



Teachers' Creativity in Shaping the Character of Students at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze teachers' creativity in shaping the character of students at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah. The urgency of this study stems from the need to strengthen character education in non-formal Islamic educational institutions amid social challenges and technological developments. This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation with key informants, namely the madrasah principal, teachers, and students. Data analysis was conducted thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that teacher creativity is manifested through a variety of learning methods, the use of simple learning media, exemplary attitudes, and continuous religious habits. These practices contribute to shaping students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, and social awareness. These findings confirm that teacher creativity is a strategic factor in the success of character education at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah and needs to be systematically supported by educational institutions and the social environment.

INTRODUCTION

Character education is one of the fundamental objectives of the national education system, which emphasizes the importance of developing students' personalities holistically (Kurniawan et al., 2025; Sofan, 2021). This is in line with the mandate of the National Education System Law, which positions education as a means to develop the potential of students to become people who are faithful, pious, have noble character, and possess the skills necessary for life in society. From an Islamic education perspective, character education has a strategic position because it is not only oriented towards academic achievement but also towards the formation of morals in accordance with sharia values (Anwar & Salim, 2019; Hidayat & Asyafah, 2019; Maunah, 2016). Thus, character education becomes the main foundation in producing a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also morally and spiritually mature.

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The phenomenon of increasing deviant behavior among school-age children, such as low discipline, lack of responsibility, and weakening respect for teachers and parents, indicates serious challenges in education (Ambarwati et al., 2022; Mulyasa, 2015; Rahman & Yasin, 2023). This condition shows that education that is only oriented towards cognitive aspects is not sufficient to shape a well-rounded individual. Therefore, education must be directed towards a balance between mastery of knowledge and character building. In this context, Islamic education has an important role because it is able to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects with religious values that serve as guidelines for students' lives.

Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah, as a non-formal Islamic educational institution, was established to address this need. This institution serves as a forum for religious learning that emphasizes the instillation of values of faith, piety, and noble character from an early age. The existence of madrasah diniyah complements formal education by strengthening spiritual and moral aspects that are often neglected in public schools (Hakim, 2025; Nurlaela et al., 2024). With a curriculum that focuses on religious education, madrasah diniyah plays a role in shaping the character of students so that they have integrity, responsibility, and a strong religious attitude in their daily lives.

In the educational process at madrasah diniyah, teachers play a central role as educators and role models for students (Mauidhoh & Syarif, 2025; Umam & Makinuddin, 2024). Teachers are not only tasked with delivering lesson material, but also function as facilitators of values who instill noble character through exemplary attitudes and behavior. Teacher creativity is a key factor in creating an engaging, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment. Religious education conducted with a creative approach can prevent students from becoming bored and increase their motivation to learn. A number of studies show that teacher creativity has a positive effect on the character formation of students, although studies that specifically examine teacher creativity in Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah are still relatively limited.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to examine in depth the creative practices of teachers in shaping the character of students at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin in Padang City. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the role of teachers in non-formal Islamic educational institutions, which has rarely been studied comprehensively, especially in the local context. This study is expected to contribute academically to enriching the literature on character education in madrasah diniyah and to provide practical recommendations for improving the quality of religious education.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design that aims to deeply understand the experiences and practices of teachers in shaping the character of students (Aryasutha et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2022, 2023; Htay et al., 2025; Okenova et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025). The phenomenological approach was chosen because it is able to explore the subjective meaning of teachers' experiences, so that researchers can obtain a comprehensive understanding of the character building process at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah (MDTA). The research was conducted at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin in Padang City for three months, focusing on the interactions between teachers and students in daily learning activities. The research location was chosen purposively because this madrasah has a strong commitment to character education based on Islamic values.

The research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with the head of the madrasah, teachers, and students, as well as through direct observation of learning activities in the

classroom and religious activities outside the classroom. The interviews were semi-structured to allow informants to express their views and experiences more freely, while the observations were conducted using participatory techniques so that the researchers could understand the real learning context. Secondary data was obtained from madrasah documents, such as the curriculum, activity records, and regulations related to Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah education, supplemented by relevant scientific literature. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation, which complemented each other to provide a complete picture of the phenomenon under study.

Data analysis was conducted thematically through three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, researchers carried out the process of selecting, simplifying, and organizing raw data to focus more on aspects relevant to the research objectives. The data presentation stage was carried out by compiling information in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic matrices to make it easier for researchers to see patterns and relationships between categories. The final stage was drawing conclusions, in which researchers formulated key findings related to teachers' creativity in shaping students' character. Data validity is maintained through source and technique triangulation, namely by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, so that the data obtained is valid, consistent, and academically accountable (Baroud et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2024, 2025; Masitoh et al., 2023; Wisda, 2023; Wulandari et al., 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the creativity of teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin is reflected in several forms.

First, pedagogical creativity through the use of various learning methods such as exemplary stories, simple discussions, worship practices, and activity-based learning. The pedagogical creativity of teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin is reflected in their ability to develop varied learning methods that are tailored to the needs of students. The use of exemplary stories, for example, not only serves as a means of delivering material but also as a medium for internalizing moral and spiritual values (Aini, 2025; Harahap & Ginting, 2025; Rizki et al., 2025). Stories taken from the lives of prophets, companions, and Islamic figures are used as real examples that students can emulate in their daily lives. In addition, simple discussions conducted in class provide opportunities for students to express their opinions, practice speaking courageously, and foster mutual respect. Thus, the varied methods applied by teachers are able to create a more lively, interactive, and meaningful learning atmosphere.

Worship practices and activity-based learning are another form of pedagogical creativity that plays an important role in shaping the character of students (Kurniawan et al., 2025). Through worship practices such as wudhu simulations, congregational prayers, and daily prayer recitations, students not only understand the procedures of worship in theory, but also become accustomed to practicing them consistently. Meanwhile, activity-based learning, such as prayer memorization competitions or educational games, provides an enjoyable learning experience while instilling the values of discipline, cooperation, and responsibility. This approach shows that teachers' creativity is not only oriented towards method variation but also towards the effectiveness of learning in shaping students' religious and social character. Thus, the pedagogical creativity of teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin has proven to be an important factor in improving the quality of religious education while strengthening character building in children from an early age.

Second, creativity in the use of learning media, both conventional and simple digital media, to aid student understanding. The creativity of teachers in the use of learning media at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin can be seen from their ability to integrate various types of media, both conventional and simple digital, to support the learning process. Conventional media such as blackboards, pictures, flashcards, and simple teaching aids are used to clarify abstract religious concepts so that they are easier for students to understand (Maghrobi, 2025). For example, the use of pictures of the procedures for wudhu or daily prayer posters helps children remember the steps of worship more systematically. In addition, teachers also utilize objects around them as contextual learning media, such as using prayer mats to explain the direction of the qibla or practicing prayer movements directly. This approach shows that teachers' creativity does not depend on sophisticated media, but on the ability to optimize available resources to make learning more meaningful.

On the other hand, the use of simple digital media is also part of teachers' creativity in improving the quality of learning. Teachers use devices such as laptops, projectors, or smartphones to display educational videos, audio recordings of prayers, and interactive materials relevant to the lesson theme. These digital media help students gain a more varied and interesting learning experience, while also fostering motivation to learn. For example, playing videos about the stories of the prophets or simulations of worship procedures provides more concrete visualizations that make it easier for students to understand the material. Thus, the combination of conventional and simple digital media not only enriches learning methods but also strengthens the internalization of religious values and character (Shalehah et al., 2025). Teachers' creativity in utilizing these media is one of the important factors that support the effectiveness of character education in madrasah diniyah (Tanjungan & Farid, 2025).

Third, relational creativity is manifested through the exemplary attitude of teachers, religious practices such as congregational dhuha prayers, and a personal approach to students. These practices contribute to the formation of students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, and social attitudes. The relational creativity of teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin is manifested through consistent exemplary attitudes in everyday life. Teachers not only act as educators, but also as role models who reflect religious and moral values in their actual behavior (Nuronia & Jannah, 2025; Safiqo & Ghofur, 2025). This exemplary behavior is evident in the teachers' discipline, modesty, and commitment to performing religious worship and activities. By directly observing the teachers' behavior, students obtain concrete models that they can imitate and internalize in their lives. This is in line with the principles of Islamic education, which emphasize the importance of *uswah hasanah* (good role models) as an effective method of character building.

In addition to exemplary behavior, relational creativity is also manifested through religious habits and a personal approach to students. Routine activities such as congregational dhuha prayers, reading prayers together, and reciting the Quran are means of instilling religious values while also training discipline and responsibility. Teachers also take a personal approach by understanding the background, needs, and potential of each student, thereby creating close and trusting relationships. This approach helps students feel valued and cared for, which in turn fosters positive social attitudes such as empathy, cooperation, and concern for others. Thus, teachers' relational creativity contributes significantly to shaping students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, and social attitudes holistically.

The findings of this study show consistency with character education theory, which emphasizes the importance of role modeling and habit formation as key

strategies in shaping student behavior. Teachers' role modeling, as reflected in their attitudes, behavior, and daily religious commitment, has a direct influence on the internalization of character values in students. Meanwhile, habituation through routine activities such as congregational prayer, reciting prayers, and other worship practices are effective means of instilling religious values, discipline, and responsibility. Thus, the results of this study reinforce the view that character education cannot be separated from the role of teachers as role models and facilitators of continuous habituation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teacher creativity plays a very important role in shaping the character of students at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah Baitul Muttaqin in Padang City. Teacher creativity is reflected through the use of varied learning methods, the use of contextual learning media, exemplary attitudes, and the habit of religious values in everyday life at the madrasah. These practices have been proven to shape the religious character, discipline, responsibility, and social attitudes of students. The implications of this study indicate that strengthening teacher creativity needs to be a primary concern for Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah administrators through continuous training and institutional support. Further research is recommended to examine teacher creativity using different approaches and contexts in order to enrich the scientific knowledge of non-formal Islamic education.

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