

Cultivating Religious Character in Students Through the Storytelling Method About the Morals of the Prophet Muhammad SAW at SDN 88 Loka, Enrekang Regency

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ABSTRACT : Religious character education has become a strategic priority in elementary education, particularly within Islamic educational contexts where moral values are expected to be integrated into daily learning. Storytelling about the exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is considered an effective pedagogical approach to fostering students' religious values through meaningful and contextual learning experiences. This study aimed to examine the implementation of the storytelling method in cultivating students' religious character at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang, Indonesia. A qualitative case study approach was employed over a three-month period. Data were collected through non-participant observations, semi-structured interviews with the principal and teachers, and document analysis. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, while trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. The findings revealed that storytelling effectively strengthened students' understanding and practice of religious values, particularly honesty, patience, compassion, responsibility, and justice. Students demonstrated greater engagement in learning and showed positive behavioral changes after participating in storytelling activities. The effectiveness of the method was supported by teachers' enthusiasm, the creative use of visual learning media, and a conducive classroom environment. However, several challenges remained, including limited instructional time, inconsistent implementation across grade levels, and the limited availability of age-appropriate storytelling materials. Overall, the study concludes that storytelling centered on the moral virtues of Prophet Muhammad is an effective strategy for promoting religious character development while simultaneously enhancing students' moral awareness, learning motivation, and social behavior. These findings provide practical implications for strengthening character-based Islamic education in elementary schools.

Keywords: Religious Character, Storytelling Method, Prophet Muhammad, Islamic Education, Elementary School.

INTRODUCTION

Character education is a fundamental foundation in shaping students' personalities from an early age. Character developed during childhood significantly

influences individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and ways of thinking throughout their lives. Therefore, education should not only focus on cognitive achievement but also emphasize the development of moral values, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect noble character. According to Mulyasa (2018), character education aims to develop individuals who possess integrity, faith, piety, and social responsibility. One effective strategy for instilling character values is storytelling, as stories can convey moral messages in an engaging, meaningful, and child-friendly manner. Through storytelling, children can internalize values naturally and apply them in their daily lives.

From the perspective of Islamic education, character and moral development occupy a central position. The primary role model for Muslims is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who was sent to perfect human morality. The Qur'an describes the Prophet as an excellent example (*uswah hasanah*) for humanity, as stated in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21. According to Ibn Kathir (2003), this verse emphasizes the importance of following the Prophet's example in all aspects of life, including personal conduct, social interaction, and moral behavior. Stories about the Prophet's life contain valuable lessons on honesty, patience, compassion, trustworthiness, and leadership, making them highly relevant for character education among children.

At the elementary school level, students are in the early stages of moral development and tend to imitate figures they admire. Lickona (2013) argues that children learn moral values not only through direct instruction but also through observing concrete examples and role models. Therefore, introducing stories about the Prophet's noble character is a strategic approach to fostering students' religious character. Such stories not only provide religious knowledge but also inspire admiration and emotional attachment, encouraging children to emulate the Prophet's behavior in their everyday lives. Consequently, storytelling serves as an effective medium for integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of religious character education.

Storytelling offers significant advantages because it presents moral values in contextual and meaningful ways. According to Musfiroh (2017), stories help children distinguish between positive and negative behaviors through characters, plots, and situations that are closely related to their experiences. In Islamic education, stories about Prophet Muhammad illustrate how Islamic values are practiced in daily life. Values such as kindness, forgiveness, and consultation, reflected in Surah Ali Imran verse 159, can be effectively conveyed through narratives about the Prophet's life.

This approach enables students not only to understand religious values conceptually but also to learn how to practice them within their families, schools, and communities.

Preliminary observations at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang revealed that most students are familiar with Prophet Muhammad as the final messenger of Islam; however, their understanding of his moral values and their practical application remains limited. Students tend to understand stories superficially without relating them to real-life behavior. This situation highlights the need for a more systematic and contextual learning strategy to facilitate the internalization of religious values. Storytelling delivered in a structured and continuous manner is expected to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice among elementary school students.

Strengthening students' religious character is consistent with the objectives of Indonesia's National Education System as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003, which emphasizes the development of learners who are faithful, pious, and morally responsible citizens. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation Number 20 of 2018 on Strengthening Character Education encourages schools to integrate character values, including religious values, into the learning process. Storytelling is one of the recommended strategies because it is practical, engaging, and suitable for elementary school students.

In addition, families and communities play essential roles in supporting children's character development. Many parents at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang recognize the importance of moral education from an early age and support the use of religious stories as learning media. Since children naturally learn through imitation of significant role models, presenting Prophet Muhammad as an exemplary figure through storytelling can provide positive behavioral models. Stories about the Prophet's character are not merely normative but also practical, enabling students to apply Islamic values in their daily interactions at school, at home, and in society.

Based on the foregoing discussion, storytelling about the noble character of Prophet Muhammad is considered a relevant and effective strategy for fostering religious character among elementary school students. This study aims to examine how the storytelling method contributes to the development and strengthening of students' religious character at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang. The study focuses on the implementation process, students' responses, and the religious character values cultivated through storytelling. It is expected that the findings will contribute both theoretically and practically to the advancement of religious character education in

elementary schools, particularly within the context of Islamic Religious Education through the exemplary model of Prophet Muhammad.

METHODS

Research Site and Research Type

This study was conducted at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang, Enrekang Regency. The research site was selected based on accessibility, feasibility, and its relevance to the focus of the study, namely the development of students' religious character through storytelling about the moral virtues of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The research was carried out over a period of approximately three months, from November 2025 to February 2026. This study employed a qualitative research design aimed at understanding phenomena in depth within their natural settings. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore meanings, values, and processes involved in the cultivation of religious character that cannot be adequately measured through quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014).

Research Approach

The study adopted a case study approach. This approach focuses intensively on a particular case, namely the process of fostering students' religious character at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang. The case study method was selected to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon within its specific social, cultural, and educational context (Suwendra, 2018).

Data Sources

The data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from key informants, including the principal, vice principal, and teachers at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang through observations and interviews. Secondary data were collected from school documents, photographs, archives, and relevant literature related to the research topic. Informants and data sources were selected purposively based on their relevance to the focus of the study (Moleong, 2017).

Research Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument. To support data collection, several auxiliary instruments were utilized, including observation guidelines, semi-structured interview guides, and documentation checklists. These instruments ensured that the data collected were relevant, focused, and aligned with the objectives of the study.

Data Collection Techniques

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Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine students' activities and school programs related to religious character development. Interviews were carried out to obtain in-depth information from informants regarding the implementation of the storytelling method. Documentation served as supporting evidence, including photographs, school profiles, and activity records

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analysis process was conducted continuously from the beginning of data collection until the completion of the study. The data were analyzed inductively to identify patterns, themes, and meanings related to the cultivation of students' religious character through storytelling.

Trustworthiness of Data

The trustworthiness of the data was established through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability procedures (Sugiyono, 2019). Credibility was ensured through source and technique triangulation. Transferability was achieved by providing detailed descriptions of the research context. Dependability and confirmability were maintained through research audits and consultations with academic supervisors to ensure the consistency, reliability, and objectivity of the research findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

A. Implementation of the Storytelling Method to Instill Religious Character among Students at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang

1. The Importance of the Storytelling Method in Learning

Based on interviews with the principal and several teachers at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang, the storytelling method plays a crucial role in the learning process, particularly in fostering students' religious character. The principal emphasized that storytelling is an effective and enjoyable approach for elementary school students because it aligns with their cognitive and emotional developmental stages. Stories not only help students understand learning materials more concretely but also develop their imagination, creativity, and empathy.

The fifth-grade homeroom teacher explained that storytelling is highly beneficial in explaining abstract concepts by connecting them to real-life contexts. Meanwhile, lower-grade teachers stated that storytelling increases students' enthusiasm and engagement during classroom activities. Therefore, the storytelling method has proven effective in enhancing comprehension, learning motivation, and creating a more dynamic and meaningful learning environment.

2. Teachers' Expectations Regarding the Storytelling Method

Educators have high expectations regarding the implementation of storytelling in learning. The principal hopes that this method will not only improve academic achievement but also foster empathy, creativity, and critical thinking skills among students. The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher emphasized that storytelling encourages students to become more active and enthusiastic in receiving instructional materials.

Homeroom teachers at different grade levels also expect storytelling to strengthen students' emotional connection with learning content. In Indonesian language lessons, for example, storytelling is considered effective in increasing reading interest and language skills. Overall, teachers expect storytelling to create a more interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning process while supporting the development of students' religious character.

3. Consistency in the Implementation of Storytelling

The findings revealed that although storytelling about the moral character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is recognized as effective, its implementation has not been fully consistent across all classes. The PAI teacher acknowledged the importance of regularly presenting stories of the Prophet's exemplary character so that moral values can be deeply internalized. However, limited instructional time and a crowded curriculum remain major challenges.

Several homeroom teachers reported that storytelling is usually incorporated according to specific lesson themes rather than being scheduled regularly. Therefore, more systematic planning is needed to ensure the continuous application of storytelling, thereby maximizing its impact on the development of students' religious character.

4. Relevance of Stories to Religious Character Development

Stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are considered highly relevant to the development of students' religious character. The PAI teacher stated that through stories of the Prophet's exemplary behavior, students learn values such

as honesty, patience, compassion, responsibility, and justice. These stories not only convey religious teachings theoretically but also provide concrete examples of how such values can be practiced in daily life.

Teachers of lower grades observed that students tend to imitate positive behaviors after listening to these stories. In upper grades, storytelling serves as a medium for reflection and deeper understanding of moral and ethical values. Thus, storytelling functions as an effective tool for internalizing religious values.

5. Differences in Implementation Across Grade Levels

The implementation of storytelling at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang is adapted to students' developmental levels. In lower grades, stories are presented in a simple, interactive manner and supported by visual media to capture students' attention. The primary focus at this stage is introducing basic values such as honesty and compassion.

In contrast, storytelling in upper grades is delivered in a more complex and in-depth manner. Teachers relate stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to broader social issues and real-life situations. Storytelling sessions are usually followed by discussions and reflections to stimulate students' critical thinking. These differences demonstrate that storytelling is flexible and adaptable to students' developmental needs.

6. Selection of Stories for Religious Character Development

Story selection is a critical factor in the success of this method. The PAI teacher stated that stories should contain strong moral values and be relevant to students' daily lives. Stories about the exemplary character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are the primary choice because they are rich in noble moral teachings.

For upper-grade students, selected stories emphasize perseverance, steadfast faith, and wise conflict resolution. For lower-grade students, stories are simpler and focus on everyday behaviors that can easily be imitated. Appropriate story selection facilitates the effective internalization of religious values according to children's developmental stages.

7. Challenges in Implementing the Storytelling Method

Despite its many advantages, the storytelling method faces several challenges. The PAI teacher noted that students' diverse backgrounds and limited instructional time are the main obstacles. In upper grades, stories that are too lengthy or complex may reduce students' concentration.

Meanwhile, in lower grades, maintaining students' attention remains a significant challenge. Teachers need to employ creative approaches, such as visual

media and interactive engagement, to make stories more appealing. Additionally, teachers must ensure that students fully understand the moral messages conveyed through discussions and follow-up explanations.

B. The Importance of Stories about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Instilling Religious Character

Interviews with the principal and teachers at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang revealed that storytelling plays a vital role in Islamic Religious Education, particularly in fostering students' religious character. Stories are viewed as an approach that conveys religious values in a more vivid, contextual, and understandable manner for elementary school students. The principal emphasized that storytelling transforms religious learning from a purely theoretical activity into one that touches students' affective and behavioral dimensions.

Upper-grade teachers noted that storytelling provides opportunities for students to reflect on and connect religious values with real-life situations. Values such as justice, patience, honesty, and compassion become easier to understand because they are illustrated through concrete examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Consequently, students not only understand religious teachings but are also able to internalize them in their daily behavior.

Lower-grade teachers viewed storytelling as particularly effective because it aligns with the developmental characteristics of elementary school children. Simple, communicative, and exemplary stories help students understand fundamental religious values such as honesty, caring, and cooperation. Students also demonstrate a tendency to imitate the positive behaviors portrayed in stories about the Prophet's character.

The findings further indicate that stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) significantly contribute to the development of students' religious character. The PAI teacher emphasized that the Prophet serves as a comprehensive role model in spiritual, moral, and social aspects. Stories highlighting his patience, steadfast faith, compassion, and justice provide students with concrete examples for developing positive religious attitudes and social behavior.

Moreover, stories about the Prophet possess a unique strength in presenting practical moral values. Teachers reported that these values are not only religiously relevant but also support the development of social character traits such as empathy, tolerance, responsibility, and discipline. Therefore, stories about Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him) serve as an effective and sustainable medium for character education.

The selection of stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is also considered appropriate because they contain universal values applicable to various aspects of students' lives. Teachers stated that the Prophet's life stories provide concrete examples of how Islamic teachings can be practiced in daily actions, leading to a deeper and more meaningful understanding of religion.

Furthermore, these stories help improve students' comprehension of Islamic values. Students not only understand religious teachings cognitively but are also able to internalize and implement them in everyday life. This finding demonstrates that storytelling significantly contributes to the development of students' religious and spiritual awareness.

Overall, the findings indicate that storytelling about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has a substantial positive impact on the development of students' religious character at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang. This method not only enriches religious understanding but also encourages behavioral changes toward becoming more religious, empathetic, and morally upright. Therefore, storytelling deserves to be considered a primary strategy in Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level.

C. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Storytelling about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for Instilling Religious Character among Students at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang

Supporting Factors

1. Enthusiastic Teacher Involvement

a. Teachers' Role in Implementing the Storytelling Method

The findings indicate that teachers play a central role in the successful implementation of storytelling about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Teachers function not only as content deliverers but also as facilitators of values and role models for students. The principal emphasized that the effectiveness of storytelling largely depends on teachers' ability to present stories in an engaging, communicative, and emotionally meaningful manner.

In upper grades, teachers act as reflection facilitators, guiding students to understand the moral lessons embedded in the Prophet's stories and relate them to their own lives. In lower grades, teachers focus on presenting stories in a simple and concrete way. These findings demonstrate that teachers' pedagogical

competence and exemplary conduct form the foundation of religious value internalization through storytelling.

b. The Influence of Teachers' Enthusiasm and Storytelling Skills

Teachers' enthusiasm and storytelling skills significantly enhance student engagement and understanding. Teachers who deliver stories with appropriate expression, intonation, and emotional involvement create a lively and interactive learning atmosphere. The principal and PAI teacher reported that when stories are presented enthusiastically, students become more focused, actively participate in discussions, and more easily grasp the moral messages conveyed.

In lower grades, facial expressions, body movements, and voice variations help maintain students' attention. In upper grades, questioning techniques and reflective discussions deepen students' understanding of religious values. Therefore, teachers' communication skills are a significant factor in the effectiveness of the storytelling method.

2. Supportive Learning Environment

a. School Environment Support

A supportive school environment is an important factor in the success of storytelling. Support from the principal, collaboration among teachers, and parental involvement strengthen the internalization of religious values. Teachers reported that parents reinforce values taught at school by discussing stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) at home.

Furthermore, collaboration among teachers in sharing experiences and storytelling resources enriches instructional practices. The synergy between school and family ensures that religious character development continues beyond the classroom and into students' daily lives.

b. Supportive Classroom Atmosphere

A calm, comfortable, and discussion-friendly classroom atmosphere contributes significantly to the effectiveness of storytelling. The PAI teacher emphasized that a conducive environment enables students to focus and reflect on the moral lessons presented.

In upper grades, open discussions encourage students to express opinions and engage in critical reflection. In lower grades, a pleasant and interactive atmosphere helps students connect emotionally with the stories. Therefore, a positive classroom climate is a key supporting factor in religious character development.

3. Availability of Supporting Media

a. Use of Media in Learning

Supporting media such as pictures, videos, and illustrated storybooks play a significant role in enriching storytelling activities. Visual media help students understand historical contexts and moral values more concretely. Upper-grade teachers utilize historical videos to clarify events, while lower-grade teachers use picture books to capture students' attention.

b. The Influence of Media on Understanding Religious Values

Visual media assist students in internalizing values such as patience, justice, and compassion exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The visualization of events enables students to connect stories with real-life experiences. Consequently, supporting media not only increase learning interest but also deepen students' understanding of religious character values.

Inhibiting Factors

1. Limited Instructional Time

a. Strategies for Overcoming Time Constraints

Limited instructional time is a major obstacle to delivering stories in depth. Teachers address this challenge by selecting shorter stories rich in moral lessons and integrating them into other subjects. This strategy allows religious messages to be conveyed despite time limitations.

b. Impact on Content Depth

Time constraints often require teachers to simplify stories and focus primarily on key moral messages. Nevertheless, teachers strive to preserve the essence of religious values to ensure student understanding. This situation reflects a balance between content depth and instructional efficiency.

2. Limited Availability of Relevant Story Resources

Teachers acknowledged that not all stories are suitable for students' characteristics and developmental levels. In lower grades, the challenge lies in finding simple yet meaningful stories, while upper grades require stories that are more contextual and socially relevant. To address this issue, teachers carefully select and adapt materials to align with religious character education objectives.

3. Lack of Student Attention or Interest

a. Students' Level of Interest

In general, stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are highly appealing because they contain exemplary lessons and are relevant to

students' lives. However, students' attention may decline if storytelling is not delivered in a varied and engaging manner.

b. Efforts to Increase Student Interest

Teachers employ various creative approaches, including question-and-answer sessions, reflective discussions, visual media, and role-playing activities. These strategies have proven effective in increasing active participation and strengthening students' understanding of religious values.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore and analyze the implementation of the storytelling method in fostering religious character among students at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang, with a particular focus on stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Based on interviews conducted with the principal and several homeroom teachers, the findings revealed that the storytelling method is highly effective in developing students' religious character, particularly in enhancing their understanding of moral and religious values relevant to their daily lives. The results indicated that stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) possess strong appeal for students because they contain profound yet easily understandable values for both lower- and upper-grade learners. This method not only improves students' religious understanding but also enriches their moral and social development.

In the context of religious education, the values embodied in stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), such as patience, honesty, compassion, and justice, are highly relevant to the development of students' religious character. This finding is consistent with Allah's statement in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21, which emphasizes that the Messenger of Allah serves as an excellent role model for believers. The verse highlights Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the ultimate example in all aspects of life, including the cultivation of religious character through virtuous attitudes and actions. Stories about his life provide students with opportunities to emulate these noble qualities and apply them in their everyday lives.

Based on interviews with the principal and teachers, storytelling at SDN 88 Loka serves not only as a means of teaching religious values but also as a tool for establishing an emotional connection between students and religious learning. Stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) touch students emotionally and motivate them to engage more deeply in religious studies. In character education theory, Halstead (2004) argues that stories and narratives possess a unique capacity to convey moral values because they directly engage learners' emotions, thereby

facilitating the internalization of those values. By linking moral lessons to authentic and meaningful stories, students can better understand and imitate the exemplary conduct of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in both social relationships and religious practices.

The successful implementation of the storytelling method is also supported by educational policies that promote character-based learning. Within Indonesia's 2013 Curriculum, character education constitutes an essential component of the learning process. Furthermore, the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 23 of 2015 concerning Character Development emphasizes storytelling and narrative approaches as effective strategies for instilling character values. The storytelling method centered on Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) at SDN 88 Loka is closely aligned with these policy objectives because it not only provides religious knowledge but also contributes to students' character formation through the moral values embedded in the stories.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research demonstrating the positive impact of storytelling methods in religious education on students' religious character development. For example, Widodo (2017) found that the use of storytelling in religious instruction at the elementary school level improved students' understanding of religious values and strengthened their moral character. The study also reported increased student engagement during learning activities, which is consistent with the present findings showing that stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) successfully captured students' attention, encouraged active participation in discussions, and enhanced involvement in religious learning.

Despite its positive impact, this study also identified several challenges faced by teachers in implementing the storytelling method. One of the primary challenges is limited instructional time, which often restricts the depth and detail of the stories presented. This finding aligns with Mulyono (2019), who noted that time constraints frequently hinder the implementation of story-based instructional approaches. Consequently, teachers must carefully select stories that are highly relevant and contain strong moral messages that can be effectively communicated within limited instructional periods.

The study further revealed that consistency in implementing stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a crucial factor in ensuring a lasting positive impact on students' religious character. Although most teachers agreed on the effectiveness of storytelling, maintaining consistent implementation remains

challenging due to time limitations and extensive curriculum demands. In this regard, constructivist learning theories developed by Piaget and Vygotsky suggest that effective learning should be continuous and contextual. Consistent application of storytelling enables students to internalize the values being taught more effectively and connect them with their daily experiences.

The implementation of storytelling about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang demonstrates that this method not only teaches religious values but also cultivates religious character that can be applied in students' everyday lives. The method has proven effective not only in religious education but also in promoting social interaction and emotional development, as reported by participating teachers. Moreover, the study found that the use of supporting media such as pictures and videos enriched students' understanding and made stories more engaging, representing an innovative aspect of the storytelling approach.

Overall, the findings indicate that storytelling about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is a highly effective method for fostering religious character among students at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang. The method is consistent with character education theories, educational policy frameworks, and previous research findings, while also producing positive outcomes in enhancing religious understanding and moral character development. Although challenges remain, particularly regarding time constraints and implementation consistency, this study provides valuable contributions to the development of character-based instructional methods in elementary education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the storytelling method in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang has made a positive contribution to the development of students' religious character. The storytelling method was found to enhance students' understanding of Islamic values, strengthen moral attitudes, and encourage active participation in the learning process. Although several challenges were identified, including limited instructional time, inconsistency in implementation, and differences in students' cognitive development levels, the use of relevant and contextual stories proved effective in facilitating the continuous internalization of religious values.

Stories about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) play a strategic role in fostering religious character, particularly values such as patience, honesty,

compassion, responsibility, and justice. The exemplary stories of the Prophet not only enrich students' religious knowledge but also encourage them to apply these values in their daily lives. Teachers and school administrators acknowledged that the storytelling method increases students' motivation to learn, deepens their understanding of Islamic teachings, and supports the formation of positive religious attitudes and behaviors.

The success of the storytelling method is supported by several factors, including teachers' enthusiasm and commitment, the creative use of instructional media, and a conducive classroom environment. Meanwhile, obstacles such as time constraints and difficulties in selecting age-appropriate stories can be addressed through adaptive teaching strategies, the integration of visual media, and interactive storytelling techniques. Overall, the findings demonstrate that storytelling about the life and character of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is an effective approach for nurturing religious character among elementary school students at SDN 88 Loka Enrekang, while also contributing to their moral, social, and spiritual development.

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