Strengthening Spiritual Character Through Islamic Religious Education Among Fatherless Students At PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang

Delta Novita Putri[1*], Abdul Haris[2], Faridi[3]

[1,2,3]Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Jalan Raya Tlogomas No. 246, Kota Malang, 65144, Indonesia.
[*] Corresponding author:
Email: deltanovp@webmail.umm.ac.id

Abstract.
This study aims to describe the reasons behind and the implementation of spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang. The study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study design. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, involving five fatherless students as the main informants, along with Islamic Religious Education teachers, caregivers, and institution administrators as supporting informants. The informants were selected using purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which involves data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that spiritual character development is driven by four main considerations: the institution's vision of shaping a generation of Muslims who are faithful, morally upright, possess a strong sense of dignity (izzah), and are independent; the diverse backgrounds and initial conditions of students; the need for emotional and spiritual support; and the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation. The implementation involves integrating the national curriculum with the institution's own curriculum, developing daily worship habits, Qur'an learning, emotional support, educators serving as role models, learning about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (sirah nabawiyah), and practical activities that foster trustworthiness, responsibility, and independence. This study concludes that developing the spiritual character of fatherless students requires an integrated, relationship-based, adaptive, and continuous educational approach that takes into account each student's individual needs. These findings highlight the importance of bringing together religious education, caregiving, and practical experiences to help students internalize Islamic values in non-formal educational settings.

Keywords: *Fatherless, Spiritual Character, Islamic Religious Education, Non-Formal Education and Caregiving.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Strengthening spiritual character is an important part of education because it is closely related to the development of faith, moral values, and an individual's ability to find meaning in life. Education is not solely aimed at developing knowledge and understanding but also at instilling values that guide students in their thoughts, attitudes, and actions. From an Islamic perspective, spiritual character reflects an individual's relationship with Allah SWT, which is expressed through religious devotion, good conduct, patience, and responsibility toward oneself and the surrounding community. Sudi et al. (2023) explain that faith and piety are essential elements of Islamic spirituality that serve as the foundation for individuals in navigating life. Similarly, Yudhawati (2020) emphasizes that spirituality helps individuals understand the meaning of life and live with a clear sense of purpose. Therefore, strengthening spiritual character should be a key concern for educational institutions as part of students' overall personality development.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in strengthening spiritual character because it serves not only as a means of delivering religious knowledge but also as a process of internalizing Islamic values in everyday life. Kasman (2024) explains that Islamic Religious Education helps develop spiritual awareness through the cultivation of faith, religious devotion, and noble character. Meanwhile, Khadafie (2025) highlights the important role of Islamic Religious Education in shaping an individual's character, morality, and spirituality through an understanding of Islamic teachings and the practice of religious values in daily life. This process requires the involvement of educators as both mentors and role models, a supportive educational environment, and religious activities carried out consistently. Thus, strengthening spiritual character through Islamic Religious Education cannot rely solely on classroom learning or cognitive understanding. It must also be reflected in students' experiences, daily habits, and actual practices.

The importance of strengthening spiritual character becomes even more evident when considering students who experience *fatherlessness*, a condition in which children do not receive adequate paternal presence or involvement, either physically or emotionally. This situation may result from the father's death, divorce, work-related separation from the family, or limited involvement in childcare and parenting. Anesti and Abdullah (2024) explain that fatherlessness is associated with the absence of a father's role in a child's life, which may affect family relationships and dynamics. Research by Wibiharto, Setiadi, and Widyaningsih (2021) shows that fatherlessness is associated with loneliness, depression, and low self-esteem among students. These findings suggest that the absence of a father's role can be one of the factors influencing children's psychological and social development. Nevertheless, each child's experience may differ, as individual development is also shaped by family support, the social environment, and educational experiences.

In the educational context, fatherlessness deserves attention because the family is the first environment in which children develop moral and spiritual values. When a father's involvement in parenting is limited, the educational environment can provide additional support and guidance to help students develop positive character traits. Freeks (2022) argues that spiritual development plays an important role in building resilience, hope, and moral direction in children who grow up without a father figure. Although the study draws on a different religious perspective, its findings highlight the relevance of spirituality in the lives of fatherless children. Within Islamic Religious Education, spiritual development can be encouraged through the teaching of *tawhid* (belief in the oneness of Allah), moral guidance, educators' role modelling, and regular worship practices. Such an approach provides students with opportunities to strengthen their relationship with Allah SWT, make sense of their life experiences, and develop positive attitudes when facing various challenges.

PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is a non-formal educational institution that focuses on caregiving, education, and community empowerment. The institution provides educational services to students from diverse family backgrounds, including those experiencing fatherlessness. Based on the phenomenon described in the thesis, some fatherless students at the institution demonstrate positive spiritual characteristics, as reflected in their religious attitudes, positive outlook on life's challenges, and strong relationship with Allah SWT. This phenomenon is worth examining because the absence of a father's role does not necessarily lead to weak spiritual character among students. It raises questions about why the institution implements spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education and how the process is carried out. In this regard, PKBM, as a non-formal educational institution, provides an important setting for understanding how spiritual development takes place outside the formal education system.

Several previous studies have examined fatherlessness and character development through Islamic Religious Education from different perspectives. Iskandar and Kertamuda (2024) examined the self-concept of individuals who experienced fatherlessness due to parental divorce and found that self-acceptance and self-concept development were influenced by personal experiences, the mother's role, and the social environment. Meanwhile, Nurjanah, Jalal, and Supena (2023) found that limited paternal involvement in parenting affects children's emotional attachment, independence, and behavioral self-regulation. In the field of Islamic Religious Education, Setiawan et al. (2020) found that students' religious character was developed through congregational prayers, mentoring, and religious training activities. Lesnasari and Leksono (2023) also showed that Islamic Religious Education teaching strategies based on role modelling, habituation, advice, personal attention, and learning activities can help shape positive behavior among students from broken-home families. Furthermore, Fauzan and Mubarok (2024) emphasized the importance of Islamic Religious Education teachers as motivators and role models in developing students' spiritual intelligence.

Based on these previous studies, research on fatherlessness has largely focused on its effects on children's psychological, emotional, and social development, while studies on Islamic Religious Education have generally focused on strategies for developing students' religious character. Research specifically connecting fatherlessness with the process of strengthening spiritual character through Islamic Religious Education, particularly among male students in non-formal educational institutions, still requires further investigation. Studies involving students from broken-home families also cannot be fully equated with

research on fatherlessness, as the absence of a father's role can occur in various family situations, including families in which both parents continue to live together. Therefore, further research is needed not only to examine fatherlessness in terms of its effects and challenges but also to explore how educational institutions strengthen the spiritual character of students with such backgrounds.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on bringing together fatherlessness, spiritual character development, and Islamic Religious Education within the context of non-formal education. Specifically, this study focuses on male students experiencing the absence of a father's role and examines the reasons behind and the implementation of spiritual character development at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang. Thus, the study seeks not only to understand the circumstances of fatherless students but also to explore the educational practices carried out by the institution to support their spiritual development. This focus is expected to contribute to the field of Islamic Religious Education, particularly in the development of spiritual character through religious guidance that takes students' family backgrounds and individual needs into account.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to describe the reasons for implementing spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang, as well as to explain how the process is carried out. The findings are expected to provide a better understanding of the role of non-formal educational institutions in developing the spiritual character of fatherless students and serve as a reference for educators and educational institution administrators in developing religious guidance that responds to students' needs.

II. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. This approach was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind and the implementation of spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects as a whole, based on their experiences, perceptions, behaviors, and actions in their natural settings (Moleong, 2017). A case study was chosen because it allows researchers to examine the process of spiritual character development in depth while taking into account students' family backgrounds, personal experiences, and educational environments that influence their spiritual development.

The research was conducted at PKBM Jabal Dau Center, Dau District, Malang Regency, East Java. The research site was selected purposively because it serves students experiencing fatherlessness and provides Islamic Religious Education activities relevant to the focus of this study. The researcher was directly involved in the data collection process through observation and interviews to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in and knowledge of the spiritual character development process. The main informants consisted of five fatherless students who had participated in spiritual development activities based on Islamic Religious Education. Supporting informants included Islamic Religious Education teachers, caregivers or student mentors, and the head of the PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang Foundation. They provided information about the development programs, students' progress, and institutional policies.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Direct observation was conducted to examine Islamic Religious Education learning activities, religious practices, interactions between educators and students, and the implementation of spiritual character development within the institution. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using open-ended questions to explore students' spiritual experiences, the reasons behind the implementation of the development programs, and the process of spiritual character development. Meanwhile, documentation was used to complement the observation and interview findings by reviewing relevant documents, such as the Islamic Religious Education curriculum, religious development programs, and records related to students' spiritual character development. Data trustworthiness was established through source and method triangulation by comparing information from different informants and examining the results of observations, interviews, and documentation.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying information related to the spiritual experiences of fatherless students and the implementation of spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education. The data were then presented systematically in narrative form and organized into themes to identify patterns and relationships among the findings. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and repeatedly verifying them by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. This analytical process was intended to develop an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind and the implementation of spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Reasons for Strengthening Spiritual Character through Islamic Religious Education among Fatherless Students

The findings show that spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is based on four main considerations: the institution's vision, the diverse initial conditions of students, the need for emotional and spiritual support, and the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation. These four considerations indicate that spiritual character development is not solely motivated by the absence of a father's role but is also part of the institution's responsibility to support students' overall personal development.

The Institution's Vision of Preserving Izzah and Developing an EmpowereMuslim Generation

The findings reveal that PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang has an educational vision focused on developing a generation of Muslims who have strong faith, good moral character, a sense of *izzah* (dignity), and the ability to contribute and bring benefits to society. This vision serves as the foundation for the institution's educational and caregiving activities, which aim not only to meet students' academic needs but also to develop their awareness of their purpose in life as servants of Allah SWT.

Spiritual character development is intended to help students build a strong foundation of faith, fulfil their responsibilities, and develop independence. In this context, spiritual development is part of the institution's efforts to shape a generation that not only possesses religious knowledge but is also able to put Islamic values into practice in everyday life.

Differences in Students' Initial Conditions and Development Needs

The findings show that fatherless students come from diverse backgrounds and have different initial conditions, particularly in terms of worship habits, behavior, adaptability, and emotional regulation. Some students need guidance in developing regular worship habits and improving their behavior, while others require support in adjusting to the educational and caregiving environment.

These differences indicate that fatherless students should not be viewed as a group with the same challenges or needs. Their parenting experiences, family backgrounds, and emotional development are important considerations in determining the appropriate approach to their development. Therefore, the institution seeks to provide guidance based on each student's individual circumstances and needs.

The Need for Emotional Support and a Stronger Sense of Identity

The findings indicate that students need an educational environment where they feel accepted, safe, cared for, and free to express the difficulties they face. These needs are among the considerations behind spiritual character development, particularly for students who experience limited paternal presence or involvement in their daily lives.

Support is provided through personal communication and the involvement of educators and caregivers in understanding students' circumstances. This process is not limited to addressing behavioral issues but also aims to build trust, strengthen students' sense of identity, and help them understand their life experiences through Islamic values.

The Need for Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation, and Guidance

The findings show that strengthening spiritual character requires a monitoring and evaluation system involving different members of the institution. Monitoring is carried out through cooperation among foundation administrators, educators, guidance and counselling teachers, and caregivers to observe students' development.

The aspects being monitored include worship habits, discipline, behavior, emotional regulation, communication, and social interaction. The results of this monitoring serve as the basis for evaluating and determining forms of guidance that suit each student's development.

These findings show that Jabal Dau Center applies an approach that gives individual attention to students, involves collective monitoring, encourages collaborative evaluation, and adjusts its guidance strategies on an ongoing basis.

2. Implementation of Spiritual Character Development through Islamic Religious Education among Fatherless Students

The findings show that spiritual character development through Islamic Religious Education at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is implemented through an integrated educational and caregiving system. The process includes curriculum integration, regular worship practices, engagement with the Qur'an, emotional support, role modelling, learning about Islamic history (*sirah*), and practical activities that emphasize responsibility and independence.

Integration of the National Curriculum and the Institution's Own Curriculum

The findings show that Jabal Dau Center combines the national curriculum with its own institutional curriculum in delivering education. The institution's curriculum places the Qur'an as the foundation for students' actions and behavior while integrating academic activities with spiritual character development.

This integration is implemented through religious learning, internship programs, the use of nature and the surrounding environment as learning resources, and lessons drawn from the lives of the Prophet Muhammad (*sirah nabawiyah*) and his companions. This approach reflects the connection between academic education and the development of students' faith, behavior, and sense of responsibility.

Regular Worship Practices and Engagement with the Qur'an

Spiritual character development is carried out through regular worship practices incorporated into students' daily routines. These activities include performing the five daily prayers in congregation, *salat duha*, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, fasting during *ayyamul bidh* (the middle three days of the Islamic lunar month), and morning and evening *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah).

In addition to worship activities, students also take part in Qur'an learning and development through reading, memorization, and *murajaah* (revising and reviewing memorized verses). These activities are carried out consistently to develop discipline, perseverance, patience, and a sense of responsibility in practicing religious teachings.

These regular practices show that spiritual values are not only taught through lessons but are also reinforced through repeated practice in students' daily lives.

Emotional Support and a Relationship-Based Approach

The findings show that spiritual character development is also carried out through emotional support involving educators, caregivers, guidance and counselling teachers, and institutional administrators. Students are given opportunities to share their experiences, feelings, and personal difficulties.

This approach places personal communication, care, and trust at the center of the educational process. The support provided is adjusted to each student’s needs, ensuring that guidance does not focus solely on compliance with institutional rules but also takes their emotional and spiritual development into account.

Learning through Sirah and Educators’ Role Modelling

Spiritual character development is also supported through lessons on *sirah nabawiyah* and the lives of the Prophet Muhammad's companions. These activities introduce students to values such as faith, patience, perseverance, sacrifice, determination, and responsibility.

Learning about Islamic history gives students the opportunity to understand the life experiences of important figures in Islam and relate them to their own circumstances. Through *sirah nabawiyah*, students

are encouraged to look up to the Prophet Muhammad and his companions as role models. In addition, educators and caregivers demonstrate good examples through their daily conduct, including discipline, worship practices, communication, manners, and responsibility.

Practical Activities to Develop Trustworthiness, Responsibility, and Independence

The findings show that Jabal Dau Center provides practical classes that allow students to take on specific roles and responsibilities. These activities include role assignments such as *The Finance, Author, Real Estate,* and *Harvest Moon*.

Through these role assignments, students gain practical experience in fulfilling entrusted duties, working together, maintaining trust, and completing their assigned responsibilities. These practical activities form part of spiritual character development because they give students opportunities to put Islamic values into practice through real-life experiences.

Overall, the findings show that spiritual character development at Jabal Dau Center takes place through the integration of learning activities, regular worship practices, emotional support, role modelling, and practical experiences involving responsibility. Fatherlessness is understood as part of students' life backgrounds that needs to be considered when determining appropriate approaches to their development, rather than as the sole factor determining their spiritual or behavioral development.

IV. DISCUSSION

1. Reasons for Strengthening Spiritual Character through Islamic Religious Education among Fatherless Students

The research findings show that strengthening spiritual character at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is part of the institution's educational responsibility, which takes into account its institutional vision and students' developmental needs. Fatherlessness does not automatically lead to the same spiritual or emotional difficulties in every individual. Parenting experiences, the social environment, and educational support also influence students' development. This is in line with the study by Awalia et al. (2022), which found that children from non-intact families may show different psychological and behavioral responses.

Institutional Vision as the Foundation for Spiritual Character Development

Jabal Dau Center's vision of developing a generation of Muslims with *izzah* (dignity), strong faith, good moral character, and independence shows that education is not solely directed toward academic achievement but also toward shaping students' outlook on life. In this context, spirituality is understood as a foundation that helps individuals determine their purpose in life and develop behaviors based on Islamic values.

These findings are consistent with Yudhawati (2020), who explains that spirituality helps individuals understand the meaning of life and live with a clear sense of purpose. Khadafie (2025) also emphasizes that Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in shaping character, morality, and spiritual awareness through understanding and practicing Islamic teachings.

From a structural-functional perspective, the institution's vision can be linked to the function of *goal attainment*, which refers to an institution's ability to establish and achieve shared educational goals. Amaruddin (2022) explains that educational institutions are social structures that play a role in shaping values and character through their goals, rules, and educational activities. Therefore, Jabal Dau Center's vision provides a foundation for connecting spiritual development with the formation of students' identities and independence.

Differences in Students' Initial Conditions as a Basis for an Individualized Approach

Differences in students' initial conditions indicate that spiritual character development requires an approach that takes into account parenting experiences, developmental stages, and individual needs. Fatherlessness should not be understood solely as the physical absence of a father, as it may also involve limited emotional involvement and guidance in a child's life.

Iskandar and Kertamuda (2024) found that the development of self-concept among individuals experiencing fatherlessness is influenced by the mother's role, peer relationships, personal experiences, and

self-awareness. Meanwhile, Nurjanah et al. (2023) found that paternal involvement in parenting is related to children's emotional attachment, independence, and behavioral regulation.

Based on these two studies, fatherlessness needs to be understood within its specific context because each student has different experiences and sources of support. Therefore, spiritual character development at Jabal Dau Center can be understood as an educational approach that seeks to adjust the type of guidance provided to students' actual needs.

Emotional Support in Spiritual Character Development

Students' need for attention, a sense of security, and personal communication shows that strengthening spiritual character cannot be separated from the quality of relationships between educators and students. An educational process that focuses only on delivering learning materials and ensuring compliance with rules may not be sufficient to address students' emotional needs.

Rakhmat (2021) explains that interpersonal communication plays a role in building emotional relationships and shaping an individual's character and personality. In the context of spiritual development, empathetic communication can help establish relationships that allow students to receive guidance and understand the values that shape their lives.

These findings are also related to Khadafie (2025), who emphasizes the importance of educators' involvement and open communication in religious education. Thus, emotional support can be understood as an element that helps internalize Islamic values through educational relationships built on care, trust, and acceptance.

Monitoring and Evaluation as Mechanisms for Continuous Development

The involvement of different members of the institution in monitoring students' development shows that strengthening spiritual character requires an integrated educational system. The development process does not depend solely on religious activities but also requires observing behavioral progress and evaluating the approaches being used.

These findings can be analyzed through Talcott Parsons' structural-functional theory, as discussed by Amaruddin (2022). The function of *adaptation* can be seen in the way guidance programs are adjusted to students' needs. The function of *integration* is reflected in the cooperation between educators, caregivers, guidance and counselling teachers, and institutional administrators. Meanwhile, the function of *latency* relates to maintaining values through consistent habits and ongoing guidance.

Khadafie (2025) also explains that developing Islamic character requires a supportive educational environment and the active involvement of educators. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation can be understood as mechanisms for maintaining continuity in the development process so that the values being taught can be put into practice in students' daily lives.

2. Implementation of Spiritual Character Development through Islamic Religious Education among Fatherless Students

The research findings show that spiritual character development at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is carried out through an approach that integrates religious learning, regular worship practices, emotional support, role modelling, and practical experiences. This approach demonstrates that Islamic Religious Education serves not only as a means of delivering knowledge but also as a process of shaping students' behavior and spiritual awareness.

Curriculum Integration in Spiritual Character Development

The combination of the national curriculum and Jabal Dau Center's own curriculum reflects an effort to connect academic education with the development of Islamic values. This integration allows students to gain knowledge while also experiencing opportunities to put religious values into practice through educational and caregiving activities.

Khadafie (2025) explains that integrating Islamic values into the curriculum is one of the strategies for developing Islamic character. In this context, the curriculum serves not only as a guide for delivering learning materials but also as a means of shaping students' attitudes, behavior, and sense of responsibility.

These findings are also consistent with Al-Ghazali's perspective, as discussed by Putra (2008), that education serves as a means of drawing closer to Allah SWT and developing human character through

knowledge and the practice of good values. Therefore, curriculum integration at Jabal Dau Center can be understood as an effort to connect intellectual development with spiritual guidance.

Regular Worship Practices and Engagement with the Qur'an as the Foundation of Spiritual Character

Regular worship practices show that strengthening spiritual character requires a consistent and repeated process. Congregational prayers, voluntary fasting, *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), and engagement with the Qur'an provide students with opportunities to practice religious values in their everyday lives.

Ali et al. (2023) explain that religious character is reflected in attitudes and behaviors based on religious values, including obedience to religious teachings, respect for the religious practices of others, and harmonious social relationships. This view is supported by Ansori and Fatimah (2022), who emphasize that religious character is associated with attitudes and behaviors that reflect adherence to religious teachings.

The study by Setiawan et al. (2020) also shows that congregational prayers and religious guidance activities are part of the strategies used by Islamic Religious Education teachers to develop students' religious character. At Jabal Dau Center, regular worship practices are not only intended to encourage the performance of religious rituals but also serve as a means of developing discipline, perseverance, and responsibility.

Emotional Support and a Relationship-Based Approach to Internalizing Values

Emotional support shows that the process of internalizing Islamic values requires educational relationships that give students opportunities to receive attention and guidance. This approach is particularly important because fatherless students have different parenting experiences and emotional needs.

Rakhmat (2021) explains that interpersonal communication involving empathy and emotional connection plays a role in personality development. In an educational setting, personal communication can help educators understand students' experiences, allowing the guidance they provide to be better suited to individual needs.

These findings are also related to Khadafie (2025), who explains that religious education within a caregiving environment includes personality guidance, emotional support, and open communication. Therefore, emotional support at Jabal Dau Center forms part of the spiritual development process by connecting religious values with students' life experiences.

Learning through Sirah and Role Modelling in Strengthening Spiritual Character

Learning about *sirah nabawiyah* and the lives of the Prophet Muhammad's companions shows that spiritual character can be strengthened by introducing students to exemplary values. The stories of Islamic figures provide examples of faith, patience, responsibility, and the ability to face life's challenges.

Khadafie (2025) emphasizes that educators play an important role as role models in developing Islamic character. Through their example, students can directly observe how religious values are reflected in the daily behavior of educators and caregivers.

This view is also consistent with Kulsum and Muhid (2022), who explain that character education through Islamic Religious Education can be implemented through teaching, habituation, and role modelling. Thus, learning about *sirah* and observing educators' behavior are two complementary elements in the process of internalizing spiritual character.

An Islamic Environment as an Ecosystem for Character Development

The educational environment at Jabal Dau Center shows that spiritual character development does not take place only through formal learning activities but also through everyday interactions and habits. The connection between institutional rules, worship activities, role modelling, guidance, and social interactions forms part of the process of internalizing religious values.

From a structural-functional perspective, this situation is related to the functions of *integration* and *latency*, as explained by Amaruddin (2022). Integration can be seen in the connection between different elements of education, while the maintenance of values takes place through consistent habits within the institutional environment.

Yudhawati (2020) also explains that spirituality does not develop solely through ritual practices but also through social activities, togetherness, and individual involvement in a community. This shows that an Islamic environment can be understood as an educational ecosystem that supports spiritual character development through shared life experiences.

Practical Activities as an Expression of Trustworthiness and Independence

The practical activities carried out at Jabal Dau Center show that strengthening spiritual character is not limited to acquiring religious knowledge and performing acts of worship. It also involves students' ability to apply Islamic values in real-life activities. Assigning responsibilities through different roles gives students opportunities to practice honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, cooperation, and independence.

These findings are consistent with Wisiyanti (2024), who explains that integrating character values into Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in developing honesty, responsibility, hard work, discipline, and social awareness. Khadafie (2025) also emphasizes that Islamic Religious Education contributes to the development of individuals' character and morality through the practice of religious values.

Therefore, practical activities can be understood as a means of putting spiritual character into practice by connecting an understanding of values with real actions. Students are not merely taught the importance of trustworthiness and responsibility but are also given opportunities to put both values into practice in their shared daily activities.

Overall, this discussion shows that strengthening spiritual character through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is carried out through an integrated, relationship-based, adaptive, and continuous approach. Spiritual development focuses not only on an individual's relationship with Allah SWT through worship but also on developing social character through role modelling, guidance, and experiences of fulfilling responsibilities. The contribution of this study lies in highlighting the importance of an educational and caregiving system that connects spiritual development with the individual needs of fatherless students in a non-formal educational setting.

IV. CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that the strengthening of spiritual character through Islamic Religious Education among fatherless students at PKBM Jabal Dau Center Malang is motivated by the institution’s educational orientation and the diverse developmental needs of its students. The institution’s vision of shaping Muslim individuals who possess faith, good moral character, *izzah*, and the ability to contribute through their work serves as the foundation for an educational approach that integrates spiritual development with the cultivation of independence. Meanwhile, differences in parenting experiences, worship habits, emotional conditions, and abilities to adapt indicate that students’ developmental needs cannot be determined solely based on their fatherless status. Therefore, the strengthening of spiritual character is carried out as part of the institution’s educational responsibility by taking into account each student’s individual characteristics, as well as the importance of continuous guidance and evaluation.

The implementation of spiritual character development is realized through the integration of the national curriculum and the institution’s distinctive curriculum, worship habituation, engagement with the Qur’an, emotional support, *sirah* learning, educators’ role modelling, and practical activities that provide students with opportunities to experience fulfilling trusts and responsibilities. This integration demonstrates that the internalization of Islamic values does not take place solely through the delivery of religious subject matter, but also through habituation, interpersonal relationships, and students’ involvement in everyday activities. These findings indicate that strengthening spiritual character among fatherless students is an educational process that continuously involves religious, relational, and practical dimensions.

Conceptually, this study highlights the importance of the interconnectedness of institutional objectives, caregiving approaches, and learning experiences in spiritual character development. These findings have implications for Islamic educational institutions, particularly non-formal education institutions with caregiving-based programs, in developing educational guidance that takes students’ individual needs into account and provides opportunities for the practical application of Islamic values. Future research could expand this study through longitudinal research or comparative studies across institutions to gain a deeper understanding of spiritual character development within different caregiving contexts and educational environments.

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express gratitude and appreciation to the faculty advisors who provided direction, guidance, scholarly input, and academic support throughout the research process and the preparation of this scholarly work. Gratitude is also extended to the Master's Program in Islamic Education at Muhammadiyah University of Malang for the academic support provided. Appreciation is also extended to the management of the Jabal Dau Center PKBM in Malang, the educators, caregivers, and students who were willing to participate as informants and provide the information necessary for this research. The author also extends gratitude to both parents for their prayers, moral support, understanding, and motivation, which were consistently provided throughout the research process until the completion of this academic work. All of this support and cooperation played a crucial role in ensuring the smooth progress and successful completion of the research.

REFERENCES

[1] Ali, H., Naping, H., Arifin, A., & Tang, M. (2023). Religious Character Education Based on Local Wisdom for Students in Gorontalo City. ***Internasional Journal of Science and Research Archive***, 8(1). https://doi.org/10.30574/ijsra

[2] Amaruddin, H. (2022). Karakter Nilai Karakter, Pendidikan Karakter : Urgensi, Terminologi, Teori, Analisis, dan Praksis. Yogyakarta: Semesta Aksara.

[3] Anesti, Y., & Abdullah, M. N. A. (2024). Fenomena Fatherless : Penyebab Dan Konsekuensi Terhadap Anak Dan Keluarga. 2(2).

[4] Ansori, P. B., & Fatimah, S. (2022). The Influence Product Quality and Price on Product Purchasing Decisions for Cardinal Casual in Ska Mall Pekanbaru. ***Jurnal Apresiasi Ekonomi,*** 10(1), 78–87. Retrieved from https://scholar.archive.org/work/6ajpzl4ehjhqzi67mv3zzibr5a

[5] Awalia, F. A., Purbasari, I., & Oktavianti, I. (2022). Dampak Keluarga Tak Utuh Pada Perkembangan Psikologis Anak. PRIMARY: ***Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar,*** 11, 748–754.

[6] Fauzan, M., & Mubarok, R. (2024). Implementasi Nilai Spiritual dalam Pengajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Melalui Pengembangan Kecerdasan Spiritual. (July). https://doi.org/10.69900/ag.v4i1.208

[7] Freeks, F. E. (2022). Transforming Fatherless Children through Faith as a Strength Perspective: Challenging Father-Absence as a Social ill in South African Society. (November). https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.103.2038

[8] Iskandar, R. N., & Kertamuda, F. E. (2024). Gambaran Konsep Diri Pada Pria Dewasa Awal Yang Mengalami Fatherless Akibat Perceraian. ***INQUIRY: Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi***, Universitas Paramadina, 14(2). https://doi.org/10.51353/inquiry.v14i02.585

[9] Jalaluddin Rakhmat. (2021). Psikologi Komunikasi (cetakan ke). Bandung: Simbosia Rekatama Media.

[10] Kasman, A. (2024). Landasan Spiritual Keilmuan Dalam Pendidikan Islam. 16(1), 65–75.

[11] Khadafie, M. (2025). Pendidikan Agama Islam: Tinajauan Teori dan Praktik (Januari; Ummu Tasyiah Arsya, ed.). Indramayu: PT. Adab Indonesia.

[12] Kulsum, U., & Muhid, A. (2022). Pendidikan Karakter melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Revolusi Digital. 12(2), 157–170. https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v12i2.2287

[13] Lesnasari, R. D., & Leksono, A. A. (2023). Strategi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Memberikan Motivasi Belajar Peserta Didik Berlatar Belakang Broken Home di SDN Kawunggading Cianjur. BHINNEKA: ***Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan Dan Bahasa***, 1(4).

[14] Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

[15] Moleong, L. J. (2017). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Edisi Revisi). Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

[16] Nurjanah, N. E., Jalal, F., & Supena, A. (2023). Studi Kasus Fatherless: Peran Ayah Dalam Pengasuhan Anak Usia Dini. ***Jurnal Kumara Cendekia,*** 11(3), 261–270.

[17] Putra, A. A. (2008). Konsep Pendidikan Agama Islam Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali. (113).

[18] Setiawan, Y., Sugiatno, & Karolina, A. (2020). Strategi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa. INCARE: ***International Journal Educational Resources***, 01(03).

[19] Wibiharto, B. M. Y., Setiadi, R., & Widyaningsih, Y. (2021). Pola Hubungan Dampak Fatherless terhadap Kecanduan Internet , Kecenderungan Bunuh Diri dan Kesulitan Belajar Siswa SMAN ABC Jakarta. 9(1), 276–288. https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v9i1.275

[20] Wisiyanti, R. A. (2024). Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Globalisasi. EDUKASIA: ***Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran***, 5(1), 1965–1974.

[21] Yudhawati, D. (2020). Penguatan Spritualitas dalam Komunitas Resimen Mahasiswa. 12(1), 50–64.