



The Correlation between Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha Program Implementation and Student Commendable Moral Development at State Junior High School 1 Rambah Rokan Hulu Regency

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Abstract

This research aimed at knowing the correlation between Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha program implementation and student commendable moral development at State Junior High School 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency. The correlation between Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha program implementation and student commendable moral development showed that the better Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha program implementation was, the better student commendable moral development would be. Questionnaire, interview, and documentation were the instruments of this research. The subjects of this research were 3 teachers of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha at State Junior High School 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency, and 72 students – 38 of the seventh-grade students and 34 of the eighth-grade students. The obtained data were analyzed by using product moment correlation technique. Based on the research findings, there was a strong correlation between Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha program implementation and student commendable moral development at State Junior High School 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency with the coefficient of correlation 0.633, and it was on the range of 0.60-0.799.

Keywords: MDTW; Moral Development; Junior High School

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara implementasi program Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha (MDTW) dengan perkembangan akhlak terpuji siswa di SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Kabupaten Rokan Hulu. Hubungan antara implementasi program MDTW dan perkembangan akhlak terpuji siswa menunjukkan bahwa semakin baik pelaksanaan program MDTW, maka semakin baik pula perkembangan akhlak terpuji siswa. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan meliputi angket, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas 3 orang guru Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha di SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Kabupaten Rokan Hulu, serta 72 siswa yang terdiri dari 38 siswa kelas VII dan 34 siswa kelas VIII. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis menggunakan teknik korelasi product moment. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, terdapat hubungan yang kuat antara implementasi program Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha dengan perkembangan akhlak terpuji siswa di SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Kabupaten Rokan Hulu dengan koefisien korelasi sebesar 0,633 yang berada pada rentang 0,60-0,799.

Kata Kunci: MDTW; Perkembangan Akhlak; Sekolah Menengah Pertama

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Introduction

Character has always been an important issue in the world of education, particularly in Islamic education. Fundamentally, discussions about character are always linked to human behaviour, and this has been taught within Islamic education. If education is likened to a tree, then the fruit of that tree is character. To cultivate good character, good education is, of course, also required.

The primary aim of Islamic education is to perfect the development of noble character, both in a vertical sense – that is, in service to one’s Lord – and in a horizontal sense that is, as social beings who constantly interact with other people. In essence, it is to nurture and develop human attitudes so that they become morally more perfect (Syamsul Bahri, 2022).

Various studies indicate that education plays a strategic role in shaping students’ character through: habituation, modelling, and reinforcement of values. Research in madrasahs indicates that the development of students’ character is achieved through habituation, teachers’ role modelling, and the provision of continuous motivation and evaluation (Fitriah et al., 2025).

Strengthening Islamic moral values requires collaboration among family, school, and community, consistent with the PPK framework (Lendy F. L. Syachputri & Arif, 2025). Moral values must be instilled through role modelling, habituation, and supportive environments (Priyonggo et al., 2026). Therefore, complementary programmes such as the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha (MDTW), which focuses on fostering students’ moral character, are required.

As an Islamic educational institution, MDTW aims to develop, expand and deepen the Islamic Education (PAI) acquired at MDTA so that students can lead lives as Muslims who are faithful, God-fearing, righteous and of noble character. Furthermore, the phenomenon of the moral crisis highlights the importance of continuous moral education in schools (Darwin & Silahuddin, 2024). From this explanation, it can be understood that, if one of the objectives of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha is to foster students’ virtuous character, then the implementation of the MDTW programme is closely linked to the development of students’ virtuous character.

The implementation of the MDTW has been proceeding smoothly. This is evident from the fact that traditional classroom-based lessons have been conducted for at least 18 teaching hours per week, and attendance rates among both teachers and pupils have been high. Extracurricular activities such as religious practice, Quran memorisation,

public speaking, and requiring pupils to perform the Zuhr and Asr prayers in congregation at the school prayer room have also been carried out effectively as part of efforts to foster good character in pupils; however, pupils' character has not yet reached a commendable standard. This MDTW programme has been running effectively and efficiently for several years, yet there are still pupils whose character is not yet commendable.

Based on the above, this study offers a novel perspective by examining the relationship between the implementation of the MDTW programme and the development of students' moral character within the context of a state junior secondary school (SMP Negeri). Unlike previous studies, which have largely examined the implementation of moral education in general, this study specifically tests the empirical relationship between the intensity of the MDTW programme's implementation and students' moral development using a quantitative correlational approach. Furthermore, this study integrates quantitative data with qualitative findings from interviews to strengthen the interpretation of the research results.

Method

The research was conducted from 23 September to 5 October 2020. The research was carried out at State Junior High School (SMP) 1 Rambah, Pasirpengaraian, Rokan Hulu Regency, Riau, located at Jl. Hangtuah No. 88, Koto Tinggi Village, Rambah Sub-district. The subjects of this study were three teachers from the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha and pupils in Years 7 and 8 at State Junior High School 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency, for the 2020/2021 academic year. The focus of the study was the implementation of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha programme and the development of student's virtuous character.

The population for this study comprised three teachers from the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha and all Year 7 and Year 8 pupils for the 2020–2021 academic year at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, totalling 357 individuals. Given the size of the population, the author selected a sample of 20% using proportional stratified random sampling. The author selected a sample of 20% from the total of 357 students. This amounts to 72 samples, comprising 38 students from Year 7 and 34 students from Year 8.

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational research design. According to Creswell and Creswell (2024), a quantitative approach is used to test objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, which can be

measured using instruments and analysed using statistical procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2024). According to Hair et al. (2020), correlation analysis is used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, making it appropriate for examining the association between the implementation of educational programmes and student outcomes. Correlational research aims to determine whether there is a relationship between the implementation of the MDTW programme (variable X) and the development of students' virtuous character (variable Y).

The research instruments used in this study included a questionnaire as the primary instrument for measuring variables X and Y, which were formulated using a Likert scale; interviews to obtain in-depth supporting data regarding the implementation of the MDTW programme and the factors influencing pupils' moral character; and documentation to supplement data relating to the school profile, MDTW activities, and other administrative data.

The data analysis techniques employed in this study include a validity test using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation to assess the validity of the questionnaire items a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha to assess the consistency of the instrument, a test of the prerequisites for analysis namely, a normality test using the Kolmogorov Smirnov and linearity tests, as well as hypothesis testing using the Product Moment correlation technique to determine the relationship between variables X and Y.

Results and Discussion

Description of Research Data

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between the implementation of the MDTW programme and the development of students' moral character at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency. Research data were collected through the distribution of questionnaires to 72 students, comprising 38 students year 7 and 34 students year 8.

The questionnaire consisted of 27 items measuring two variables: the implementation of the MDTW programme (variable X) and the development of students' moral character (variable Y). The data were then analysed through several stages: validity and reliability tests, prerequisite tests (normality and linearity), and hypothesis testing using the product-moment correlation.

The author then presents the stages of the product-moment correlation test as follows:

1. Validity Test of the Questionnaire for Variable X (Implementation of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha Programme) and Variable Y (Development of Students' Virtues)

The study examined the relationship between the implementation of the MDTW programme and the development of students' moral character at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency. Data were collected from 72 students, consisting of 38 year 7 and 34 year 8 students, using a 27-item questionnaire measuring two variables: MDTW implementation (X) and students' moral character (Y). Data analysis included validity and reliability tests, prerequisite tests (normality and linearity), and hypothesis testing using product-moment correlation. Validity was assessed using the Pearson bivariate correlation with SPSS version 25. Items were considered valid if r_{count} exceeded r_{table} at a 5% significance level. Results showed all items for variables X and Y were valid.

2. Questionnaire Reliability Test

Reliability testing was conducted to ensure instrument consistency, indicating that the questionnaire produced stable and consistent results when applied under similar conditions (Sugiyono, 2022). The reliability test was conducted using the alpha formula. The significance test was performed at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The instrument can be considered reliable if the alpha value is greater than the critical value (0.232). Conversely, a questionnaire item is considered unreliable if the alpha value is less than the critical value at a 5% significance level. The following are the results of the reliability test:

Tabel 1. Questionnaire Reliability Test

VARIABLE	r_{xy}	$r_{table} 5\% (72)$	Description
X	0.826	0.232	Reliabel
Y	0.888	0.232	Reliabel

The results of the reliability test indicate that all r_{xy} values are greater than r_{table} at a 5% significance level with a sample size of 72 students. Therefore, it is concluded that all questionnaire items are reliable and can be used as a research instrument.

3. Normality Test

According to Field (2020), normally distributed data form a symmetrical bell-shaped curve.

Tabel 2. Questionnaire Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		72
Normal Parameters ^{ab}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	5.30451806
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.046
	Positive	.043
	Negative	-.046
Test Statistic		.046
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.		
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.		

Basis for decision-making in the normality test:

1. If the value of Asym. Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05, H_a is accepted.
2. If the value of Asym. Sig. (2-tailed) is less than 0.05, H₀ is accepted.

H₀: The data distribution is not normal

H_a: The data distribution is normal

Interpretation:

Based on the Asym. Sig. (2-tailed) value, it is found that Asym. Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05 (0.200 > 0.05), which means H_a is accepted and H₀ is rejected. Therefore, the data distribution is normal.

4. Linearity Test

A linear relationship indicates that changes in the independent variable are followed by proportional changes in the dependent variable (Ghazali, 2021).

Table 3. Linearity Test

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
PENGEMBANGAN AKHLAK TERPUJI SISWA * PELAKSANAAN MDTW	Between Groups	(Combined)	1701.658	9	189.073	7.184	.000
		Linearity	1335.708	1	1335.708	50.749	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	365.949	8	45.744	1.738	.107
	Within Groups		1631.842	62	26.320		
	Total		3333.500	71			

Basis the linearity test decision:

- a. H_a = If the value of *Deviation from Linearity Sig.* > 0.05, there is a significant linear relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

- b. H_0 = If the value of *Deviation from Linearity Sig.* is < 0.05 , there is no significant linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Interpretation:

Based on the value of *Deviation from Linearity Sig.*, it is found that *Deviation from Linearity Sig.* > 0.05 ($0.107 > 0.05$), so H_a is accepted and H_0 is rejected. This means there is a significant linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

5. Product Moment Correlation Test

Following the normality and linearity tests, product-moment correlation test was then conducted. According to Dancey and Reidy (2020), Pearson correlation coefficient indicates the degree of linear relationship between two variables, with coefficient values ranging from -1 to +1. Positive value indicates positive relationship, whilst negative value indicates a negative relationship. Before performing the calculations to obtain the product-moment correlation coefficient, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) and the null hypothesis (H_0) were first formulated.

Hypotheses:

H_a = If the $r_c > r_t$, there is significant positive correlation between the implementation of MDTW and the development of students' virtuous character.

H_0 = If the $r_c > r_t$, there is significant positive correlation between the implementation of MDTW and the development of students' virtuous character.

After the hypothesis was formulated, an interpretation was carried out. In this study, the interpretation used the product-moment 'r' value table.

Tabel 4. Result of the *Product Moment Correlation Test*

Correlations			
		PELAKSANAAN MDTW	PENGEMBANGAN AKHLAK TERPUJI SISWA
PELAKSANAAN MDTW	Pearson Correlation	1	.633 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	72	72
PENGEMBANGAN AKHLAK TERPUJI SISWA	Pearson Correlation	.633 ^{**}	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	72	72
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The steps are as follows:

- a. Calculate df (degrees of freedom)

Formula : $df = N - nr$

Notes :

N = Number of cases

nr = number of correlated variables

The data correlated in this study are $N = 72$, $nr = 2$.

Therefore, $df = N - nr$

$$= 72 - 2$$

$$= 70$$

- b. Consult the product moment “r” value table. With $df = 70$, we obtain:

r_t 5% significance level = 0.232

r_t 1% significance level = 0.302

- c. Compare r_o (r observed) from the calculation with r_t (r table) with criteria:

1. If $r_o > r_t$ then H_a is accepted dan H_o is rejected

2. If $r_o < r_t$ then H_o is accepted dan H_a is rejected

Thus, $r_{xy} = 0.633$ is greater than r_{tabel} both 5% and 1% significance levels ($0.232 < 0.633 > 0.302$). This means that H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted.

- d. Research Conclusion

There is a significant positive correlation between the implementation of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha (MDTW) programme and the development of students’ virtuous character at State Junior High School 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency. As the correlation coefficient is positive, it can be concluded that where the score for the implementation of the MDTW programme is high, the score for the development of students’ character is also high.

This study also employed interviews with three MDTW teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, Rokan Hulu Regency. The findings indicate that the MDTW programme has been successfully implemented and has shown notable progress since its introduction. Initially optional and fee-based, it is now compulsory for all Muslim students and free of charge, increasing participation and establishing MDTW as a flagship programme and model for other schools in the district.

MDTW supports students’ moral development through integrated curricular and extracurricular activities. The curriculum includes Islamic Beliefs and Ethics, Qur’an and Hadith, Arabic, and Islamic History and Culture, all of which emphasise moral and

ethical values (Ismail, 2018). Extracurricular activities—such as religious practice, Qur'an memorisation, and religious discussions—reinforce these values and encourage consistent religious behaviour. This integration of theory and practice contributes significantly to character formation.

Several supporting factors enhance students' moral development, including adequate facilities, qualified teachers, parental support, and a conducive school environment. Alignment with the school's vision of producing knowledgeable and morally upright students, along with government support, further strengthens programme sustainability. However, challenges remain, particularly from family and social environments where parental supervision may be lacking. Limited teacher supervision time and exposure to negative influences from technology and social media also pose obstacles.

Despite these challenges, MDTW activities are well-structured and delivered by professional educators, with clear targets such as Qur'an memorisation at each grade level. Overall, the programme positively impacts students' moral character, reflected in improved discipline, stronger religious understanding, better daily behaviour, and the development of moderate religious attitudes through regular practices like congregational prayer, zikr, supplication, and da'wah activities.

Based on interviews with the MDTW teachers, several key findings emerged:

1. The implementation of MDTW is proceeding well, both in terms of the curriculum and extracurricular activities.
2. Supporting factors include religious education activities (both curricular and extracurricular), professional teaching staff, adequate facilities, and support from parents and the government.
3. Inhibiting factors include the family environment, the students' social environment, the influence of social media, and limited time for guidance at school.

Implementation of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha

From the perspective of modern character education, the implementation of MDTW can be analysed through the integration of three key dimensions: Thomas Lickona's concepts of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Lickona et.al, 2016). In this study, these dimensions are reflected in the delivery of religious

instruction, the habituation of worship practices, and direct activities such as congregational prayer and tahfiz.

These findings are consistent with Oktariyan M. et al. (2020), who emphasises that effective character education must integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects to ensure that values are internalised by students. In addition, research by Fitriah et al. (2025) highlights that education grounded in religious values tends to be more effective in shaping character due to its strong normative and spiritual foundations.

However, a critical finding reveals that, despite proper implementation, MDTW has not yet produced optimal changes in students' moral character. This suggests a gap between programme implementation and its outcomes. Supporting this, Darwin and Silahuddin (2024) argue that the success of character education is strongly influenced by school culture and teachers' exemplary behaviour in daily interactions. Therefore, although MDTW has been implemented effectively, continuous strengthening of school culture is essential to ensure that the values taught become deeply embedded as students' habitual behaviours.

Article 1(10) of Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia No. 13 of 2014 on Islamic Religious Education states that a madrasah diniyah takmiliyah is an Islamic religious education institution within the non-formal education sector, organised in a structured and graded manner to complement the implementation of Islamic Religious Education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels (Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 13 of 2014).

At this educational institution, students enrolled in general formal education institutions (primary/MI, lower secondary/MTs and upper secondary/SMK or equivalent) can broaden and deepen their knowledge of Islam. However, this institution remains open to any child of primary or lower secondary school age who is interested and of the Islamic faith, even if they have not yet had the opportunity to attend formal education (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2014). From this explanation, it can be understood that the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha can be compared in its organisation to a Junior High School (SMP).

There are three levels of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah. These are: (a) Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah (MDTA) or primary level, with a duration of 4 (four) years; (b) Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wusha (MDTW) or lower secondary level, with a study period of 2 (two) years; and (c) Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Ulya (MDTU) or

upper secondary level, with a study period of 2 (two) years. This non-formal religious education is organised and managed in a structured manner (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2017).

The organisation of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah does not require a legal entity as the organising body. Therefore, in terms of organisation, Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah can be categorised into three types, namely:

- a. Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah organised by a group of competent individuals within the community to carry out the educational vision and mission of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah, or by a specific legal entity or foundation;
- b. Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah organised within a pesantren;
- c. Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah organised within formal educational institutions, such as primary schools (SD/MI), lower secondary schools (SMP/MTs) and upper secondary schools (SMA/SMK) or equivalent.

These three types of Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah have flexibility in the technical implementation of their education whilst adhering to the basic provisions established regarding grading, curriculum, and administrative and management systems (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2017). From this explanation, it can be seen that the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah programme is a structured and tiered programme, ranging from MDTA, MDTW, to MDTU.

MDTW is a non-formal Islamic religious education unit that provides Islamic religious education as a supplement for students at junior high school (SMP)/MTs or equivalent levels, as well as children of school age who have not yet entered formal education (Zulfahman S & Rajab, 2025). This level is completed over 2 (two) years with a minimum of 18 teaching hours per week. MDTW is a community-based education programme operating under the supervision of the Head of the District/Municipal Ministry of Religious Affairs Office through the Head of the Section for Religious Education and Islamic Boarding Schools, or a similar organisational level.

The learning activities of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Wustha integrate the mastery of theory, the consolidation of practice, and the cultivation of akhlakul karimah (noble character) through exemplary role models (*uswatun hasanah*). The learning system is designed to be effective, efficient, creative, innovative, and capable of encouraging

students to develop their inherent potential. Learning at the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah is divided into two categories: curricular and extracurricular activities.

Curricular activities comprise learning activities for which time allocations have been specified in the programme. Curricular activities involve face-to-face interaction between students and teachers, including independent assignments, revision, and enrichment. Curricular activities are conducted through several approaches, namely: the traditional classroom approach; group learning; and the individualised approach (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2014).

Extracurricular activities are activities outside normal school hours carried out with the aim of strengthening students' cognitive, psychomotor and affective aspects. These activities are carried out periodically and in a planned manner, taking into account their relevance to the achievement of educational objectives (Widyawati et.al, 2025). Extracurricular activities in education are intended to meet the needs of students, assist those who are less able, enrich the learning environment, and stimulate them to be more creative (Agus Mulyana, et al., 2023).

The purpose of organising the MDTW is to develop, broaden and deepen the Islamic religious education received at the MDTA for students, so that they may develop their lives as Muslims who are faithful, God-fearing, righteous in their deeds and of noble character; as Indonesian citizens with a strong sense of identity, self-confidence, and physical and spiritual well-being (Noblana Adib, 2019). Furthermore, MDTW also aims to shape students as Indonesian citizens who possess strong identity, self-confidence, and balanced physical and spiritual well-being, which aligns with the concept of holistic Islamic education integrating intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions (Ahmad Nasta'in Billah, 2024).

The MDTW also serves to nurture students so that they possess experiences, knowledge, and skills in worship, as well as commendable traits, attitudes, and behaviour that are useful for their personal development; to nurture students so that they have the ability to carry out their life's duties in society and to serve Allah SWT in order to attain happiness in this world and the hereafter; and to prepare students to be able to pursue Islamic religious education at the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Ulya (MDTU).

Meanwhile, the functions of MDTW are to provide Islamic religious education, covering the Qur'an, Hadith, Aqiqah, Fiqh, Islamic History, Arabic, personal

development related to Islamic teachings, and the cultivation of noble character; furthermore, to meet the community's need for supplementary Islamic religious education, particularly for students attending junior high schools (SMP)/MTs or equivalent, as well as children of school age who have not yet had the opportunity to attend formal education; to foster cooperative relationships with students' parents and the community; and to implement the administrative and household management of non-formal religious education and libraries (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2014).

From the description of the objectives and functions of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha (MDTW), it can be seen that the first objective of the MDTW is to develop, expand and deepen the Islamic religious education acquired at the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awal (MDTA) for students, so that they may develop their lives as Muslims who are faithful, God-fearing, righteous and of noble character; and the first point of the MDTW's functions is to provide Islamic religious education, covering the Qur'an, Hadith, Aqiqah, Fiqh, Islamic History, Arabic, personal development related to the teachings of Islam, and the cultivation of noble character, so that one of the objectives and functions of the MDTW is indeed to foster virtuous behaviour. The behaviour of a Muslim who is faithful, God-fearing, and righteous is a representation of virtuous behaviour that has developed well.

From the above, it is clear that Islamic education, in this case the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha, essentially emphasises three things, namely:

- a. An educational endeavour using specific methods, particularly training methods to achieve mental discipline among students;
- b. Educational content provided to pupils consists of material elements—various types of knowledge—and spiritual elements—lifestyles and worldviews grounded in Islamic ethical values;
- c. The educational objective is to develop rational and virtuous individuals, and to achieve a just and prosperous society within the embrace of Allah's pleasure (Roqib, 2009).

From this explanation, the author understands that Islamic education, in this case the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha, is essentially intended to cultivate virtuous character, as it is Islamic education that can make a person of noble character—that is, character that is correct according to Islamic law. This is also in line with the primary

objective of Islamic education, which is to produce an Islamic generation of virtuous character.

Development of Student's Virtuous Character

The research findings indicate that the development of students' virtuous character falls into the 'fairly good' category, though it is not yet optimal. This suggests that character formation is a long-term process requiring consistency and support from various parties. According to character education theory, the formation of character does not depend solely on the learning process, but also on the internalisation of values that takes place through experience and habit formation (Lickona et.al, 2016). This process encompasses the stages of knowing values, feeling values, and practising values in daily life.

In light of the research findings, students have reached the stage of understanding and, to some extent, internalising values, but are not yet fully consistent in putting these values into practice. This is evident from the fact that some students' behaviour still does not consistently reflect virtuous conduct.

Recent research also confirms that the development of moral character must be carried out through a 'living values' approach, namely the application of values in real life, rather than merely the mastery of concepts (Berkowitz, 2012). In the context of MDTW, activities such as religious practice, memorisation of the Quran, and public speaking are forms of implementation of this approach. However, interview results indicate that external factors such as family, social environment, and digital media have a significant influence on the development of students' moral character.

Furthermore, the development of digital technology presents a unique challenge in the cultivation of students' moral character. Research indicates that uncontrolled exposure to social media can significantly influence students' behaviour and moral values (Darwin & Silahuddin, 2024). Consequently, the development of students' moral character cannot rely solely on the MDTW programme but requires synergy between schools, families, and the community as a holistic educational ecosystem.

In a modern context, character is also understood as part of one's character or morality, reflecting the good values internalised within an individual (Lickona et.al, 2016). The concept of character is a habit of the will; when the will is cultivated, it becomes a habit, and that habit is what is referred to as character. Thus, an understanding of ethics is that of a person who truly comprehends the behavioural

habits practised in social interactions, which are solely devoted to obedience to Allah and submission to Him.

Therefore, for someone who has understood akhlak, their conduct arises from the integration of conscience, thought, emotion, innate disposition, and habit, which coalesce to form a unified moral action lived out in the reality of daily life. Allah SWT states in Surah Al-Maidah, verse 8:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ؕ اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: *“O you who bear witness, let you be those who always uphold (the truth) for the sake of Allah, bearing witness with justice. And let not your hatred of a people lead you to act unjustly. Be just, for justice is nearer to piety. And fear Allah; verily, Allah is All-Knowing of what you do.”*

An action can be said to be virtuous if it is deeply ingrained in the soul so that it becomes part of one’s personality, is performed effortlessly without much deliberation, and arises from one’s own free will without coercion. Furthermore, such an action is carried out earnestly and is motivated by the intention to please Allah (Nata, 2015).

There are two types of moral conduct in Islam: al-akhlak al-karimah, often also referred to as al-akhlak mahmudah (praiseworthy conduct), which is good and righteous conduct according to Islamic teachings; and the second is al-akhlak madzmumah (blameworthy conduct), which is conduct that is neither good nor righteous according to Islamic teachings. According to Imam al-Ghazali, the praiseworthy human traits are al-munjiyat, that is, traits that will save one (Hadziq & Abror, 2025). Meanwhile, possessing praiseworthy character means eliminating all reprehensible customs outlined in the Islamic faith and distancing oneself from such reprehensible acts, then cultivating good customs, practising them, and cherishing them (Asmaran, 2002). Imam al-Ghazali explains that there are four main virtues of good character, namely: seeking wisdom; being courageous; purifying oneself; and acting justly. According to Ahmad Amin, these include honesty, trustworthiness, mutual aid, respecting teachers, and doing good to friends (Amin, 2020).

Zaharuddin and Hasanuddin Sinaga, in their book entitled Introduction to the Study of Ethics, explain that praiseworthy ethics or akhlak mahmudah are divided into two parts: outward obedience and inward obedience. Within the curriculum of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha, several praiseworthy moral virtues are taught,

including iffah, syaja'ah, hikmah, amanah, and tasammuh. Iffah means preserving one's dignity by avoiding attitudes and actions that might diminish one's self-respect. Courage refers to steadfastness of heart and firm resolve to defend and uphold the truth wisely and commendably, with sincere intention for the sake of Allah. Wisdom means being prudent in decision-making.

The formation and development of character are influenced by several key factors, namely customs and traditions, innate talent or instinct, the environment, and education. Customs and traditions encompass the customs and practices that have developed within society, as well as individual habits performed repeatedly until they become part of one's character. Innate talent or instinct (fitrah) is an innate potential present from birth that influences a person's behaviour. The environment also plays a significant role as it can shape, reinforce, or even hinder the development of character. Meanwhile education has a major influence in maturing one's personality through the instilling of values and the cultivation of good behaviour. In Islamic education, character serves as the primary focus, grounded in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith (Khodijah et.al, 2024).

According to Berkowitz, however, a pupil's character is not formed overnight, but is influenced by various factors, including the family which is the primary environment that shapes a child's character through habit formation and setting a good example. The school environment, including teachers and the education system, which plays a role in shaping students' character. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that the wider community, in terms of social interactions and cultural norms, also influences students' behaviour; and in today's world, the media and technology can exert both positive and negative influences on students' moral character (Berkowitz, 2012).

In truth, the primary source of moral character is religion, as moral character is a reflection of one's state of being as manifested in daily life. Religion, in fostering human moral character, is linked to the definitive and clear provisions of religious law. These provisions are explained in detail within the religion. Therefore, the cultivation and development of moral character cannot be separated from religious education.

The Correlation Between the Implementation of MDTW and the Development of Students' Morality

The research findings indicate a strong correlation between the implementation of MDTW and the development of students' moral character ($r = 0.633$). This suggests

that MDTW makes a significant contribution to the development of students' moral character. Theoretically, this relationship can be explained through the concept of character education as a systematic process in shaping individual values and behaviour (Lickona et.al, 2016). MDTW, as an Islamic values-based educational programme, plays a role in instilling moral values through learning, habit formation, and setting a good example. However, the correlation coefficients falling into the 'strong' (rather than 'very strong') category indicate that MDTW is not the sole factor influencing students' moral character. This suggests that other variables also play a role, such as the family environment, peer groups and social media.

Recent research confirms that character education in the modern era requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach, involving various stakeholders in the process of fostering values (Iva Sarifah et al., 2025). Consequently, the effectiveness of MDTW will be optimised if supported by a conducive and consistent environment. Critically, these findings indicate that MDTW is a key factor in the development of students' moral character, but cannot stand alone without the support of other external factors.

Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews with three teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha SMP Negeri 1 Rambah, there are several factors supporting the development of students' virtuous character, namely: intra-curricular and extra-curricular religious learning activities at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha, parental guidance, environmental influences, and professional teaching staff. Meanwhile, the factors hindering the development of students' virtuous character are: the family environment, the community environment, peer influence, and social media.

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can also be concluded that the implementation of the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Wustha (MDTW) programme has a significant and positive correlation with the development of students' virtuous character. This indicates that the more effectively the MDTW programme is implemented, the better the development of students' character. The MDTW programme has been shown to contribute to shaping students' religious and social behaviour through structured curricular and extracurricular learning activities.

However, this study has several limitations, including a small sample size covering only one school—and the use of a questionnaire that relies on respondents'

perceptions. Furthermore, this study has not yet conducted an in-depth quantitative analysis of other external factors, such as the influence of the family environment and social media. It is therefore recommended that future researchers expand the scope of their studies to include a wider range of schools and regions, and develop a more comprehensive research model by incorporating other variables that influence pupils' moral character. Furthermore, for education practitioners, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for optimising the implementation of the MDTW programme as a strategy for strengthening character education based on Islamic values.

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