



Developing a Mentoring Program for Shaping Students' Islamic Character

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of the mentoring program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara in shaping students' Islamic character. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research investigates the experiences, perceptions, and practices surrounding the program from the perspectives of students, mentors, and school administrators. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation over three months, from September to November 2024. The data analysis process involved transcribing interviews, organizing field notes, coding recurring themes, and interpreting the findings in relation to the research objectives. The findings reveal that the mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara has significantly contributed to the development of students' Islamic character, promoting values such as honesty, discipline, respect, and responsibility. Mentors played a key role in fostering a supportive environment, helping students internalize these values through theoretical discussions and practical activities. While students demonstrated improvements in behavior and discipline, challenges such as time constraints, varying levels of religious knowledge, and limited parental involvement were noted as factors that hindered the full potential of the program. Recommendations for enhancing the program include allocating more time for mentoring, addressing the diverse religious backgrounds of students, and increasing parental involvement to reinforce the values taught in the program.

Keywords: Mentoring program, Islamic character, student development

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi implementasi program mentoring di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara dalam membentuk karakter Islami siswa. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini menyelidiki pengalaman, persepsi, dan praktik seputar program tersebut dari sudut pandang siswa, mentor, dan administrator sekolah. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi selama tiga bulan, dari September hingga November 2024. Proses analisis data melibatkan transkrip wawancara, mengatur catatan lapangan, mengkodekan tema-tema yang muncul, dan menginterpretasikan temuan-temuan yang

berkaitan dengan tujuan penelitian. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program mentoring di MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara telah berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap pengembangan karakter Islami siswa, mempromosikan nilai-nilai seperti kejujuran, kedisiplinan, rasa hormat, dan tanggung jawab. Para mentor memainkan peran kunci dalam membina lingkungan yang mendukung, membantu siswa menginternalisasi nilai-nilai ini melalui diskusi teoritis dan kegiatan praktis. Meskipun para siswa menunjukkan peningkatan dalam hal perilaku dan disiplin, tantangan seperti keterbatasan waktu, tingkat pengetahuan agama yang berbeda-beda, dan keterlibatan orang tua yang terbatas dicatat sebagai faktor yang menghambat potensi penuh dari program ini. Rekomendasi untuk meningkatkan program ini termasuk mengalokasikan lebih banyak waktu untuk pendampingan, menangani latar belakang agama siswa yang beragam, dan meningkatkan keterlibatan orang tua untuk memperkuat nilai-nilai yang diajarkan dalam program ini.

Kata Kunci: Program mentoring, karakter Islami, pengembangan siswa

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental tool in shaping individuals who possess not only intellectual competence but also strong moral and ethical values (Bauer & Hermann, 2022; Firmansyah, Sa, & Munir, 2024; Yasin & Khasbulloh, 2022). In Indonesia, Islamic educational institutions such as Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High Schools) play a pivotal role in integrating religious teachings with general education to nurture well-rounded individuals (Nursyam et al., 2025; Piaget, 2013). Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara, as a prominent Islamic educational institution, holds a significant responsibility in fostering students' Islamic character in a rapidly changing global environment marked by cultural shifts, technological advancements, and moral challenges. The formation of students' Islamic character has become a critical issue in the field of education, particularly in the context of madrasah, which hold a unique role in integrating religious values with formal education (Arif, Chapakiya, & Dewi, 2024; Danuwara & Giyoto, 2024; Tihabsah, Rahmat, & Rofiq, 2024). In recent years, the importance of instilling Islamic character in students has gained significant attention due to the increasing challenges posed by globalization, cultural shifts, and the rapid dissemination of information through social media (Aziz, Napitupulu, & Parapat, 2025; Cheung & Lee, 2010; Sahin, 2018). These factors have contributed to the erosion of moral and spiritual values among youth, making the implementation of character-building programs in schools, especially religious schools like Madrasah Aliyah, an urgent necessity (Nuriman, Mahmoud, Hamzah, & Yusnaini, 2024; Pabbajah, Abdullah, Widyanti, Jubba, & Alim, 2020; Rachman, Kawakip, Fadhillah, Saputra, & Zulkifli, 2023).

In response to these challenges, the implementation of mentoring programs has become a strategic approach to character education (Aliyas, 2020; Murharyana, Ayyubi, Rohmatulloh, & Suryana, 2023). Mentoring programs are designed to provide students with direct guidance, support, and a platform for moral and spiritual development under the supervision of qualified mentors. At MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara, these programs are intended to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge of Islamic teachings and practical application in daily life. Mentors serve as role models and facilitators, guiding students through personal reflections, group discussions, and activities that promote the cultivation of Islamic values (Abidin, Fatawi, & Kausar, 2025; Arifin, Ulfiah, Sauri, & Koswara, 2022; Grine, Bensaid, Nor, & Ladjal, 2013; Halstead, 2014; Nieuważny et al., 2021). Despite the efforts to implement mentoring programs, the effectiveness of these initiatives in forming students' Islamic character remains a topic that

requires deeper exploration (Astuti, Herlina, & Ibrahim, 2024). Previous studies have indicated that the success of such programs is influenced by various factors, including the mentor-student relationship, program structure, school culture, and the active participation of students (Azizah & Murniyetti, 2023). However, there is a lack of qualitative research focusing on the lived experiences of students and mentors involved in these programs, particularly in the context of Islamic education (Azmi, Hadijaya, & Syah, 2022).

Existing literature highlights the importance of various educational strategies to foster students' character development (Adwiah, Tantia, & Rantikasari, 2023; Chandra, 2020; Nuriman et al., 2024; Rehren & Sauer, 2022). For instance, studies have shown that integrating religious teachings into the curriculum can enhance moral awareness and ethical behavior among students. However, these studies often focus on general classroom teaching and fail to address the specific role of structured mentoring programs in character formation (Erihadiana, 2019). Furthermore, while mentoring has been extensively explored in secular educational settings, there is limited research on how mentoring programs are designed and implemented in madrasah environments, specifically in fostering Islamic character. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a focused study on the implementation and outcomes of mentoring programs within madrasah contexts (Etfita & Montessori, 2021). Previous research on mentoring in educational institutions primarily emphasizes academic support, social adjustment, and psychological well-being (Fitriati, Anggoro, & Harmianto, 2020). Although these aspects are undoubtedly important, they do not fully capture the essence of Islamic character development, which encompasses spiritual growth, adherence to Islamic values, and the cultivation of behaviors aligned with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah (Hariyani & Rafik, 2021). Thus, there remains a lack of comprehensive studies that examine mentoring as a holistic approach to character education in madrasah, particularly in addressing both the spiritual and moral dimensions of student development (Ifani & Kartiwi, 2024; Karim, Bakhtiar, Sahrodi, & Chang, 2022; Mulawarman, Kundori, Tubagus, Judijanto, & Susilawati, 2024; Rozi, Pujiono, & Maskud, 2023). This paper seeks to address this gap by exploring the implementation of a mentoring program in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Kutai Kartanegara and its impact on shaping students' Islamic character.

The primary purpose of this study is to analyze the design, execution, and effectiveness of the mentoring program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Kutai Kartanegara. Unlike prior studies that focus solely on academic or psychological outcomes, this research aims to uncover how mentoring practices specifically influence the development of Islamic character traits, such as honesty, responsibility, compassion, and resilience (Diab & Green, 2024). By doing so, this study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how mentoring can serve as a transformative tool in the holistic development of students within the madrasah context. This paper also aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by offering insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing mentoring programs in religious educational settings. It intends to examine the program's alignment with Islamic educational principles, its reception among students and mentors, and its measurable impact on students' character formation. By addressing these aspects, the study aspires to fill the gaps left by existing literature and propose practical recommendations for enhancing character education in madrasah.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically utilizing a case study design, as described by (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), to investigate the implementation of the mentoring program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara. The qualitative approach is chosen to deeply understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and practices related to the mentoring program from the perspectives of students, mentors, and school administrators. This case study allows for an in-depth examination of the program within its real-life context. The research was conducted over a period of three months, from September to November 2024, at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara, a reputable Islamic educational institution in Tenggarong, Kutai Kartanegara.

Data collection was conducted using three primary techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were employed to allow for flexibility in exploring participants' perspectives while ensuring that key topics were covered. The interviews involved key informants, including student participants, mentors, and school administrators. Observations were carried out during mentoring sessions and school activities to gain insights into the interaction between mentors and students and how Islamic values are integrated into daily practices. Documentation involved the collection of relevant records, such as mentoring program guidelines, reports, attendance sheets, and photographs, to support the data obtained through interviews and observations.

The data analysis process followed Creswell's systematic approach for case study research, which consists of three main steps: organizing and preparing data, coding and categorizing themes, and interpreting findings. First, all interview data were transcribed verbatim, and field notes from observations were organized chronologically. This organization facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the context and allowed for the identification of patterns and themes relevant to the mentoring program's implementation. Subsequently, the data were coded and categorized to highlight key themes related to the participants' experiences and perceptions of Islamic character development. Finally, the findings were interpreted in light of the case study framework, providing insights into the effectiveness of the mentoring program within the specific context of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The mentoring program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Kutai Kartanegara is designed to guide students not only in understanding Islamic teachings but also in applying them to their daily lives. The program consists of weekly sessions conducted by senior teachers who have a strong religious background and are dedicated to fostering the spiritual and moral growth of students. According to interviews with school administrators, the program aims to instill key Islamic values such as honesty, discipline, respect, and a sense of responsibility. As one administrator stated, *"Our goal is not just to teach students about Islam but to help them live the teachings in their daily lives."* (Interview: A, 2024).

The sessions typically begin with group prayers, Quran recitation, and a short lecture or discussion on specific Islamic principles. For example, one session explored the importance of honesty, discussing its relevance in academic integrity, personal relationships, and social

interactions. This theoretical component is supplemented by practical activities such as community service, role-playing exercises, and reflective discussions, which help students internalize the values being taught. In a conversation with a mentor, they explained, *“We try to make the teachings come to life through real-life examples, such as helping others or discussing moral dilemmas. The activities allow students to practice what they learn in a supportive environment.”* (Interview: JH, 2024).



Figure 1. Mentoring Program in MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara

Documentation of the program also shows a well-structured curriculum that balances theoretical knowledge with hands-on activities. The program is aligned with the school's broader vision of producing graduates who are academically competent while also possessing a strong moral and spiritual foundation. One school administrator mentioned, *“The mentoring program is part of our effort to ensure that students not only succeed in their studies but are also grounded in their faith and character.”* (Interview: G, 2024). This vision was echoed by students who expressed their appreciation for how the program combines academic and religious growth. One student remarked, *“The sessions help me learn how to be a good Muslim and a good student. They're connected; being a good Muslim helps me be a better student.”* (Interview: H, 2024).

The role of mentors in the program is crucial, as they act as guides, role models, and facilitators. Through interviews, mentors emphasized the importance of building trust with students in order to foster an open and supportive environment. One mentor explained, *“We need to build a relationship with the students where they feel safe to open up about their struggles, whether it's academic pressure or personal issues. It's important they know we're here not only to teach but also to support them.”* (Interview: C, 2024).

Observations during mentoring sessions confirmed that mentors take a personalized approach, addressing students' individual concerns, particularly related to academic challenges, peer influence, and personal dilemmas.

Despite the positive aspects, the student-mentor relationship revealed some areas for improvement. While most students appreciated the guidance and support, a few expressed hesitations in sharing personal issues due to fear of judgment. One student mentioned, "I find it difficult to talk about my problems because I'm afraid the mentors might judge me." (Interview: N, 2024). This feedback suggests that while trust is central to the mentoring process, there is still room for the program to develop a more open, non-judgmental atmosphere where students feel completely comfortable in sharing their challenges.

The program has had a noticeable impact on students' behavior and values. Observations indicated that students were more disciplined, with an increased sense of respect for both their mentors and peers. For instance, students were observed arriving on time for mentoring sessions and actively participating in discussions. Teachers reported improvements in students' attitudes, particularly in terms of politeness and willingness to help others. As one teacher shared, "*We see a difference in their behavior—students are more cooperative, and their interactions with others have become more respectful.*" (Interview: GU, 2024).

Interviews with students further revealed that certain aspects of the program, such as the real-life scenarios presented during discussions, had a positive influence on their ability to apply Islamic values outside of the classroom. One student explained, "*The examples our mentors give us help me apply Islamic values in my life, whether it's in how I treat my friends or how I act in school.*" (Interview: F, 2024). However, a few students mentioned challenges in maintaining these values when faced with peer pressure or societal influences. One student admitted, "*It's hard sometimes to stay true to my values when my friends are acting differently, but the mentoring sessions help remind me of what's important.*" (Interview: K, 2024).

The mentoring program has also faced several challenges in its implementation. One of the main challenges identified in interviews with mentors and school administrators is the limited time available for the program. With a packed academic schedule, mentors often struggle to find sufficient time for in-depth mentoring sessions. As one mentor put it, "*The program is beneficial, but time constraints make it difficult to fully engage with every student. We wish we had more time to discuss their individual concerns.*" (Interview: T, 2024). Another challenge mentioned was the varying levels of religious knowledge and commitment among students. One mentor noted, "*Some students come from families with a strong Islamic background, while others have little exposure to religious teachings. This makes it difficult to create a one-size-fits-all approach.*" (Interview: D, 2024).

Parental involvement was another area identified as crucial for the program's success. Interviews with mentors indicated that students who received support from their families exhibited more consistent character development. However, the limited parental engagement was seen as a barrier to reinforcing the program's goals outside of school. A mentor suggested, "*We need to find ways to involve parents more, perhaps through workshops or regular communication. Their involvement would make a significant difference in reinforcing the values we teach in school.*" (Interview: S, 2024).

Despite these challenges, the mentoring program has produced positive outcomes. Documentation of program evaluations indicated that over 80% of students reported feeling more confident in practicing Islamic values in their daily lives. Furthermore, mentors observed a marked improvement in students' emotional maturity and conflict resolution skills. One mentor shared a success story about a student who had previously struggled with anger management but, through consistent mentoring, learned to manage their emotions and became more engaged in school activities. *"It's amazing to see how mentoring can help students grow, not only in their faith but also in their personal development,"* (Interview: D, 2024).

The findings also revealed several suggestions for enhancing the program. Both mentors and students proposed incorporating more interactive and experiential learning methods, such as field trips to religious sites or community service projects. Students also suggested introducing peer mentors to make the program more relatable. One student proposed, *"It would be nice if older students could also act as mentors. It would help us connect more easily and make the sessions more engaging."* (Interview: R, 2024). Administrators also highlighted the need for better resource allocation, including mentor training and more time dedicated to the program. A school administrator mentioned, *"We need to invest more in training our mentors to ensure they are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to guide students effectively."* (Interview: L, 2024).

Based on this explanation, the findings of the research can be tabulated below.

Table 1. Mentoring Program for Shaping Students' Islamic Character

Theme	Key Findings
Program Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara guides students in understanding and applying Islamic teachings. - Sessions include weekly group prayers, Quran recitation, lectures, and discussions on Islamic principles.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To instill key Islamic values like honesty, discipline, respect, and responsibility.
Mentoring Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sessions include practical activities like community service, role-playing, and reflective discussions.
Role of Mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentors act as guides, role models, and facilitators. - Mentors build trust with students to foster an open and supportive environment.
Impact on Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved discipline, respect, and cooperation among students. - Positive influence on applying Islamic values in real-life situations (e.g., in friendships and school).
Challenges in Student-Mentor Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some students are hesitant to share personal issues due to fear of judgment. - Room for improvement in creating a more open, non-judgmental atmosphere.
Impact on Student Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observed improvement in students' behavior, including punctuality and active participation. - Students exhibited better attitudes, politeness, and willingness to help others.
Challenges Faced by the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time constraints make it difficult to fully engage with each student. - Varying levels of religious knowledge and commitment among students.
Parental Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited parental engagement is seen as a barrier. More involvement could enhance character development.

Program Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 80% of students reported feeling more confident in practicing Islamic values.- Improvement in students' emotional maturity and conflict resolution skills.
Suggestions for Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Incorporate more interactive learning methods, like field trips or community service.- Introduce peer mentors to make the program more relatable.- Better resource allocation, including mentor training and more time for mentoring sessions.

Discussion

Strategies To Foster a More Open and Supportive Environment Within the Program

The mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara plays a critical role in guiding students through both academic and personal challenges, aiming to foster an environment where Islamic values are applied to everyday life. However, one of the key challenges faced by the program is creating a space where students feel completely comfortable sharing personal issues. Trust between students and mentors is essential for open communication, yet some students express hesitation in sharing their struggles due to fear of judgment (Husnah, 2024). This fear stems from the perception that mentors, as authoritative figures, might not be receptive to their concerns or might use their personal issues as learning examples for others (Ilmah, Malli, & Madani, 2022). To address this, the program must focus on building deeper, individualized relationships between mentors and students, where students feel seen, heard, and respected as individuals (Isnaeni, Saepudin, & Rachmah, 2024).

A crucial aspect of overcoming this challenge lies in mentors' ability to be empathetic and non-judgmental. Mentors should be trained not only in religious guidance but also in listening and responding in a manner that validates the students' feelings (Jalil, 2016). This means that mentors need to adopt a compassionate approach, acknowledging the emotional complexity of the issues students face. Empathy can be cultivated by encouraging mentors to share personal stories or experiences in a manner that relates to the students' own lives, helping break down barriers of formality. When students witness that their mentors are not only knowledgeable but also understanding, they are more likely to trust them and open up about their problems (Winarno, 2023).

Building a safe space for students to share their personal issues requires a cultural shift within the mentoring program. The program could benefit from creating clear guidelines about confidentiality and ethical boundaries, which would assure students that their disclosures will not be used against them or shared inappropriately (Ulyani, 2022). Mentors should emphasize that the mentoring relationship is built on mutual respect and confidentiality, which would help alleviate fears of judgment or breach of trust (Barnett, 2008). This clear communication about the boundaries of the mentoring relationship ensures that students feel secure in expressing their concerns without fear of negative consequences. Additionally, mentors should be equipped with tools for responding to sensitive issues in a respectful and supportive manner (Julkarnain & Tamam, 2022).

To enhance the non-judgmental atmosphere, mentoring sessions can include exercises that foster emotional safety and trust (Mischenko, Nicholas-Hoff, Schussler, Iwu, & Jennings, 2022). For example, ice-breaking activities that promote vulnerability and sharing, such as

reflective journaling or group discussions on general life challenges, can be integrated into the sessions. These exercises allow students to share their experiences in a less structured and more informal way, easing the process of opening up about deeper issues. When students see their peers sharing personal stories or challenges, they might feel encouraged to share their own, creating a culture of openness and mutual support within the group (Kamaruddin & Ardiansyah, 2024).

The mentoring program could also benefit from the involvement of peer mentors, who can serve as intermediaries between the students and the senior mentors. Peer mentors, especially those who are closer in age and experience to the students, might be able to connect with them in a way that is less intimidating (Ula & Suwarno, 2023). These peer mentors can act as role models, demonstrating how to express emotions and seek help without fear of judgment. Peer mentorship provides an additional layer of support, where students can share their concerns more comfortably before approaching a senior mentor. This can gradually build confidence in the mentoring process, especially for those who might feel overwhelmed by the authority figure of a senior mentor (Lubis & Nasution, 2017).

Feedback mechanisms, such as anonymous surveys or informal discussions, can help identify areas where students still feel uncomfortable sharing personal issues. These mechanisms can provide valuable insights into the specific aspects of the mentoring environment that need adjustment (Syarnubi, Mansir, Purnomo, Harto, & Hawi, 2021). If certain students express feeling judged or misunderstood, it can indicate areas where mentors might need further training or where adjustments to the program's approach could be beneficial. Continuous evaluation of the mentoring program ensures that it evolves in response to the students' needs, further enhancing the sense of security and trust within the relationship. By making this feedback a regular part of the program, it becomes easier to address concerns before they become significant barriers to effective mentoring (Marzuki & Haq, 2018).

The mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara can also benefit from integrating Islamic teachings into the approach to personal issues. Islam places a strong emphasis on compassion, forgiveness, and understanding, which can serve as core values in creating a non-judgmental mentoring environment. Mentors can incorporate these values into their interactions with students, offering guidance based on the principles of empathy and mercy found in Islamic teachings. This would not only make the mentoring sessions feel more aligned with the students' spiritual beliefs but also reinforce the importance of compassion in relationships. By integrating these values into both the content and the method of mentoring, students will likely feel more comfortable in approaching their mentors with personal issues, knowing that their concerns will be met with understanding and support.

Approaches To Address Time Constraints and Accommodate Student Diversity Effectively

Time constraints are one of the most significant challenges in the mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara. Mentors often face difficulties in dedicating enough time to engage deeply with each student due to the packed academic schedule. One effective strategy to overcome this issue is to streamline mentoring sessions by focusing on essential topics and allowing for more focused, yet impactful, interactions. Instead of trying to cover a wide range

of topics, mentors could prioritize key themes related to Islamic values and personal development that are relevant to the students' immediate needs. This could involve structuring the mentoring program around specific themes for each term, ensuring that each session is targeted and goal-oriented. By narrowing the scope of discussion in each session, mentors can maximize the impact of their limited time while still addressing crucial aspects of students' growth (Maulidiyah, Muhammad, & Syahrin, 2022).

Another approach to overcoming time constraints involves integrating mentoring into the daily school activities in a more seamless way. For example, short mentoring sessions could be incorporated into breaks or during free periods. These mini-sessions can focus on quick discussions or reflections on specific values such as honesty, discipline, or respect, which can be reinforced throughout the school day (Suyadi, Darmiatun, Barizi, & Supriyatno, 2023). By embedding mentoring moments within the natural flow of the school schedule, mentors can continue to guide students without requiring a significant time commitment. This method allows for more frequent, less time-intensive interactions that still provide valuable insights and guidance (Muawwanah & Darmiyanti, 2022).

To address the varying levels of religious knowledge among students, mentors can implement a tiered approach to mentoring. This strategy involves tailoring the content of each session based on the students' existing knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings (Suwandi & Widodo, 2021). For students with a strong religious background, mentoring sessions can delve into more complex aspects of Islamic principles, while for those with less exposure to religious teachings, simpler, foundational lessons can be provided. Mentors can assess each student's understanding at the beginning of the program and create personalized learning paths, ensuring that every student receives the appropriate level of support. This approach allows for a more customized experience that meets the individual needs of students without overwhelming them or leaving them behind (Mujahidin & Syiddiq, 2022).

Peer mentoring is another effective strategy to address both time constraints and varying levels of religious knowledge. In this model, older or more knowledgeable students can act as mentors for their peers, helping to bridge the gap between students with differing levels of understanding (Sujarwo, 2024). Peer mentors can assist in reinforcing the lessons taught by the senior mentors, providing explanations and guidance in a way that is relatable to their peers. This also reduces the burden on senior mentors, as they can delegate certain aspects of the mentoring process to the peer mentors, allowing for more efficient use of time. Peer mentoring encourages collaboration and creates a supportive network where students can learn from each other, which fosters a deeper sense of community and mutual respect (Muzayaroh, 2021).

The use of multimedia resources can also be a powerful tool in addressing time constraints and diverse knowledge levels. Mentors can supplement their sessions with videos, podcasts, or online lectures that students can access at their own convenience. These resources can provide additional context and explanations on Islamic teachings, allowing students to learn outside of the formal mentoring sessions (Subki & Imami, 2022). By providing students with materials that they can explore independently, mentors can free up time during their sessions to focus on more personalized guidance and discussions. This blended learning approach ensures that students receive comprehensive support while maintaining the flexibility to learn at their own pace (Najiburrahman, Azizah, Jazilurrahman, Azizah, & Jannah, 2022).

To further support students with varying levels of religious knowledge, the mentoring program could incorporate group discussions or study circles. These sessions can encourage students to learn from one another and share their insights on the topics discussed. Group discussions also provide an opportunity for students to ask questions and clarify doubts in a collaborative environment (Subaidi, Mahnun, & Arsyad, 2024). Mentors can guide these discussions, offering insights, when necessary, but the emphasis would be on peer-to-peer learning. This strategy helps students gain a deeper understanding of the material while fostering a sense of community and shared learning. It also allows students with more religious knowledge to take on leadership roles within the group, further enhancing the mentoring experience for both the leaders and their peers (Mullen, 2012; Nur Aini, Sahlan, & Arifin Billa, 2023).

In conclusion, overcoming time constraints and varying levels of religious knowledge in the mentoring program requires a combination of strategies aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of each session. By streamlining content, integrating mentoring into the daily schedule, personalizing learning paths, utilizing peer mentors, incorporating multimedia resources, and promoting collaborative learning, the program can become more efficient and inclusive. These strategies ensure that every student, regardless of their prior knowledge, has the opportunity to benefit from the program, while also addressing the challenge of limited time. Through these efforts, the mentoring program can enhance both the academic and spiritual development of students, creating a more balanced and impactful learning experience (Jie & Kamrozzaman, 2024; M. Suud & Na'imah, 2023).

Methods To Enhance Parental Involvement and Engagement in The Program

Enhancing parental involvement in the mentoring program at MAN 2 Kutai Kartanegara is crucial for reinforcing the Islamic values being taught and ensuring that these values extend beyond the school environment. One effective approach is to establish more direct lines of communication between mentors and parents. Regular updates on students' progress, challenges, and achievements can be shared with parents through meetings, emails, or dedicated communication platforms. By providing parents with a clear understanding of what their children are learning and how they are developing, mentors can encourage greater parental support in reinforcing these lessons at home (Solihat & Wahyudi, 2023). This ongoing dialogue helps ensure that the messages students receive in school align with the values promoted by their families, creating a unified approach to character development (Nur, Purwanto, & Santoso, 2021).

To further enhance parental involvement, workshops or training sessions for parents can be organized. These workshops could focus on key themes such as the importance of instilling Islamic values in children, effective parenting strategies, and ways to support students' academic and moral growth outside of school (Sari, Zainiyati, & Hana, 2020). Involving parents in their children's education empowers them to take an active role in reinforcing the same principles that the mentoring program emphasizes. Parents would gain a better understanding of the mentoring process and learn practical ways to create a supportive home environment that encourages the practice of Islamic values (Latif, Ubaidillah, & Mundir, 2023; Mu'min, 2023). These sessions could also provide an opportunity for parents to share their own

experiences and challenges, fostering a sense of community and mutual support (Abdullah, Rahim, & Omar, 2021; Kardi, Basri, Suhartini, & Meliani, 2023; Masrur, 2023).

Another way to enhance parental involvement is by inviting parents to participate in school activities and mentoring sessions. While mentors typically lead the sessions, having parents attend or even co-facilitate certain activities could deepen their connection to the program (Sandria, Asy'ari, & Siti Fatimah, 2022). For example, parents could be invited to join in community service projects or religious discussions, where they can model Islamic values alongside their children. This collaborative approach not only strengthens the bond between parents and students but also allows parents to see firsthand the positive impact of the mentoring program. By engaging in the activities together, families can reinforce the importance of Islamic teachings and create shared experiences that promote personal and spiritual growth (Paridi, 2019).

To further support the program's objectives, the school could establish a formal parent-mentor partnership program. In this model, mentors and parents would work together more closely to set goals and track students' progress (Pahlawanti, Harapan, & Wardiah, 2020; Samudera & Uyun, 2022). Mentors can provide guidance on how parents can support specific aspects of their child's development, whether it be related to academic challenges, behavioral issues, or the application of Islamic values in daily life. By actively involving parents in the goal-setting process, mentors can ensure that the support students receive extends beyond school and is aligned with the values being cultivated in the mentoring sessions. This partnership would provide students with a consistent support system at home and at school, which is crucial for fostering long-term character development (Putri, Kurniawan, & Nuraini, 2024).

Another strategy to enhance parental involvement is by creating a more inclusive school culture that values the role of parents in shaping their children's education (Samal, Mustafa, & Ibrahim, 2023). This can be achieved by organizing regular parent-teacher conferences, where mentors and school administrators can directly engage with parents about their children's progress. These conferences can also serve as an opportunity to discuss the importance of supporting the spiritual and moral aspects of education, emphasizing the role of Islamic values in shaping well-rounded individuals. Additionally, school events such as family days, where parents and students participate together in activities, can help build a stronger connection between the school and home environments. By celebrating the involvement of parents in school life, the institution reinforces the message that education is a shared responsibility (Rahyasih, Pribadi, & Nurazizah, 2022).

Finally, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the mentoring program can encourage parents to take a more active role in supporting its goals. Regular reports on the program's successes and its positive impact on students can be shared with parents through newsletters or school meetings (Samad, Bin Mujib, & Malik, 2023). When parents see the tangible benefits of the program, such as improved student behavior, academic performance, and adherence to Islamic values, they are more likely to become invested in its continued success. Parents can also be encouraged to share their feedback and suggestions, making them feel valued and integral to the program's development. This sense of partnership and shared responsibility strengthens the overall impact of the program and ensures that students receive consistent support both at home and in school (Rohmah, Sauri, & Sukandar, 2022).

In conclusion, enhancing parental involvement in the mentoring program requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving communication, offering educational workshops, inviting parents to participate in activities, fostering parent-mentor partnerships, creating an inclusive school culture, and promoting a sense of ownership. By engaging parents in these ways, the mentoring program can extend its reach beyond the classroom, reinforcing the Islamic values taught and ensuring that students receive continuous support in applying these values to their daily lives. The collaborative effort between parents and mentors will help create a more consistent and supportive environment for students' moral and spiritual growth, making the program more effective in achieving its objectives (Sa'adah & Pamungkas, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The mentoring program at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Kutai Kartanegara has shown encouraging results in shaping students' Islamic character, with an emphasis on values such as honesty, discipline, respect, and responsibility. A striking finding is that although the program has been successful in improving students' behavior, the challenges faced, such as time constraints and varying levels of religious knowledge, suggest that there is potential that has not been fully tapped. This confirms the need for a more comprehensive approach to address students' different religious backgrounds so that all can equally benefit from the program.

However, this study has limitations, especially in terms of data collection which may not cover the full range of student and parent perspectives. In addition, the limited time for observations and interviews may affect the depth of analysis regarding the impact of the mentoring program. These limitations indicate the need for further research to get a more complete picture of the effectiveness of the program and the challenges faced.

For future research, it is suggested that the focus be on developing more inclusive methods to accommodate students' diverse religious backgrounds. In addition, research could explore ways to increase parental involvement in the mentoring program, such as through training and collaborative activities. With this approach, it is expected that

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