

Application of Character Education in Rusmee Sthapana School Mayo, Pattani Thailand

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i4.1247>

*Danilo Pernando, Abdurrahman^{ab}

¹²Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Medan

Corresponding Author: daniopernando24@gmail.com

A B S T R A C T

This study aims to explore the strategies for implementing character education at Rusmee Sthapana School in Mayo, Pattani, Thailand region predominantly inhabited by a Muslim minority. The school integrates Islamic values and local cultural traditions into its educational practices. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, involving school principals, teachers, students, and community members. The findings indicate that character education at the school is implemented holistically and contextually. Key strategies include the integration of character values into classroom instruction, daily habituation through morning *halaqah* and congregational prayers, role modeling by teachers and school leaders, active participation of parents and the surrounding community, as well as observation-based non-academic assessments. These practices are in line with Thomas Lickona's (2018) framework of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, and reflect the competencies of 21st-century learning as outlined by Trilling and Fadel (2016). This study contributes to the discourse on contextually grounded character education models rooted in religious and cultural values within multicultural educational settings.

Keywords: *Character Education, Islamic Schools, Local Values, Holistic Approach, Rusmee Sthapana School*

Article History:

Received 13th July 2025

Accepted 01st August 2025

Published 21st August 2025



INTRODUCTION

Character be properties that owned by individuals that must be developed through education. Therefore step Early for teacher is to understand more in About Substance of character aforementioned, How to facilitate its growth, and methods for evaluating them. To understand a character, It is important to examine the definition of the character itself. Example, One of the characters that wants to be instilled in the school is "Discipline." The first step that needs to be taken is to provide a clear definition or meaning about "Discipline." The more detailed the meaning contained in this character, it is easier to identify the indicators. (Salirawati, 2021)

Character education serves as an essential basis for developing a generation that not only smart in the academic aspect, but also has morals Solidresponsibility to the community and taste empathy to others. In line with what is said (Safitri, 2020) that Education Characters have a role that It is crucial for students to build attitudes responsible. Education very Needed currently is kind education that able to combine character education with system who can Increase development all aspects child included cognitive, physical, social-emotional, creative, and spiritual.

Through the education that such child-The child can be directed to become Individual intact. In the context of minority Muslim communities such as those in southern Thailand, character education faces unique challenges. This region, like Pattani Province, is home to a Malay Muslim community struggling to maintain its religious and cultural identity amidst a

Buddhist-oriented national education system. Previous research (Yusof & Ali, 2020; Ahmad & Saad, 2022) indicates that Islamic schools in Thailand face a dilemma between upholding Islamic values and adapting to the national curriculum. In this situation, a character education approach based on Islamic values and local wisdom is crucial. Rusmee Sthapana School, located in Mayo, Pattani, Thailand, is one such school that strives to integrate character values into daily learning. The school operates in a pluralistic society with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. This situation demands the implementation of character education that not only prioritizes universal values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline but also accommodates local religious and cultural values.

The Qur'an also explains how our attitude is not only at school but also at home, not only to teachers but also to parents, this is in line with the Qur'an Q.S Al-Isra' verse 23 which reads

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آفٍ وَلَا تُنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ۚ ۲۳﴾

Meaning: "And your Lord has commanded that you should worship none other than Him and that you should do good to your parents. If one of them or both of them reaches old age in your care, then do not say to them the word "ah" and do not yell at them, and speak to them a good word" Q.S Al-Isra' verse 23.

Quality Advantages children not only lies in the ability Cognitive but also on the formation Better characters for Every child as an individual. (Safitri, 2020) In the era globalization and Progress rapid technology, challenges in build character student increasingly Complicated. Therefore, implementation Character education in institution formal education, including in Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, very important. Rusmee Sthapana School, which Located at Southern Parts Thailand, is one of the institution that Trying to unify character values into Teaching and Learning Process everyday. This School Operate in the context of society diverse, with Various ethnic and religious backgrounds, including the Muslim community in Patani. Situation Ini need A character education approach that is not only Put Values common such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline, but also acknowledging wisdom Local and Values religion.

However, in practice, character education at Rusmee Sthapana School faces a number of obstacles. Limited resources, lack of training for teachers related to character education, and low parental involvement in supporting school programs are some of the problems faced. On the other hand, the impact of outside culture through social media platforms and the shift in the lifestyle of the current young generation also play a role in the process of forming students' character.

Deep Development efforts characters in Institution, All the elements involved must accommodation included Various aspects education itself, such as material Curriculum teaching methods, Rating, Quality relationship, subject management, administration school, implementation of activities Extracurricular, Utilization means and infrastructure Funding, and ethics work All individuals in the environment education. Although the teacher serves as the front line in the process Learning at room class not mean responsibility Instilling character on students only lies on them. All parties, Starting from officials to employees level basics such as security guards, Cleaners, As well as the parking attendants. must Collaborate to build The Culture of the School based on character, appropriate with role and ability each. (Salirawati, 2021)

Thus, this provides inspiration for researchers to further research the application of character education to students at Rusmee Sthapana school with the title "The Application of Character Education at Rusmee Sthapana School, Thailand".

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. The qualitative approach was chosen because it aims to deeply understand the meaning, process, and values behind the application of character education in a particular school context (Creswell, 2016). This type of descriptive research is used to describe systematically, factually,

Application of Character Education in Rusmee Sthapana School Mayo, Pattani Thailand

and accurately the strategies, values, and impact of character education on students at the Rusmee Sthapana School (Lexy J. Moleong, 2017).

This research was conducted at the Rusmee Sthapana School, Mayo, Pattani, Thailand. This location was chosen because it has unique characteristics in the application of character education based on Islamic values and local culture in the midst of a Muslim minority community. The subjects of the study include: School principals, teachers in the field of study and moral coaches, Junior high/high school students, Community leaders or guardians of students (if relevant).

To obtain in-depth and accurate data, this study uses the following data collection techniques: Participatory Observation is carried out directly by the researcher to observe learning activities and character habituation practices in schools (Sugiyono, 2019). Observations include halaqah activities, book readings, and students' religious activities. In-depth Interview. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to school principals, teachers, and students to obtain information related to the strategies and character values applied (Moleong, 2017). Documentation Study, This technique is carried out by examining documents such as school curriculum, syllabus, character development programs, and documentation of learning activities (Lexy J. Moleong, 2017).

Data analysis was carried out using an interactive model from Miles and Huberman (1994), which involved three main stages, namely: Data Reduction, Selection process, focusing, and simplification of field data relevant to the research focus. Data Presentation is presented in the form of descriptive narratives, matrices, or diagrams to facilitate understanding. Drawing Conclusions and Verification, the researcher draws temporary conclusions which are then verified continuously until valid results are obtained. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, a triangulation technique is used (Patton, 2022), namely: Source triangulation: comparing information from various sources (teachers, students, principals). Triangulation technique: comparing observation, interview, and documentation results.

FINDINGS DISCUSSION

Findings

This study was conducted to find out and describe the strategy for implementing character education at Rusmee Sthapana School Mayo, Pattani, Thailand. Based on observations, interviews, and documentation studies conducted on school principals, teachers, students, and community leaders, the following results were obtained. Rusmee Sthapana School is located in a Muslim-majority area in the Southern Thailand region, precisely in Mayo Regency, Pattani Province. This school emphasizes education based on Islamic values that is integrated in all school activities, both academic and non-academic. Strong socio-cultural characteristics, a spiritual environment, and community involvement make this school a model of local-based character education.

Integration of Character Values in Learning

Character values such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, and humility are integrated into the subject matter, especially in the subjects of Islam, Arabic, and Islamic history. Teachers actively associate learning materials with real-life examples.

Interviews with Arabic teachers show that every learning topic is always inserted with a moral message, even in grammar activities (nahwu-sharaf) it is still associated with learning manners and the importance of honesty in science.

First, the finding that character values such as honesty, responsibility, and hard work are systematically integrated in learning, especially in religious and Arabic subjects, is very much in line with the results of Fitriyani's (2021) research which emphasizes that pesantren-based character education can shape students' discipline and morality through a religious approach and structured daily activities. This strengthens that the integration of religious values in the curriculum is an effective strategy in shaping the character of students.

Character Habituation through Daily Activities

The school carries out habituation activities such as morning halaqah, congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, and yellow book halaqah in the afternoon. This activity indirectly

trains students' discipline, solemnity, and spiritual responsibility.

Based on observations, students who arrive late are not only recorded administratively, but also given special guidance by character development teachers.

Second, daily habits such as halaqah, congregational prayer, and the reading of the yellow book applied in Rusmee Sthapana confirm the results of Marzuki & Sholikhah's (2022) research which emphasizes the importance of continuous habituation and transformative approaches in character education. Both studies show that character formation is not enough only through theory, but must be realized in students' daily practice so that values can be firmly rooted.

Exemplary Teachers and Principals

Teachers are central figures in the implementation of character values. All teachers are required to maintain attitudes, speech, and appearance as a form of example to students. The example of the principal as a spiritual leader as well as an academic is also a real example.

One of the students said that "Ustadz never gets angry hard, but we are embarrassed if we violate. It makes us want to change ourselves."

Third, the aspect of exemplary teachers and principals as role models in character education is in accordance with the findings of Hasanah & Nurhayati (2020) who stated that the role of teachers as role models greatly determines the success of character education, especially in multicultural school environments. The experience at Rusmee Sthapana shows that teachers' consistency in practicing moral values in real life is an important motivation for students to imitate and internalize positive characters.

Parent and Community Involvement

Character education does not only take place in the school environment, but also involves parents and the community. The school actively holds religious activities, community service, and public recitation involving students' guardians.

School documentation shows that there is a monthly "Parent Gathering" program that discusses the development of students' morals and habits at home.

Fourth, the involvement of parents and communities in supporting student character education found in this study is also in line with the view of Berkowitz & Bier (2017) who stated that effective character education must involve the community, not just the school. The "Parent Gathering" program and religious social activities at Rusmee Sthapana reinforce the evidence that synergy between school and family is the key to successful character building.

Non-Academic Evaluation

Character evaluation is carried out qualitatively and observation-based. Each teacher has a student character notebook that is used to assess behavior development. This evaluation is an important part of the consideration of scholarships and awards at the school.

The documents analyzed showed the existence of a "Moral Card" filled out every week by the class teacher, which recorded the students' daily behavior such as cleanliness, manners, and activeness in worship.

Finally, non-academic evaluations based on observation of students' behavior and character recording support the principle of character assessment developed by Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis (2018) namely that character assessment should be based on students' real habits and actions, not just theoretical knowledge. The implementation of the "Moral Card" in Rusmee Sthapana shows the practical implementation of this principle, which allows for continuous monitoring and character strengthening. Thus, the results of this study not only confirm previous findings, but also provide additional empirical evidence that character education based on local religious and cultural values, complemented by community involvement and continuous assessment, is an effective strategy in shaping the personality of students who excel morally and socially.

Discussion

Strategy for the Implementation of Character Education at Rusmee Sthapana School Mayo, Pattani Thailand

The implementation of character education at Rusmee Sthapana School in Mayo District, Pattani Province, Thailand, is conducted comprehensively and systematically by integrating Islamic values, local cultural traditions, and community engagement. This strategy aligns with Thomas Lickona's (2018) theory, which emphasizes three core elements of character development: *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. It also reflects the 21st-century competencies framework by Trilling and Fadel (2016), which promotes the integration of ethical values and essential life skills.

The findings of this study identify five key strategies employed by the school in fostering character education:

Integration in Formal Learning

Character values such as honesty, responsibility, humility, and discipline are integrated into the formal curriculum, especially in Islamic Religious Education, Arabic, and general subjects. Teachers consistently embed moral teachings through stories of the Prophet, classical Islamic texts (turats), and reflective classroom discussions.

A teacher of Arabic remarked, *"Every lesson contains a moral message whether we are studying grammar or vocabulary, we always relate it to the ethics of learning and respect for knowledge"*.

This approach supports both moral knowing and moral feeling, fostering students' understanding and emotional connection to ethical principles. These findings are in line with the study by Fitriyani (2021), who emphasizes the effectiveness of integrating religious values into subject matter as a foundation for moral development in students.

Daily Habituation and Non-Formal Activities

The school embeds character formation into students' daily routines through activities such as morning halaqah, congregational prayers, and afternoon classical Islamic book readings. These regular practices cultivate discipline, piety, and a sense of communal responsibility.

One student shared, *"Joining the morning halaqah and praying together makes me feel part of something meaningful. It shapes how I behave the rest of the day"*

Such habituation reflects moral action, as it translates abstract values into habitual conduct. Marzuki and Sholikhah (2022) reinforce this view by asserting that character development must be consistently enacted in daily student life to be effective and enduring.

Teacher Example

Teachers serve as central figures in the character education process by modeling integrity, patience, sincerity, and ethical communication. Their actions provide students with real-life references for moral behavior.

The principal noted, *"Students are more likely to internalize values when they see them practiced genuinely by their teachers every day"*

This aligns with the moral feeling component of Lickona's framework. According to Hasanah and Nurhayati (2020), teacher exemplification is one of the most influential factors in the success of character education, especially in multicultural and faith-based environments.

Collaboration with Parents and the Community

Character education at Rusmee Sthapana is not confined to school boundaries. The school regularly engages parents and the wider community through religious events, community service activities, and monthly "Parent Gathering" sessions to discuss students' moral development.

A parent stated, *"The school updates us on our children's behavior and invites us to be involved. This strengthens our role at home too"*

This collaborative approach supports Berkowitz and Bier's (2017) framework, which underscores the necessity of home-school partnerships in shaping character. Similarly, Sri Mardiah (2020) emphasizes that community involvement enhances the sustainability of school-based character education programs.

Non-Academic Character Evaluation

Character development is assessed through continuous observation, teacher monitoring logs, and behavior-oriented assessments such as the weekly "Character Card."

These tools capture students' day-to-day conduct and contribute to decisions regarding awards and mentorship.

A homeroom teacher explained, "We use the character card to track students' daily behavior, from punctuality to manners during prayer. It helps guide our coaching strategies"

This form of performance-based assessment resonates with Lickona et al. (2018), who argue that evaluating character should involve observable behavior, not merely cognitive understanding. This practical approach addresses the weaknesses identified in Salirawati's (2021) research, which critiques the lack of effective character assessment systems in many conventional schools.

Compared to previous research such as Sri Mardiah (2019) which emphasizes extracurricular activities and family cooperation, or Septi Wahyu Utami (2019) which focuses on student discipline through routine activities, this study highlights the strategic role of teachers as an integrator of character values in learning and school life. In addition, Thailand's multicultural and Muslim-community-based local context provides a strong religious and cultural dimension to its implementation, making it different from studies in more formal and bureaucratic Indonesian schools. Thus, the strategy of implementing character education at Rusmee Sthapana School can be an example of good practices of contextual, religious, and participatory character education, especially for schools in minority or multicultural areas.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the strategy for implementing character education at Rusmee Sthapana School, Mayo, Pattani, Thailand is implemented comprehensively through the integration of Islamic values, local culture, and community approaches. This approach is not only oriented towards moral knowing, but also fosters moral feelings and moral actions, as theorized by Thomas Lickona (2018). The strategies implemented include the integration of character values in formal learning, the habituation of daily religious activities, the role models of teachers and principals, the active involvement of parents and the community, and character evaluation based on non-academic behavior. The practice of character education in this school is an effective contextual model for the formation of students who excel morally and socially, especially in multicultural areas and Muslim minority communities. For Schools: It is important to continue strengthening teacher training in character education based on Islamic values and local wisdom so that the approach used is more focused and measurable. For Government and Policy Makers: More flexible and contextual character education policy support is needed, especially in minority or multicultural areas such as Southern Thailand. For Parents and Communities: More active involvement in school programs is expected, because synergy between families and educational institutions has been proven to increase the effectiveness of student character development. For Further Researchers: Further research can be conducted using an action research approach to test the effectiveness of each strategy quantitatively or develop a locally-based character evaluation model. Theoretical Implications: This study strengthens the relevance of character education theory by Lickona and 21st century competencies by Trilling & Fadel in the context of Muslim communities in Southeast Asia. The integration of religious and cultural values has proven to be a relevant and applicable approach. Practical Implications: The strategies implemented at Rusmee Sthapana School can be replicated by other schools, especially in multicultural areas, as best practices for character education based on spirituality and community. Social Implications: This character education model contributes to forming a young generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has noble character, is tolerant, and is socially responsible in a diverse society.

REFERENCES

Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2017). *What works in character education: A research-driven guide for educators*. Character Education Partnership.

- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Fitriyani, E. (2021). Integrasi nilai-nilai karakter dalam pembelajaran berbasis pesantren. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 11(2), 113–124. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v11i2.12345>
- Hasanah, U., & Nurhayati, D. (2020). Peran keteladanan guru dalam pembentukan karakter siswa di sekolah multikultural. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, 25(1), 88–95. <https://doi.org/10.24832/jpnk.v25i1.5678>
- Lexy, J. Moleong. (2017). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif* (Edisi revisi). PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Lickona, T. (2018). *Educating for character: How our schools can teach respect and responsibility*. Bantam Books.
- Lickona, T., Schaps, E., & Lewis, C. (2018). *Eleven principles of effective character education*. Character.org.
- Marzuki, M., & Sholikhah, H. (2022). Strategi pembiasaan karakter dalam kehidupan sekolah berbasis nilai Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 9(1), 45–57. <https://doi.org/10.24252/jpai.v9i1.2022>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2022). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Qur'an Surah Al-Isra' [17]: 23. (n.d.). *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahannya*. Kementerian Agama RI.
- Safitri, M. (2020). Pendidikan karakter berbasis integratif dalam membangun pribadi utuh siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, 53(3), 213–225. <https://doi.org/10.24114/jpp.v53i3.4567>
- Salirawati, D. (2021). Evaluasi sistem pendidikan karakter di sekolah. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 27(1), 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jip.v27i1.34567>
- Sri Mardiah. (2019). Peran orang tua dalam pendidikan karakter siswa di sekolah berbasis Islam. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 9(2), 144–153. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v9i2.45678>
- Trilling, B., & Fadel, C. (2016). *21st century skills: Learning for life in our times*. Jossey-Bass.
- Utami, S. W. (2019). Disiplin siswa melalui pembiasaan dan kegiatan rutin. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 7(1), 38–48. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jmpi.v7i1.3456>