivation was the main obstacle. The teacher revealed that many students tend to be less enthusiastic in participating in spiritual learning, which can be caused by various factors, such as the social environment, technological developments, and a lack of understanding of the importance of spiritual values in everyday life. Therefore, a learning strategy is needed that can attract students' interest so that they are more involved in the learning process. A fun approach is one solution that is considered effective, because it can create a more interactive and less boring learning atmosphere. Teachers try to present more creative learning methods, such as the use of inspirational stories, educational games, group discussions, and the use of digital media that are closer to the world of students today. With the right strategy, it is hoped that students can be more motivated to understand and practice spiritual values in their lives. This shows that in teaching spiritual learning, a teacher is not only required to provide theoretical material, but must also be able to create a learning atmosphere that is fun and relevant to the world of students.

Based on the results of the author's interview with teachers of Elementary School 010 Teluk Pinang regarding the main challenges faced in teaching spiritual learning to students, the main challenge is that there are still students who are not good at reading the Qur'an, making it difficult to introduce reading or memorization properly. The results of the interview with one of the teachers showed significant challenges in the spiritual learning process, especially in the context of introducing reading and memorization of the Qur'an. The main challenge faced is the students' unequal ability in reading the Qur'an. The teacher revealed that there are still a number of students who are not fluent or even unable to read the Qur'an properly and correctly. This is an obstacle in itself because spiritual learning in the context of Islam is closely related to the ability to read the verses of the Qur'an, both in daily reading activities, memorization, and in understanding its meaning more deeply.

This condition has various implications in the implementation of learning. First, teachers must spend more time to provide basic guidance on reading the Qur'an to students who are not yet able, even though the learning time available is limited. On the other hand, students who are already fluent in reading need to be challenged and given advanced materials so that they do not get bored. This requires teachers to divide their attention and learning strategies at one time, which is certainly not easy to do optimally. In addition, this limitation also has an impact on the effectiveness of the process of introducing and memorizing the verses of the Qur'an. Students who are not yet able to read will certainly have

difficulty memorizing, because memorization in spiritual learning does not only emphasize oral memory, but also understanding the reading and correct pronunciation. Teachers must also work harder to ensure that each student continues to get a meaningful spiritual experience, even though their ability backgrounds are different. Meanwhile, in the aspect of learning the Qur'an, a more personal and gradual approach is needed. Teachers can group students based on their ability level and provide more intensive guidance for those who are still experiencing difficulties. The talaqqi method, where students read directly in front of the teacher and receive direct correction, can be an effective solution. In addition, instilling the habit of reading the Qur'an every day, both at school and at home, will help students become more accustomed and gradually increase their fluency.

With the right combination of strategies and support from various parties, it is hoped that the difficulties faced by students in understanding the subject matter, increasing concentration, and reading the Qur'an well can be overcome slowly but surely. This will not only improve the quality of learning, but also help students develop skills and a deeper understanding in their spiritual and academic fields. However, some students still show enthusiasm for spiritual learning, especially when teachers are able to present a learning atmosphere that is fun, interactive, and relevant to their lives. This enthusiasm is an important asset in improving understanding and internalization of spiritual values. Therefore, a creative, participatory, and real-experience-based approach is needed so that spiritual learning can run more effectively, touch students' hearts, and have a positive impact on the formation of their character. By understanding these various obstacles, it is hoped that teachers and schools can develop adaptive and innovative learning strategies so that spiritual values are not only taught as theory, but are truly lived and practiced by students in everyday life.

### **Spiritual learning strategies in character formation of students in Public Elementary Schools of Indragiri Hilir Regency**

Based on the results of the author's interview with the Principal of Elementary School 012 Teluk Kelasa, the basis of the policy used in the spiritual learning strategy is that the Policy Basis used in the spiritual learning strategy is Government Regulation, curriculum, school needs, school vision and mission. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 103 of 2014 Concerning Learning in Elementary and Secondary Education (Tanjung, 2024). First of all, the basis of the policy used is closely related to Government Regulation. This policy reflects an effort to ensure that the spiritual learning strategies implemented in schools are in line with the regulations and policies set by the government. In this case, the regulations in question include various regulations related to national education, both related to the integration of spiritual values in the education curriculum and the application of learning principles that support the development of students' character and morals.

In addition, the curriculum used is also one of the important policy bases. This curriculum is not only designed to achieve students' academic competencies, but also integrates spiritual values that aim to shape students' better personalities and characters. The principal stated that the existing curriculum provides space for schools to insert spiritual learning in various subjects, with the aim of increasing the depth of students' understanding of more universal life values, such as honesty, peace, and compassion. Through this curriculum, it is hoped that students will not only be intellectually intelligent, but also have a spiritual depth that can guide them in facing life's challenges.

School needs are also another important basis in formulating this policy. Each school, according to the principal, has different dynamics and characteristics, so spiritual learning strategies need to be adjusted to the specific needs of the school. For example, in this elementary school, there is special attention to the development of more holistic student character, which not only prioritizes cognitive aspects, but also their emotional and spiritual

aspects. In this context, the policies implemented aim to create an environment that supports students' spiritual development, where they are not only equipped with knowledge, but also with noble values that lead to the formation of good character.

The school's vision and mission are also the main foundation in formulating this policy. The vision and mission emphasize the importance of education that focuses not only on academic intelligence, but also on the formation of strong and moral character. The principal emphasized that the spiritual learning strategy in this school aims to foster a sense of empathy, social responsibility, and strengthening deep religious values. Through the vision and mission that have been set, the school hopes to produce the next generation who are not only intelligent in terms of knowledge, but also wise in acting and thinking.

However, even though this policy has been set with a clear basis, there are several challenges faced in its implementation. One of the main weaknesses identified is the limited time and resources available. Spiritual learning is often considered an integral part of general learning, but not all teachers have a deep enough understanding of how to integrate spiritual values into daily learning. Some teachers may find it difficult to adapt this approach due to a lack of adequate training or resources to support them. The solution proposed by the principal to overcome this weakness is to increase training and coaching for teachers. The principal suggested holding regular workshops or training that can improve teachers' understanding and skills in integrating spiritual values into the learning process. In addition, there needs to be closer collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community to ensure that this spiritual learning does not only take place in the classroom, but also in students' daily lives outside of school. That way, this spiritual learning strategy will be more effective and have a greater impact on student development.

Overall, the policy taken by this school in the spiritual learning strategy is quite strong because it is based on clear regulations, an integrated curriculum, and attention to the needs and vision of the school. Although there are some challenges in its implementation, with the right approach, such as increasing teacher training and community involvement, it is hoped that this spiritual learning can run more effectively and provide greater benefits for students.

Based on the results of the author's interview with the Principal of State Elementary School 001 Tembilihan City regarding the basis of the policy used in implementing the spiritual learning strategy, the basis of the policy used in implementing the spiritual learning strategy is the regulation of the implementation of the independent curriculum and the school's vision. Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024 concerning the Curriculum in Elementary Education and Secondary Education Levels. The basis of the policy used in implementing and developing the spiritual learning strategy in Elementary Schools, namely the regulation of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum and the school's vision, provides clear direction on how spiritual education can be integrated into the learning process. The Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes flexible and student-centered learning, gives schools the freedom to adjust teaching materials to the needs and potential of students. With this policy, schools can use a more holistic approach in educating students, including in aspects of character formation and spirituality.

The Independent Curriculum provides space for the implementation of learning that is more oriented towards life values, such as those contained in spiritual learning. Schools can choose and adjust learning strategies that suit students' needs, not only limited to academic aspects, but also in shaping their character and spirituality. In this context, spiritual learning does not have to be separate from other learning, but can be integrated into various subjects, such as Islamic Religious Education, Citizenship Education, and Physical Education. Learning based on the Independent Curriculum allows teachers to adopt various approaches that are more creative and in accordance with students' spirituality. In addition, a clear school vision regarding the formation of student character is also an important basis for this policy.

The school's vision, which emphasizes education that not only produces students who are academically intelligent, but also have noble character and good morals, provides a strong foundation for spiritual learning. This vision directs all school activities, including spiritual learning, to focus on achieving these goals. With a vision that is in line with spiritual values, schools can design and implement learning strategies that support the formation of student character comprehensively.

However, while the basis of this policy provides many opportunities for spiritual learning, the challenge is to ensure that these regulations and visions are translated well into daily practice in schools. Spiritual teaching must be able to run consistently, both in class activities and outside the classroom, to ensure that students truly gain a deep understanding of spiritual values that are in line with the curriculum and vision of the school. In addition, there needs to be synergy between the policies set by the principal and the implementation carried out by teachers, so that spiritual learning strategies can be implemented effectively and in accordance with student needs.

Based on the results of the author's interview with the Principal of Elementary School 010 Teluk Pinang regarding the basis of the policy used in implementing the spiritual learning strategy, the basis of the policy used in implementing the spiritual learning strategy is based on the results of a meeting held by all teachers, namely requiring all students to participate in weekly or extracurricular religious activities based on the students' religious background and beliefs. The basis of the policy used in implementing the spiritual learning strategy in schools, as conveyed by the principal, is a decision taken through a meeting with all teachers. This policy aims to require all students to participate in weekly or extracurricular religious activities, which are adjusted to the students' religious background and beliefs. This policy recognizes the importance of respecting the diversity of religions and beliefs among students. This policy allows for the creation of an inclusive atmosphere in schools, where all students feel valued and can participate in activities that are in accordance with their beliefs without feeling isolated. Potential challenges: These diverse religious activities may require adjustments and more intensive communication between teachers and parents to ensure that all students can participate without feeling burdened or marginalized.

**Weekly Learning:** Religious activities carried out weekly aim to build positive habits and consistency in spiritual learning. With routine activities like this, students will be more accustomed to religious values and character built through these activities. By including religious activities as extracurricular activities, this policy provides space for students who are interested in delving deeper into their religious teachings, as well as developing spiritual aspects more personally and voluntarily. Spiritual learning through weekly activities and extracurricular activities can help students develop discipline and a sense of responsibility for their religious learning. In addition, extracurricular activities provide flexibility for students who want to deepen their religious knowledge more intensively. Potential challenges: Not all students may be interested in participating in extracurricular religious activities. In addition, if not managed properly, these extracurricular activities can be less than optimal due to limited time or resources.

**Decision Based on the Results of the Teachers' Council Meeting:** This policy is the result of a joint deliberation between the principal and the entire teacher council, which means that this decision has gone through careful consideration and a shared understanding of the importance of spiritual learning in schools. Having a decision based on deliberation provides an illustration that all parties in the school (teachers, principals, and perhaps parents) are involved in formulating this policy, thus ensuring the suitability and involvement of all parties in its implementation. Potential Challenges: The success of implementing this policy is highly dependent on the active involvement and commitment of all teachers and principals in supporting spiritual activities. If there is no adequate supervision or evaluation, this policy can run without providing an optimal impact on students' spiritual development. The basis of

the policy used in implementing this spiritual learning strategy emphasizes the diversity of students' religions and the importance of regularly scheduled spiritual activities. This policy is designed to ensure that students not only learn religious values, but also apply these values in their lives. With good collaboration between teachers and proper monitoring, this policy can support the formation of students' character optimally.

Based on the results of the author's interview with the Principal of State Elementary School 012 UPT VII Sapta Mulya regarding the basis of the policy used in implementing spiritual learning strategies, the basis of the policy used in the spiritual learning strategy is by following the school curriculum. If a school only follows the school curriculum as the basis for implementing spiritual learning, this means that spiritual learning in the school is limited to what has been regulated in the existing official curriculum, without any additional or special policies developed by the school to explore spiritual aspects further. The limitation if the school only follows the existing curriculum without any special policies for spiritual learning, the activities held will be more limited to what has been regulated in certain subjects, such as Religious Education or Ethics, without any special space for deeper and experience-based spiritual development activities.

Spiritual learning based on school curriculum often has clear standards, in accordance with government guidelines or larger educational institutions. This can ensure that the material taught is in accordance with national or widely recognized educational demands, so that learning is structured and does not deviate from the established path. Standard curriculum may not be enough to accommodate the more holistic or deep spiritual needs of students. Spiritual learning can seem like part of an academic routine that does not provide enough space for students' personal exploration of religious aspects or more personal character formation.

In the existing curriculum, religious or spiritual learning is generally only covered in certain subjects, such as Islamic Religious Education (PAI) or Pancasila Moral Education (PMP) in the past, now Citizenship Education (PKn), which usually do not involve all aspects of daily life at school. Spiritual learning outside of these subjects, such as social activities or spiritual-based character development, may not receive enough attention. By following a structured curriculum, schools can ensure that students receive learning materials that are consistent and in accordance with applicable regulations. The learning process can be more focused and have clear achievement indicators. Without additional policies from the school, more practical and experience-based spiritual activities, such as community service or routine religious activities, can be neglected. Students may not get many opportunities to apply spiritual values in their daily lives outside of formal lessons.

National curricula are usually more focused on teaching a particular religion, such as Islamic Religious Education in Islamic schools, and may provide less space for interfaith understanding or spiritual diversity in schools that have students from different religious backgrounds. By referring to the curriculum set by the government, schools can ensure that students' religious and moral learning is maintained within a more general framework and does not highlight one particular religion, if the curriculum facilitates religious teaching fairly. If schools only focus on one religion listed in the curriculum, students from other religions or beliefs may feel less valued or not given the same attention in their spiritual development. By referring to the school curriculum, each student receives uniform learning and is in accordance with the established educational standards. This ensures that there are no deviations in the teaching materials and spiritual values conveyed. Learning that follows the national curriculum is easier to account for, both to parents and to the authorities, because it is in accordance with applicable guidelines and regulations. By following a structured curriculum, schools can more easily plan and assess students' spiritual learning outcomes, as well as set clear goals in the education process.

From this, of course, various weaknesses can be found, namely the lack of flexibility because the school curriculum is generally fixed and does not always accommodate students' personal spiritual needs or interests. The lack of space for free and personal exploration of spiritual values can reduce the positive influence of spiritual learning. Limited to theory, namely spiritual learning that only relies on the curriculum is often limited to theory or classroom learning, without practical applications such as social or religious activities that can provide direct experience for students in experiencing spiritual values. Lack of respect for diversity, if the curriculum applied is more focused on one religion or does not sufficiently cover all students' religious backgrounds, this can create inequality in the spiritual learning received by each student.

Following the school curriculum as the basis for spiritual learning policies provides a clear structure, but may not be enough to accommodate the deeper and more diverse spiritual needs of students. For spiritual learning to be more effective, further adjustments are needed, either through supportive extracurricular activities or a more inclusive approach to respecting the diversity of students' religions and beliefs. Outside of scheduled school hours, not all schools consistently implement spiritual learning activities. Some schools have held activities such as religious studies, religious lectures, spiritual guidance, or literacy activities that contain spiritual values. However, there are also schools that do not yet have additional spiritual activities outside of school hours, so that students do not get a wider space to explore and experience spiritual values outside the context of formal learning. In fact, ideal spiritual learning should also touch the lives of students as a whole, both inside and outside the classroom, and not be limited to formal activities that are tied to the academic schedule.

Based on interviews with experts represented by the supervisor, namely Mr. Dr. Zamsiswaya, M.Ag, examples of spiritual learning materials are prayer and fasting. The way teachers implement it is by reinforcing the material on prayer and fasting. Prayer and fasting are two pillars of Islam that are not only ritualistic, but also have educational dimensions and character formation that are very important in the spiritual education of students in elementary schools. In the context of spiritual learning, these two worships play a major role in forming individuals with noble morals and high discipline.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that spiritual learning in Public Elementary Schools in Indragiri Hilir Regency has been implemented in various forms, but there is still a lot of room for development and improvement. Efforts to shape students' character through a spiritual approach require a more focused, integrative, and contextual strategy. Schools need to develop a spiritual learning program that is not only focused on one subject, but is comprehensive in all aspects of education. Teachers also need to be given in-depth training so that they are able to deliver spiritual learning in a way that touches the heart and is relevant to students' lives. Thus, spiritual learning will not only form students who are religiously obedient, but also individuals who have strong character, empathy, and are able to live with full moral awareness in society.

## CONCLUSION

Spiritual learning strategies play an important role in shaping the character of students at Public Elementary Schools (SDN) in Indragiri Hilir Regency. Through the integration of spiritual values into the learning process, students not only develop academically, but also have better moral and religious awareness. The success of this strategy is highly dependent on collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community in creating a supportive educational environment. Despite challenges such as limited resources and diverse student backgrounds, this approach has proven effective in building a generation with character, spiritual resilience, and the ability to face the challenges of globalization with strong values.

Based on the formulation of the problem, the results of the research conducted by the author, the author can conclude as follows: 1) Spiritual learning in forming in Elementary

Schools so far is that: (a) Current conditions: Spiritual learning has not been fully integrated into the daily learning process. Teachers and schools face challenges in compiling guidelines and implementing spiritual learning systematically. Student characters still show variations; some students have strong characters, but some are still weak due to environmental influences, lack of parental guidance, and the negative impact of technology. (b) Implementation in the field: Teachers tend to use a conventional approach without explicitly integrating spiritual values into teaching and learning activities. Student awareness of spiritual values is still low, so that character formation is not optimal.

2) Obstacles to the implementation of spiritual learning in Public Elementary Schools in Indragiri Hilir Regency are that: (a) There is no special structured program for spiritual learning. Most spiritual activities are just routines such as Yasinan, Sholawat, or Tausiah, without the support of a systematic concept or curriculum. (b) Spiritual learning tends to be limited to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects only, so that spiritual values are not integrated thoroughly into other subjects or school life holistically. (c) Learning methods that are less varied and less contextual make it difficult for students to understand spiritual meanings in depth, especially because the characteristics of elementary school students are still at the stage of concrete thinking. (d) Minimal evaluation of spiritual learning programs, so that their effectiveness is difficult to measure and adjust to student needs.

3) The spiritual learning strategy in shaping students' character in Public Elementary Schools in Indragiri Hilir Regency is that: (a) There needs to be a more structured learning strategy to integrate spiritual values with daily learning activities. It is important for schools to develop specific guidelines that support the implementation of spiritual learning, such as teacher training and provision of supporting materials. (b) The recommendation is a program that combines the monotheistic approach with universal values such as empathy, responsibility, and justice. Conducting special training for teachers to be more competent in integrating spiritual values. Utilizing technology as a tool to convey spiritual messages in an interesting way for students. Involving parents and the community in the spiritual learning process so that these values are consistently applied outside of school.

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