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Religious values as foundations of education: Insights from teachers' perspectives

Ghufron Maksum[1]* (iD), Muhtolib[1], Mahmurudin[1], Sulaeman[2], Wiwi Pertiwi[1], Hidayatul Azizah Gazali[1], Raudhatul Husna[1], Zuhrupatul Jannah[1], Agus Supriadi1, Istiqomah[1], Muzna Attamimi[1], A. Syaiful Fahmi[1], Salman Ali[1] & Dewanti Srihati[3]

[1]Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia

[2]Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

[3]STIT Al-Quraniyah Manna, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ghufronmaksum@mhs.ptiq.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The integration of religious values into primary education plays a crucial role in shaping children's character and morality from an early age. As the forefront of the educational process, teachers hold a strategic role in instilling and exemplifying these values within the school environment. This study aimed to explore primary school teachers' perspectives on the urgency of embedding religious values in formal education, identify which values are essential to introduce early, and examine the reflective role of teachers as role models and agents of character formation in schools. Adopting a narrative inquiry approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The participants consisted of six primary school teachers with in-depth knowledge of the characteristics of children in their respective teaching contexts. The findings revealed that: (1) religious values should be instilled from an early age as they are fundamental to character building; (2) the values deemed most essential included morality, faith and monotheism, discipline, honesty and justice, politeness and social etiquette, care and responsibility, compassion and empathy, as well as tolerance and cooperation; and (3) teachers served as role models, facilitators, motivators, and mentors who guided and monitored students' attitudes and behaviors throughout the school day. The implications of this study indicate that integrating religious values into the learning process requires appropriate pedagogical approaches and sustained institutional support. These findings enrich the discourse on religion-based character education at the primary level and pave the way for developing culturally contextualized value-based learning models. Furthermore, the study provides a foundation for future research on the effectiveness of value education interventions across diverse social and cultural contexts.

KEYWORDS: religious values, role modeling, student morality, teacher perspectives

Introduction

Education serves to develop students' cognitive abilities and plays a fundamental role in shaping their character and personality, grounded in moral and spiritual values. In this regard, religious values provide an essential foundation for strengthening personal integrity and ethical conduct (Mogra, 2017). Amid the growing complexity of contemporary social challenges, the urgency of religious education within formal institutions has gained increasing attention from scholars and policymakers (Fathurrohman et al., 2025; Suparjo & Hidayah, 2023). Teachers hold a strategic role as the primary agents in transmitting religious values to students through various approaches, including exemplary behavior, collective prayer activities, and classroom dialogue (Nuha, 2025; Wulandari & Abdurrasyid, 2021). Their understanding of the importance of these values significantly affects the effectiveness of students' internalization processes (Sauri et al., 2022). Through pedagogical practice and role modeling, teachers function as facilitators of learning and as moral actors who contribute to the holistic development of students' character (Primandini & Sunarso, 2025). Consequently, an in-depth exploration of the teacher's role in internalizing religious values is crucial in today's formal education.

A growing body of research confirms that integrating religious values into formal education can cultivate religious character and enhance students' social awareness by reinforcing empathy, tolerance, and moral conduct, particularly when combined with cultural values and local wisdom (Hilmi et al., 2024; Kulsum & Apriyani, 2025; Uyun et al., 2024). Wulandari and Abdurrasyid (2021) underscore the pivotal role of teachers in fostering a spiritual environment in primary schools through modeling and religious activities. Furthermore, collaboration between schools and families is essential for the effective internalization of religious values in children. This collaboration merges parental role modeling with school-based reinforcement through consistent support, joint activities, and the integration of religious principles into the curriculum, thereby promoting tolerance and character development (Ikhwan et al., 2019; Listiawati, 2021; Miftahurrohmah et al., 2024). Similarly, Arif et al. (2024) highlight the importance of habituation in shaping children's religious character from an early age in integrated Islamic primary schools, while Jannah (2025) shows that Islamic religious education teachers play a central role in instilling interfaith tolerance through reflective, dialogical, and behavior-oriented approaches in the school environment. Aziza et al. (2025) further emphasize the role of value-based pedagogies, teacher role modeling, the use of digital media, and intercultural dialogue in fostering students' religiosity and tolerance through the Islamic religious education. These findings consistently place teachers as the central actors in shaping students' religious character within the school context.

The implementation of religious value education in formal institutions faces conceptual, practical, and perceptual challenges that affect the effectiveness of value internalization. Conceptually, teachers often encounter dilemmas in defining values such as tolerance and honesty, which may be interpreted differently by the curriculum, students, and the broader social context (Mąkosa, 2016). Practically, the constraints include limited resources and the dominance of teacher-centered approaches (Bukenya & Peter, 2024). On a perceptual level, challenges arise from discrepancies between teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of religious value education, particularly concerning values such as honesty, empathy, and respect, as well as from tensions between teachers' personal beliefs and their professional responsibilities in pluralistic societies (Arslan & Ince, 2023; Nelson & Yang, 2023). These studies highlight the need for religious education policies that are both objective and inclusive, while also illustrating the complexity of the teacher's role in navigating the intersection of diverse social realities and normative curricula. This underscores the importance of further investigation into how teachers interpret and enact their religious roles within the evolving landscape of formal education.

The complexity of the phenomenon concerning the importance of religious values in education calls for a deeper understanding of the teacher's role as a reflective individual, one who not only implements educational policies or religious programs (Jarvis, 2019) but also brings personal experiences and subjective interpretations into their pedagogical practices (Mohamed et al., 2022). Although numerous studies have highlighted the significance of religious values in education, most have concentrated on institutional aspects, school programs, or collaboration with families. This study offers a fresh perspective by delving into teachers' cognitive constructions of religious values through a qualitative narrative inquiry approach, which views experience as a form of knowledge structured through stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The research focused on three core dimensions: the urgency of religious values, the types of values deemed essential, and the teacher's reflective

role in shaping students' character. Accordingly, the study addressed the following research questions: (1) How do primary school teachers perceive the urgency of instilling religious values in formal education? (2) Which religious values are considered most important to be introduced to students from an early age? Furthermore, (3) How do teachers understand and enact their reflective role as role models and agents of character formation in instilling religious values within the school environment? Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on values education by positioning teachers as reflective and active subjects in the process of religious value internalization. Practically, the findings can serve as a foundation for developing teacher training programs, designing value-based curricula, and formulating education policies that are more attuned to the personal and spiritual dynamics of teachers in shaping students' character.

Literature Review
Psychoeducational Foundations: Theoretical Frameworks Supporting the Teacher's Role in the Internalization of Religious Values

Teachers hold a strategic role in the education system, as conveyors of academic content and as agents of social and moral transformation. In fostering religious values such as faith, worship, ethics, and spiritually grounded interpersonal relationships, teachers function as caregivers, role models, mentors (Sudrajat, 2011), exemplars (Omeri, 2015), facilitators (Wiseza, 2017), and educators who nurture, guide, and train students while remaining knowledgeable and responsive to societal changes (Karmawan. & Lestari, 2021). This role is essential in shaping students' religious character (Sudrajat, 2011). The Javanese expression *"digugu lan ditiru"* ("to be trusted and emulated") underscores the necessity for teachers to possess relevant knowledge, wisdom, and integrity so they can earn students' trust and serve as worthy examples. From an educational psychology perspective, the success of teachers in instilling religious values is significantly affected by their personal example and interpersonal interactions, both of which contribute to the holistic formation of children's morals and character. Various theories reinforce the importance of such role modeling and personal engagement in nurturing religious character.

Social Learning Theory posits that children acquire a significant portion of their learning through observation and imitation (Bandura, 1977). When teachers consistently demonstrate religious behaviors, such as praying before lessons, practicing honesty, showing patience, and exercising tolerance, students are likely to imitate these actions, facilitating the internalization of values (Ashari, 2025; Krivokapic, 2018). Bandura (1977) emphasizes that children tend to replicate behaviors modeled by figures they perceive as authoritative and trustworthy, with teachers often being central role models within the school environment. Furthermore, Social Learning Theory offers a comprehensive framework for value internalization through processes such as observation, modeling, reinforcement, and the development of self-efficacy (Rahayu et al., 2021; Rishan et al., 2024). In Islamic education, this framework has been effectively integrated with modern digital tools, such as instructional videos, simulations, and social media, and traditional pedagogical methods like *hiwar* (dialogue), *qishah* (storytelling), and *amtsal* (analogies). These combined approaches have been particularly effective during the COVID-19 pandemic in fostering moral development and enhancing learner engagement (Afifah, 2024; Wati, 2022).

Theory of Moral Development highlights that moral value formation progresses through sequential stages, facilitated by meaningful social interaction (Kohlberg, 1981). Within this framework, teachers act as facilitators who create learning environments that stimulate ethical growth, for instance, by presenting concrete examples, engaging students in discussions about moral dilemmas, and rewarding positive behavior. The teaching approach must be adapted to align with each learner's stage of moral development. Empirical evidence suggests that higher religiosity correlates with more advanced moral reasoning across cultures (Pawlak et al., 2021). Applying this theory in educational contexts equips parents and teachers with a deeper understanding of children's moral stages, enabling them to cultivate strong values and social responsibility (Hanafiah, 2024). Integrating Kohlberg's framework with character education programs enhances moral formation by ensuring alignment between teaching strategies and students' developmental stages, thereby revealing the interplay between religion, moral growth, and pedagogical practice (Nainggolan & Naibaho, 2022).

Humanistic Learning Theory emphasizes student-centered education, where teachers foster environments grounded in compassion, empathy, and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1969). In this model, teachers

go beyond delivering knowledge to shaping students' personalities, encouraging emotional and spiritual development. The internalization of religious values is more effective when students feel safe, respected, and heard. By addressing students' emotional needs, teachers can facilitate deeper understanding and personal ownership of these values (Rogers, 1969). Prior research supports the effectiveness of humanistic, student-centered approaches, such as mindfulness-based curricula, narrative pedagogy, and experiential learning, in enhancing empathy, emotional well-being, and holistic growth (Li, 2025; Zhou et al., 2023). These methods foster self-awareness, collaboration, creativity, and professional identity, while promoting cognitive development through active engagement and varied, non-punitive teaching strategies (Li, 2025; Novrizal et al., 2023).

Transformative Learning Theory posits that genuine learning occurs when learners engage in deep reflection on their values and life experiences. In this context, teachers guide students in reflecting on social and religious events they have encountered, enabling them to develop more meaningful perspectives aligned with spiritual values (Purwanto et al., 2023; van Dijk-Groeneboer, 2020). Through this approach, religious education moves beyond the rote memorization of doctrine to become a vehicle for personal transformation and the cultivation of a renewed ethical and spiritual consciousness (Mezirow, 2000).Values Clarification Theory This theory emphasizes the process of helping students recognize, choose, and act in accordance with the values they believe in (Raths et al., 1978). In the context of religious values, this approach encourages students to consciously understand the meaning of religiosity and internalize it through reflection and learning experiences. *Ta'dib* Theory The concept of *ta'dib* according to Al-Attas emphasizes education as the inculcation of proper adab harmonizing knowledge, action, and ethics. Religious values do not stop at knowledge or rituals but shape moral integrity rooted in faith. (Al-Attas, 1991). Spiritual Theory Development in Education describe "relational consciousness" as the core of spiritual development, namely the awareness of relationships with oneself, others, nature, and God. (Hay & Nye, 2006). Ethic of Care Theory places caring relationships at the core of moral education. Teachers who integrate religious values can create a classroom climate full of empathy, responsibility, and respect, in line with religious teachings on compassion (*rahmah*) and brotherhood (Noddings, 2013).

These four theoretical perspectives demonstrate that a teacher's role in fostering religious values cannot be passive or one-directional. It requires a deliberate, reflective, and strategic process in creating a learning environment that enables the deep internalization of values. By serving as exemplary role models, offering moral guidance, providing emotional support, and facilitating critical reflection, teachers can shape students into individuals who are faithful, morally upright, and endowed with strong spiritual integrity.

The Urgency of Religious Value Internalization in Education

Religious values form the moral foundation of an individual, encompassing the development of character and positive habits that must be nurtured from an early age. These values play a pivotal role in shaping a child's moral compass and ethical conduct (Eryandi, 2023). Internalizing religious values is a crucial process in which children accept and internalize the deeper meaning embedded in these principles, thereby strengthening their personality and moral identity (Syafeie, 2020). As Mohamed (2017) emphasizes, instilling religious values from an early age helps foster honesty, patience, empathy, and responsibility. The internalization process encompasses *aqidah* (faith), *akhlaq* (morality), and *ibadah* (worship), which can be cultivated through formal classroom instruction as well as extracurricular religious activities (Fadilla et al., 2025). The targeted values include religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic participation, curiosity, patriotism, love of country, appreciation of achievement, friendliness, peacefulness, reading habits, environmental care, and social concern (Purwanti, 2017). Islamic values, which prioritize moral and ethical principles, have a profound capacity to shape students' character and identity (Eryandi, 2023). In today's context, religious education plays a crucial role in helping the younger generation preserve their faith amid growing secularism, while also serving as a bridge between secular trends and spiritual values (Oktaviani, 2024)

The effort to instill religious values does not only begin within the family environment but also needs to be strengthened through formal educational institutions. In this context, instilling worship values in elementary schools is very important for strengthening children's religious character and helping them adapt to the digital world, through role modeling, participation, wisdom in storytelling, habituation, and discipline (Astuti, 2024) Therefore, religious character education in elementary schools needs to be implemented comprehensively and consistently, emphasizing role modeling by teachers and the school environment, as well as the habituation

of positive values in daily life. This approach not only encourages the development of reflective behavior in children but also helps them become individuals of strong character, integrity, and the ability to face the complex challenges posed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Wakhudin, 2023).

Jean-Pierre Elias in (Silay, 2019) emphasizes that since ancient times, the fundamental aim of education has been to cultivate individuals who are moral and virtuous. He affirms that the development of a virtuous character has long been regarded as the primary goal of education. This perspective reinforces the urgency of integrating moral values, including religious ones, into formal education. In practice, schools are therefore expected not only to function as institutions for transferring knowledge but also as spaces for nurturing students' spiritual and moral virtues. Accordingly, learning activities should aim to foster qualities such as honesty, responsibility, and other religious values as objectives in their own right. Andrew Kim and David Sankey argue that value education is holistic in nature and aligns with religious and spiritual education. They explain that value education is "a field of learning which, like religious and spiritual education, is highly sensitive to the overall atmosphere and the holistic character of the learning process." Thus, teaching values requires attention to the entirety of students' experiences (physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual) similar to religious education, which is integrative in nature. (Silay, 2019).

The theoretical underpinnings for this emphasis are supported by prominent scholars. Durkheim (1956) asserts that education serves as a mechanism for socializing moral and spiritual values, thereby fostering social solidarity. Instilling religious values from an early age strengthens individual integrity and social cohesion. Kohlberg (1981) further notes that virtues such as honesty and responsibility, often taught through religious frameworks, are integral to moral development stages, culminating in actions guided by universal ethical principles. Lickona (1991) highlights that religious values form an essential dimension of character education, encompassing the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of "knowing, feeling, and doing the good." Similarly, Maslow (1970) places spiritual needs within the hierarchy of human self-actualization, asserting that religious values help individuals find holistic life meaning, emotionally and spiritually.

Religious value internalization thus serves as a foundation and a moral compass, equipping children to live by sound religious principles. These values are expected to provide a solid base for navigating life's challenges, grounded in knowledge, practice, and deep faith, ultimately fostering commendable character and worship aligned with religious teachings. In line with this, Fadilla et al. (2025) affirm that the scope of Islamic values that must be instilled in children includes three key dimensions: faith, worship practices, and moral formation. From a broader perspective, religious education holds a distinctive role in enriching the discourse on value education, as it is grounded in the conception of God as the ultimate source of values. This aligns with the view that religious education is not merely transcendental, but also integrative and political in nature, thereby enabling it to contribute both critically and productively to the development of contemporary values (Grümme, 2023).

Religious values are considered to play a fundamental role in shaping students' morality. Educators believe that the spiritual dimension has the capacity to instill universal values—such as honesty, responsibility, and justice—within students. Thus, education serves not only as a means of knowledge transmission but also as a platform for building strong character (Nucci & Narvaez, 2014). Religious values hold a strategic function in strengthening social cohesion, preserving cultural traditions, and acting as a cultural instrument within the educational sphere. From the perspective of educators, religiosity not only cultivates morally upright individuals but also fosters a harmonious sense of togetherness both within the school environment and in the broader community. In this way, religion functions as a moral foundation that promotes solidarity, reduces the potential for conflict, and reinforces students' cultural identity (Haydon, 2003). Religious values do not stand in isolation but are also integrated into the general curriculum by teachers. This integration enables a synergy between scientific knowledge and the students' spiritual beliefs (Aljaberi, 2015).

Furthermore, parental education plays a crucial role in shaping children's intelligence—academically, emotionally, and socially—which ultimately becomes a shared responsibility within the family (Junaidi, et al., 2022). One effective approach to supporting this development is through the integration of cultural narratives, such as folktales, that embed moral and religious values. For instance, among the Pasemah ethnic group in Kedurang, the folktale of *Sang Piatu* contains rich Islamic values that can be used as educational tools to foster religious character in children (Nafisendy, et al., 2025). Similarly, other traditional stories in *Andai-Andai*

introduce characters such as a wise monarch and the virtuous Beteri, who exemplify elevated social empathy, leadership, compassion, and beauty—traits that reinforce both moral and social intelligence (Junaidi, et al., 2024). These narratives not only highlight virtuous role models but also depict deep familial devotion and religious piety, as seen in the portrayal of the orphan who remains faithful to his grandmother and committed to his faith. Beteri's character, in particular, reflects essential aspects of social intelligence—such as empathy, social awareness, and interpersonal effectiveness—which are expressed through her interactions, decision-making, and daily conduct (Junaidi, et al., 2024).

In the modern educational context, these character values can be further reinforced through the integration of AI tools in language instruction, which help embed moral teachings into learning materials (Yanti, et al., 2025). Additionally, educators apply various character-building strategies—such as routine-based habituation, moral modeling, visual storytelling, and collaboration with parents—to cultivate values like honesty, discipline, empathy, and spiritual awareness. These efforts are extended beyond the classroom through religious and communal activities like duha prayers, *Jumat Berkah*, *Pesantren Kilat*, and Qur'anic literacy programs, ensuring a holistic and value-oriented education for children (Tohirin, et al., 2025).

Method

Research Design

This study adopted a narrative inquiry approach, a qualitative method aimed at exploring and understanding individuals' lived experiences through their personal stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This approach was selected because it is well-suited for uncovering the meanings behind primary school teachers' perspectives and experiences in instilling religious values in their students. Moreover, narrative inquiry enables the researchers to enter deeply into participants' worlds, valuing the subjectivity and complexity of their experiences as educators and moral agents. Rooted in the seminal works of Connelly and Clandinin since the 1990s, narrative inquiry focuses on lived experience (Clandinin et al., 2007) and seeks to understand human experience across time and place (Dewart et al., 2020). Data are examined through the dimensions of sociality, temporality, and place (Clandinin & Caine, 2008), which emerge within broader social, cultural, economic, and institutional narratives. As Bruce et al. (2016) note, narrative inquiry studies experience through stories and the process of "storying," generating themes from participants' accounts in a deeply contextual manner.

In general, this study is a qualitative inquiry designed to explore and understand the meanings derived from individuals' or groups' experiences in relation to a social or human problem (Cresswell, 2013). Data in this approach are expressed in words, sentences, narratives, verbal expressions, or visual representations such as images (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019). Qualitative research is conducted in natural settings with a holistic perspective, underpinned by a naturalistic paradigm and phenomenological theory, to examine social realities from the participants' perspective (Abdussamad & Sik, 2021).

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted in Kedurang Regency, South Bengkulu Province, involving six primary school teachers as participants. These teachers were selected because they were local residents with a deep understanding of the social and cultural characteristics of the children in the area. Furthermore, their willingness to participate as informants facilitated in-depth data exploration.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The interviews were designed to elicit teachers' narratives about their experiences in instilling religious values in students. Conducted in a narrative, reflective, and temporal manner, the interviews encouraged participants to recount their life experiences across the past, present, and future aspirations. This process was collaborative, with the researchers and participants working together to construct meaning from the shared stories. Observations were conducted to corroborate the interview data by documenting teachers' activities and interactions within the school environment. Documentation, such as lesson plans, daily notes, photographs of activities, and teachers' reflective writings, served to verify oral accounts and enrich the narratives. To ensure data validity, the study employed triangulation of sources, time, and methods. Information obtained from one source was cross-checked with

other sources in different contexts and time frames. Interview findings were also confirmed against relevant documents to strengthen data credibility.

Data Analysis

In narrative inquiry, data analysis involves constructing narratives from participants' experiences gathered through in-depth interviews and observations. In the present study context, the analysis was guided by the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, encompassing the dimensions of interaction (personal and social), continuity (past, present, and future), and situation (place and context) (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The researchers repeatedly read and interpreted the data to identify patterns, meanings, and values emerging from teachers' stories about their role in instilling religious values. The constructed narratives were then analyzed to explore how teachers perceived the urgency of religious values, which values they considered most important, and how their reflection and role modeling contributed to shaping students' character.

Results and Discussion

Results

The researchers conducted structured interviews with six primary school teachers, two males and four females, comprising two English subject teachers, one Physical Education teacher, and three classroom teachers from primary schools in South Bengkulu. The aim was to examine and analyze the strategies employed by teachers in instilling Islamic values in their students. Interviews were conducted in person and in a structured manner with the research participants. The data obtained from these interviews were subsequently processed and analyzed. Based on the analysis, several strategies were identified that teachers used to embed Islamic values among students. The findings, derived from interviews with the participants, are presented as follows.

Teachers' Perspectives on Instilling Religious Values

The following section presents the results of interviews and observations with the six participants regarding their perspectives on embedding Islamic values in students.

Religious values as the foundation of character development

The teachers unanimously agreed that religious values could form the primary foundation for shaping students' character from an early age. This view is reflected in the following statements.

> "Instilling religious values is essential because they serve as the fundamental basis for building children's character and morals." (Informant 1)

> "Religious values are crucial to be instilled in children from an early age because they play a major role in shaping their character, morals, and personality." (Informant 6)

The statement from Informant 1 highlights the belief that religious values act as the moral architecture underpinning children's future behavior. In this context, teachers position themselves as moral agents responsible for ensuring that spiritual dimensions remain integral to school learning activities. Similarly, Informant 6 frames religious values as a multidimensional factor in forming a well-rounded individual. The phrase *"play a major role"* signifies a strong belief in the substantial contribution of religion to the three pillars of character education: habit (character), ethical judgment (morality), and self-identity (personality). Teachers understand that religious values are not merely doctrines of faith but internal value structures that guide how individuals think, feel, and act. Thus, the implementation of religious education transcends the mere teaching of norms; it becomes a pathway to shaping a child's spiritual resilience and social integrity. This perspective situates religious values as the core foundation that upholds a child's moral integrity and self-identity. Teachers recognize that these values are not simply normative tools, but internal frameworks that foster principled steadfastness and moral endurance in navigating social dynamics.

Integration of religious values and character formation

Teachers also highlighted the strong interconnection between religious values and the development of students' character. This is evident from the following interview excerpts.

> "It is very important to instill religious values because we can embed moral character from them. Religious education in schools can also help shape students' character." (Informant 2)

> "Religious values are essential to be instilled in children as a means of developing moral values so that they possess good morals." (Informant 5)

These statements illustrate the functional relationship between religious values and character formation in the context of primary education. Teachers recognize that students' character does not exist in isolation but is rooted in an understanding of religious values encompassing spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. Religious education at school is positioned as a strategic instrument for shaping students' daily ethical conduct, both in their relationships with peers and teachers, as well as in their interactions with the broader environment. The use of the word *"help"* by Informant 2 suggests that teachers do not rely solely on formal learning but view it as complementary to role-modeling and everyday practice. This reflects a pedagogical perspective that integrates the intellectualization of values with ethical habituation in students' real-life contexts. Similarly, Informant 5 underscores the role of religious values as the primary medium for transferring moral principles to children. The phrase *"so that they possess good morals"* indicates that the ultimate aim of instilling religious values is not merely doctrinal understanding, but the actualization of virtuous behavior in everyday life. Within this framework, teachers believe that children's morality is shaped through a process of internalizing religious teachings, where repeated reinforcement through instruction and exemplary conduct fosters good habits. The emphasis on *"good morals"* aligns with the virtue ethics approach in moral philosophy, which stresses habituation as a means of building character. This perspective demonstrates that teachers are not solely targeting cognitive understanding but intentionally directing religious education toward behavioral transformation. Such transformation cultivates a holistic personality spiritually, morally, and socially.

Early childhood intervention as an effective strategy

Most teachers stated that early childhood is the most appropriate stage to instill religious values, as depicted in the following excerpts.

> "Religious values are certainly important to instill in children as early as possible because they will influence character formation." (Informant 2)

> "Religious values are very important to be implemented from early childhood, as this aligns with their developmental stage, and children will later be accustomed to practicing these values." (Informant 1)

> "Children from an early age should already be accustomed to having religious values instilled…" (Informant 3)

The statement from Informant 2 emphasizes the urgency of early childhood as the optimal phase for the internalization of religious values. Teachers are aware that timing significantly determines the effectiveness of value transmission, as children at this stage are still forming their self-concept and moral framework. In this regard, the influence of religious values is not instantaneous but cumulative, gradually shaping a stable value structure within the child's consciousness. The choice of words *"will influence"* reflects teachers' acknowledgment of a causal relationship between value instillation and character formation, wherein religiosity serves as the seed that eventually grows into a guiding life principle. This approach aligns with Lickona's theory of value internalization, which asserts that values instilled through habituation and role-modeling lead to the development of moral virtues. Furthermore, Informant 2's statement demonstrates teachers' awareness of developmental psychology principles, particularly the golden age period, during which values and habits can be internalized most effectively. This is consistent with the ideas of Piaget and Vygotsky, both of whom stress the

importance of social interaction and habituation in children's learning processes.

Informant 1's response reflects a psychopedagogical approach, acknowledging the importance of aligning value instillation with children's developmental stages. The phrase *"as this aligns with their developmental stage"* corresponds with cognitive and affective development theories, which suggest that early childhood is an optimal time for shaping behaviors and habits. Teachers believe that when religious values are instilled during this formative stage, they become part of the child's habits practiced not out of compulsion, but through awareness and consistent exposure. In this context, the implementation of religious values is not merely an instructional process but a habit-formation mechanism that progressively shapes children's spiritual personality. Informant 1's emphasis on habituation reveals its strategic role in pedagogical practice for value internalization. This perspective resonates with Aristotelian virtue ethics, which posits that virtues are cultivated through repeated practice. In the religious education context, such habituation may take the form of structured acts of worship, daily prayers, and other organized religious activities, thereby embedding values into the child's character in a sustainable and meaningful way.

Religious values as a guide to social ethics and etiquette

Several teachers emphasized the importance of religious values in shaping children's manners and etiquette, as portrayed in the following interview excerpts.

> "It is important to instill religious values because they serve as the initial foundation for shaping children's character, such as their manners and ethics." (Informant 4)

> "Students really need to be taught religious values because they relate to manners, morals, behavior, and attitudes." (Informant 6)

The statement by Informant 4 explicitly links religious values to the formation of etiquette and ethics. The term *"the initial foundation"* refers to the golden age of child development, during which the habits and values instilled are likely to remain deeply embedded into adulthood. In this context, etiquette is not limited to polite behavior, but also encompasses a value system that consistently guides how children think and act. Teachers recognize that etiquette risks becoming a mere formality devoid of meaning without a strong religious foundation. Therefore, instilling religious values from an early age is believed to produce individuals whose actions are not only behaviorally compliant but also spiritually grounded. This approach aligns with the integrative Islamic educational concepts of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) and *ta'dib* (education of proper conduct). In classical Islamic discourse, *adab* (etiquette) encompasses more than politeness; it includes orderly conduct, self-discipline, and the acknowledgment of the authority of values. Thus, religious values are viewed not as a supplementary element of the curriculum, but as a value framework that underpins the entire educational process.

Informant 6's statement further underscores the urgency of religious values as the foundation for developing social ethics, such as manners and morality. The phrase *"really need"* reflects heightened awareness of current social conditions, where children may be increasingly influenced by instant and individualistic cultural trends. In this regard, religious values are perceived as a counterbalance, shaping courteous and responsible behavior. Hence, teachers focus not only on the theological aspects of religion but also on translating these into tangible social practices, including how to behave, speak, and conduct oneself. This perspective highlights the role of religious education in shaping children's socio-civic attitudes within a harmonious and respectful community life.

The role of habituation and role-modeling in religious education

Several interview responses reveal that teachers emphasized the importance of a habituation-based approach.

> "Children from an early age should already be accustomed to having religious values instilled…" (Informant 3)

> "Religious values are important to be internalized in children from an early age so that they become accustomed…" (Informant 1)

The statements from Informants 3 and 1 illustrate the understanding that effective religious education cannot rely solely on cognitive instruction; it must also be embedded through repetitive and contextualized practice from an early age. The term *"be accustomed"* underscores the practical dimension of religious education, in which values are transformed into consistent, lived actions. Teachers recognize that character is not passively received but cultivated through a prolonged and continuous learning process. Children develop behavioral consistency that gradually and systematically reflects their internalized spiritual values by instilling religious values through habituation in early childhood. Moreover, teachers acknowledge that value education cannot be achieved merely through verbal instruction. It must be reinforced through role-modeling and daily practice in real-life contexts.

Overall, the interviews reveal that religious values occupy a central position within the framework of primary education. Teachers do not regard these values as merely part of the formal curriculum, but as a fundamental element in shaping children's character, morality, and self-identity. Instilling these values is considered most effective when initiated at an early age, employing methods such as habituation, role-modeling, and integration into all learning activities. These findings reaffirm the strategic role of teachers as agents of value transformation, individuals whose influence extends far beyond the classroom, shaping a generation that is intellectually capable and morally upright.

Religious Values Instilled in Primary Education

Instilling religious values at the primary education level is a crucial foundation for developing a child's character holistically, spiritually, morally, and socially. Based on the interview responses, primary schools actively embed a range of religious values, which can be categorized into several main themes: (1) moral values as the fundamental foundation, (2) faith and monotheism, (3) discipline, (4) honesty and justice, (5) politeness and social etiquette, (6) care and responsibility, (7) compassion and empathy, and (8) tolerance and mutual cooperation.

Moral values as the fundamental foundation

Moral values are regarded as the central element that must be instilled from an early age. The informants emphasized the importance of moral values as a basis for distinguishing between good and evil behavior.

> "Instilling religious values, particularly moral values, from an early age is very important so that children can understand morality, differentiate between positive and negative behaviors, and recognize virtuous traits." (Informant 2)

> "The most important value to instill in children is moral character, so that they are accustomed to doing good deeds." (Informant 3)

The emphasis on moral values serves as the foundation for building a child's moral awareness, making goodness a habit that becomes internalized over time. Both Informants 2 and 3 agree on the urgency of instilling moral values from an early age to form a child's moral foundation. Positioning morality as the top priority in children's education means treating it not merely as one among many values, but as the core foundation that underpins character formation. Morality, in this sense, functions not only as behavioral guidelines but also as tools for fostering a child's awareness of distinguishing between right and wrong. Moral-based value education is an integral approach within Islamic education, where the ultimate goal is to shape well-mannered, ethical, and spiritually intelligent individuals from an early age. This aligns with the function of primary education as the initial stage in shaping a child's moral identity.

Faith and Monotheism

Faith in God Almighty was considered the most fundamental value in primary education, as depicted in the following excerpt.

> "Children must be instilled with belief and faith in God Almighty; this is certainly the most basic value that must be taught to them." (Informant 1)

Introducing children to God becomes the starting point for all moral and spiritual values taught in school. Informant 1 explicitly stated that faith in God Almighty is the most fundamental foundation in a child's education. The phrase *"the most basic value"* underscores the belief that before moral or ethical values are introduced, the recognition and conviction in the Divine must be established as the top priority. This reflects the acknowledgment of the spiritual dimension inherent in human beings, which is believed to be the primary source of all goodness and truth, serving as a guiding principle.

Discipline

Time discipline and adherence to school regulations were regarded as essential aspects of shaping a child's character, as represented in the following interview excerpts.

> "Among the religious values that are important to instill in children from an early age are discipline values, such as punctuality and arriving early at school…" (Informant 3)

> "Politeness, discipline, and honesty should be practiced within the school environment." (Informant 6)

Developing discipline from an early age fosters a work ethic and a sense of responsibility toward commitments. Informant 3 emphasizes the importance of practical and context-based value education in children's daily lives. In this case, discipline, particularly time discipline, serves as the foundation for building a strong work ethic and respect for commitments. When children are taught to arrive at school on time, they are simultaneously being trained to become consistent individuals who value time and respect established rules.

Honesty and Justice

Honesty and justice were considered core moral values taught in primary schools, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

> "Children should be aware of being polite, tolerant, and honest in everyday life." (Informant 5)

These values are fundamental to building personal integrity and fostering social trust within the school community. As indicated by Informant 5, the word *"aware"* here goes beyond mere knowledge; it reflects an active understanding and willingness to apply these moral principles in all aspects of life. Such awareness is evidence that education has succeeded in forming individuals who not only comply with rules but also comprehend the reasoning behind good behavior and choose it voluntarily. When children are "aware of being polite, tolerant, and honest," it shows they have internalized the importance of respecting others, observing proper etiquette, and understanding how their behavior impacts their environment. Politeness becomes a natural part of their identity, evident in how they speak, act, and interact with others, whether at home, school, or in public spaces. This level of moral awareness lays the groundwork for harmonious social relationships, enabling children to become respected individuals who can be readily accepted in diverse social settings.

Care and Responsibility

Care for others and a sense of responsibility were instilled to foster empathetic children capable of carrying social responsibilities, as further discussed in excerpts below.

> "A sense of care and responsibility should be taught to children from an early age so that they develop concern for others and a sense of responsibility." (Informant 2)

> "Moral or character values that are important to instill in children include having a sense of responsibility." (Informant 4)

Children who develop responsibility from an early age are more likely to become active and constructive citizens. Informants 2 and 4 highlight that instilling care and responsibility is integral to character education based on religious values in primary education. These two values are part of social morality, which reflects a child's relationship with other human beings and represents the horizontal application of divine values. Early instillation is key because childhood is the formative period for habits and behavior patterns that will persist into

adulthood. By embedding care and responsibility from an early age, children become accustomed to showing concern for their surroundings and taking accountability for their actions. This underlines the importance of these two fundamental values in character education: empathy and accountability. The emphasis on *"from an early age"* signals a strong belief that childhood is the crucial period for planting these seeds. The ultimate goal is to form individuals who are aware of their rights and understand their responsibilities toward themselves and their community, thus creating a foundation for empathetic and principled personalities.

Compassion and Empathy

Compassion is a core element of religious teaching that must be instilled in children from an early age within the primary education environment. Love and care toward parents, teachers, and peers reflect the horizontal dimension of religious values, emphasizing kindness, attentiveness, and mutual concern. Embedding this value fosters harmonious interpersonal relationships and nurtures a sense of social responsibility in children. In Islam, *rahmah* (compassion) is considered a Divine attribute that underpins all human interactions, making primary education the initial and most critical stage for cultivating this value in tangible, everyday practice.

> "Children must be instilled with religious values such as having love and care for their parents, teachers, and friends." (Informant 4)

The statement from Informant 4 underscores the role of religious education as a source of compassion, which is fundamental in shaping a child's character. It affirms that religious teachings go beyond ritual or doctrinal aspects, extending to the development of essential human qualities, such as the ability to love and care. Instilling this value from an early age aims to build a strong emotional and spiritual foundation, forming children into empathetic and compassionate individuals in every interaction.

Tolerance and Mutual Cooperation

Tolerance and a spirit of mutual cooperation represent the awareness of living in a pluralistic and democratic society.

> "Children should be aware of being polite, tolerant, and honest in daily life." (Informant 5)

Informant 5's statement shows that tolerance is a critical quality in a diverse society. This awareness goes beyond knowing the concept; it means actively accepting and respecting differences in beliefs, opinions, backgrounds, or lifestyles. Children who internalize this value understand that diversity is a form of richness and are able to interact peacefully with those who are different from themselves. Such awareness cultivates inclusive individuals, reduces prejudice, and builds bridges of understanding between people, which is essential for social harmony. This value strengthens social cohesion and prevents discriminatory or exclusionary attitudes.

Positive Impact of Religious Value Education

The religious values instilled in students could generate tangible, positive impacts on their daily lives, as depicted by teachers in the following excerpts.

"The benefit is harmony and togetherness at school." (Informant 1)

"Students become politer, disciplined, cooperative, and able to distinguish between right and wrong." (Informant 2)

"Children's attitudes and behavior improve, they become easier to guide, and their tolerance is high." (Informant 3)

"Children understand their obligations as students, such as being obedient and compliant with existing rules." (Informant 4)

"Children are aware of being polite, tolerant, and honest…" (Informant 5)

"Maintaining harmony among school members, mutual tolerance, cooperation, and care for others." (Informant 6)

The most frequently mentioned benefit was maintaining harmony within the school community. In this context, harmony signifies creating a peaceful atmosphere with minimal conflict, where mutual respect exists among all school stakeholders, like students, teachers, and staff. When values such as politeness and respect are embedded, the potential for friction decreases, creating a more conducive learning environment. A harmonious atmosphere makes everyone feel safe and comfortable, enabling them to interact, learn, and grow without significant psychological barriers. The consistent application of these values fosters a school environment that is disciplined, caring, and character-driven. Tolerance plays a key role in sustaining harmony, especially in a heterogeneous school setting. It teaches school community members to accept and value differences in background, opinion, belief, or ability, prevent discrimination and bullying, and encourage the embrace of diversity. This mutual acceptance strengthens interpersonal bridges and nurtures unity amid diversity. Mutual cooperation and care for others are tangible expressions of shared empathy and solidarity. Cooperation encourages teamwork in students' academic and extracurricular activities, fostering a sense of collective responsibility and unity. Meanwhile, caring for others demonstrates sensitivity to the needs or difficulties of others and the willingness to offer help. These values could actively strengthen social bonds within the school, creating a supportive community where everyone feels a sense of belonging and readiness to assist one another. The cultivation of such character values is not solely about shaping good individuals but also about building an ideal school community. Harmony, tolerance, cooperation, and care are the pillars that transform schools into safe, inspiring, and productive spaces. Collectively, these benefits enhance the quality of teaching and learning, developing students who are intellectually capable and morally grounded, ready to serve as agents of positive change in society.

The Role of Teachers in Instilling Religious Values

Based on interview results, teachers performed various crucial roles in instilling religious values in students. These roles could be classified into several categories: (1) as role models, where teachers demonstrated religious behavior in daily life; (2) as facilitators, who created a conducive learning environment for the cultivation of religious values; (3) as communicators, who conveyed religious teachings clearly and in ways relevant to students' lives; (4) as motivators, who encouraged students to practice religious values in their daily routines; and (5) as evaluators, who assessed students' understanding and application of religious values. These roles were carried out simultaneously to shape students' religious character at the primary education level.

Teachers as Role Models

Teachers are figures who are respected and emulated by students in daily life. This role manifests in their behavior, speech, and consistent practice of religious values. Statements from Informants 2, 3, and 6 reinforce the notion that teachers serve as living examples for their students. The Indonesian phrase *"digugu dan ditiru"* ("to be respected and emulated") implies that teachers' words and actions are observed closely and are likely to be imitated, thus requiring them to consistently embody noble values.

"Teachers act as examples and facilitators in instilling religious values." (Informant 3)

"A teacher must be a role model and reflect the qualities of someone to be respected and emulated." (Informant 6)

"Teachers serve as educators and exemplars when instilling religious values in schools." (Informant 2)

"Teachers are role models for students, suggesting that they must first apply religious values themselves in order to be good examples for their students." (Informant 3)

"Teachers act as examples for students, implying that their attitude becomes a model, so they must behave courteously." (Informant 6)

Teachers as Facilitators

Teachers also provided resources, media, and environments that enabled students to learn, understand, and practice religious values. As facilitators, teachers ensured that learning conditions, whether physical, social, or emotional, could support the integration of these values into students' daily routines. This facilitation included organizing religious activities, providing access to relevant learning materials, and fostering a school culture where religious principles are naturally practiced and reinforced. These findings are represented in the following interview excerpts.

> "Teachers serve as facilitators, meaning they must provide facilities for students to learn religious values within the school environment." (Informant 4)

> "Teachers play an important role as facilitators and companions in instilling religious values, and they also serve as role models for good behavior." (Informant 5)

> "As guides and facilitators in instilling religious values, teachers are role models for their students." (Informant 4)

Teachers as Guides and Companions

Teachers guided and accompanied students in practicing religious values directly during lessons and through personal mentoring.

> "Teachers play an important role. Apart from the parents' role at home, the teacher must also guide the students at school." (Informant 2)

Informant 2's statement underscores that while the cultivation of religious values begins at home, the teacher's role at school is critical in extending and reinforcing this process. This reflects the importance of continuity between home and school environments in character formation.

Teachers as Drivers of a Religious Environment

Teachers should play an active role in creating a school environment that is religious, peaceful, and supportive of the practice of religious values. As highlighted by Informant 1, this role extends beyond individual action to a collective effort. Teachers should act as initiators who foster a conducive, spiritually grounded, and harmonious school climate, which indirectly supports the cultivation of religious values.

> "In the school environment, teachers also act as drivers in creating a religious, peaceful, and harmonious atmosphere." (Informant 1)

Teachers as Motivators and Reinforcers

Teachers also motivated students to consistently behave well and apply religious values across various settings, not only within the school but also in their daily lives.

> "Teachers also act as reinforcers or motivators for students to always behave well wherever they are." (Informant 3)

Teachers as Partners to Parents

Teachers collaborated with parents to ensure that religious values are consistently applied and upheld outside the school environment, creating synergy between home and school. Informant 6 underscored the importance of this partnership. This collaboration ensures holistic value formation, where the moral guidance students receive at school is reinforced at home. Such cooperation also facilitates mutual monitoring, early intervention for behavioral concerns, and the maintenance of a consistent moral framework across contexts.

> "A teacher should also be a colleague or partner of parents in monitoring students' attitudes and behavior outside the school environment." (Informant 6)

Teachers as Moral and Character Builders

Teachers are responsible for shaping students' character, morals, and ethics as part of holistic religious education. According to Informant 1, this role is central to the overall mission of teaching religious values.

> "Teachers play an important role in instilling religious values, such as children's morals." (Informant 1)

This statement affirms that the teacher's responsibilities go beyond academic instruction to include deliberate moral formation. By integrating ethical principles into classroom interactions, disciplinary approaches, and extracurricular activities, teachers nurture not only intellectual growth but also spiritual and moral maturity.

From the preceding sub-sections, it can be concluded that instilling religious values in primary education is inseparable from teachers' strategic roles as role models, facilitators, communicators, motivators, and evaluators. Each role complements the others, collectively contributing to the successful internalization of religious values among students. Through consistent and contextually relevant approaches, teachers can embed religious values effectively within formal learning activities and daily school life. This underscores that religious value education at the primary level is not solely focused on cognitive outcomes but also prioritizes the holistic formation of students' spiritual and moral character.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this study on teachers' perspectives regarding the inculcation of religious values in primary school students, it was revealed that religious values hold a very high level of urgency in formal education, as they are regarded as the primary foundation for character formation in children. In this regard, teachers are not merely responsible for transferring knowledge but also for shaping students' personalities by integrating religious values into every aspect of learning. This aligns with humanistic theory, which positions teachers as facilitators of students' holistic development, covering emotional, social, spiritual, and moral (Rogers, 1969). It is essential to foster religious values from an early age, as they serve as the basis for developing character, ethics, and moral integrity in children. By embedding religious values in school education, character formation can be carried out more effectively. This aligns with (Eryandi, 2023), who emphasizes that religious values play a crucial role in shaping students' morals and values, serving as a strategic tool for character development. The internalization of religious values is vital because it involves the process through which children accept, internalize, and embody the meaning embedded in these values, thereby strengthening their personality (Syafeie, 2020). The implication is that formal education should be designed to facilitate reflective and dialogical processes between teachers and students so that students internalize religious values not as rote memorization but as part of a naturally developing moral and spiritual awareness (Anwar, 2023; Nursalim et al., 2024; Susilawati et al., 2022). Such an approach fosters a more humane and transformative educational environment. Therefore, it can be concluded that religious values should be instilled early in children's lives, as they form the foundation for developing character, morals, and ethical behavior (Farisia & Mukhlisah, 2020; Isom et al., 2021).

The religious values internalized by the teachers within the school environment included morality, faith and monotheism, discipline, honesty, mutual assistance, politeness, social ethics, empathy, compassion, tolerance, mutual cooperation, and responsibility. These findings are supported by Hamid (2016), who asserts that religious values can cultivate students' character to uphold morality, tolerance, social responsibility, honesty, and accountability. The inculcation of these values encompasses creed (*aqidah*), morals (*akhlaq*), and worship (*ibadah*), conveyed both through classroom learning and through various religious activities outside formal lessons (Fadilla et al., 2025). The values or character traits emphasized by the teachers included religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, nationalism, patriotism, appreciation of achievement, friendliness, peacefulness, love of reading, environmental awareness, and social care (Purwanti, 2017). According to Mohamed (2017), introducing religious values from an early age is expected to nurture honesty, patience, empathy, and responsibility in children.

The implementation of religious values in primary education can also be examined through the lens of the Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2000), which underscores the importance of critical reflection in forming new meaning through deep, dialogical learning experiences. In this context, inculcating religious

values goes beyond knowledge transmission; it requires creating a learning space where students can actively reflect on their spiritual, social, and moral experiences. Through dialogue and reflection, students do not simply memorize religious teachings but undergo a transformation of consciousness that drives comprehensive changes in behavior and mindset (Mulyasari, 2025). This is consistent with Rofiq (2022), who explains that the internalization process of Islamic educational values consists of three stages: transformation, transaction, and transinternalization. In these stages, students gradually and consciously integrate values into themselves through reflective learning experiences and the habituation of religious practices within the school environment. The implication is that schools must design participatory, contextual, and interactive learning processes that enable students to authentically understand religious values and incorporate them into their moral and social identity. This demands that teachers act as facilitators, encouraging reflection and dialogue rather than merely delivering content. Schools should therefore develop a curriculum that supports affective and transformative learning, such as reflective discussions and socio-religious activities. This also calls for teacher training in reflective teaching strategies and evaluation methods that assess the depth of students' moral and spiritual understanding.

In the inculcation of religious values within the school environment, the findings of this study indicate that teachers play a crucial role as value transmitters, role models, facilitators, mentors, initiators of a religious atmosphere, motivators and encouragers, partners to parents, and instillers of moral and ethical values. These findings are consistent with previous research, which identifies teachers as caregivers, role models, and mentors (Sudrajat, 2011). All teachers are expected to position themselves as authoritative and respectable figures for their students (Omeri, 2015). The teacher's role centers on educating with a focus on providing direction and motivation for achieving both short-term and long-term goals, facilitating goal attainment through adequate learning experiences, and supporting the development of personal aspects such as speech, attitudes, values, and adaptability (Wiseza, 2017). This is further supported by Illahi (2020), who asserts that teacher professionalism is essential for students, as teachers bear the significant responsibility of educating, guiding, and motivating learners to become knowledgeable and morally upright individuals. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers have a vital role in instilling religious values in the school setting. They function not only as role models, facilitators, and motivators but also as mentors who supervise and guide children's attitudes and behavior within the school environment.

The discussion of the teacher's role in fostering religious values is aligned with the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), which posits that learning occurs through observation and imitation of behaviors modeled by significant figures, such as teachers. In this context, teachers do not merely deliver content; they also exemplify moral and religious values through their daily actions (Hadi et al., 2025; Liang et al., 2022). Teachers' demonstration of honesty, discipline, patience, and tolerance serves as a tangible source of learning for students. Consequently, value inculcation cannot rely solely on the transfer of knowledge; it must also create a learning space that allows students to observe, imitate, and actively reflect upon spiritual, social, and moral values. The implication is that teachers must remain aware that their daily behaviors and interactions exert a profound influence on shaping students' religious character. This demands consistency between speech and action in moral and spiritual education.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and data analysis, it can be concluded that teachers view the inculcation of religious values as a fundamental aspect in shaping the character, morals, and ethics of students from an early age. The values considered essential included moral integrity, faith and monotheism, discipline, honesty and justice, politeness and social etiquette, compassion and empathy, tolerance, and cooperation. The cultivation of these values not only fosters positive student behavior but also contributes to creating a more harmonious and conducive school environment. In this process, teachers played a strategic role as role models, facilitators, mentors, companions, drivers of a religious atmosphere, motivators, partners for parents, and instillers of moral and ethical values. Their reflective role in internalizing religious values was evident through exemplary conduct and active involvement in guiding and shaping student behavior. This study enriches the body of knowledge in the field of value-based and character education, particularly those rooted in religious principles at the primary school level. It provides deeper insights into the personal and reflective roles of teachers, an area often overlooked in previous research, which has tended to focus more on institutional or formal curricular

aspects. However, the present study has certain limitations. The scope of informants was limited to primary school teachers within a single region and did not incorporate the perspectives of students or parents, thus restricting the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the qualitative, exploratory approach employed did not quantitatively assess the effectiveness of these value-education practices. Future research is recommended to broaden participant coverage by involving multiple stakeholders, such as students, parents, and school supervisors, and to adopt a mixed-methods approach to more accurately examine the correlation between teachers' roles and their measurable impact on student behavior. Further studies may also focus on developing systematic and practical models for implementing religious value education in primary school settings.

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