

## Religious Character Development through GASMI Pencak Silat Activities at Ar Rahman Mosque in North Metro District

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the process of religious character development among students through GASMI martial arts training at Ar-Rohman Mosque, North Metro District, and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting its implementation. The study was motivated by preliminary findings indicating that some students exhibited limited religious understanding, weak ethical behavior, and low discipline prior to participating in GASMI training. A qualitative approach with a descriptive field research design was employed. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving fifteen students selected through purposive sampling based on their limited religious background before joining the training program. The findings indicate that religious character development is fostered through the integration of religious practices into martial arts training activities. These practices include routine prayers before training sessions, participation in congregational prayers, weekly religious studies, fasting before level advancement examinations, and the application of educational sanctions, such as reciting the adhan or selected Qur'anic verses, for students who violate training regulations. Thematic analysis revealed the enhancement of several dimensions of religious character, including discipline, responsibility, independence, honesty, cooperation, humility, courage, and patience. The results demonstrate that GASMI martial arts training serves not only as a means of physical development but also as an effective medium for the internalization of Islamic values. This study concludes that a religiously oriented martial arts training model makes a significant contribution to the development of students' religious character. It also recommends further research to examine its applicability and effectiveness in broader educational and community settings.

**Keywords:** Religious Character Development, Gasmi Martial Arts, Islamic Values, Character Education,

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### INTRODUCTION

Social, cultural, and technological changes in the era of globalization pose significant challenges to the character development of the younger generation. The phenomena of moral decadence, lack of religious awareness, and increasing deviant behavior among adolescents are increasingly reported in various recent studies. (Faza and Ubaidillah 2020) noted that the pressures of modernity have implications for the weakening of youth's cultural and spiritual identity, necessitating a character education strategy based on local and religious values. In the Indonesian context, pencak silat, as an

intangible cultural heritage, plays a strategic role not only as a martial art but also as a vehicle for internalizing moral, ethical, and religious values. (Nurbaiti, Alwy, and Taulabi 2020)

Religious character is a person's disposition, nature, morals, or personality that is formed from religious values and teachings that are internalized and practiced in daily life. According to the Ministry of National Education, religious character is reflected in an attitude of obedience to religious teachings, tolerance towards the implementation of other religious worship, and living in harmony with adherents of other religions. (Jannah and Khikmah n.d.) Ngainum Naim emphasized that religious values are the appreciation and implementation of religious teachings in a person's real behavior that is reflected through worship, speech, and social interactions. (Nurhidayat et al. 2025) In Islam, religious character includes the dimensions of faith, worship, and morals which are the basis for the formation of a true Muslim person who has strong faith, good deeds, and noble character. Therefore, religious character is not only limited to the spiritual aspect, but also a moral and social foundation that shapes a person's personality to become a moral, disciplined, and responsible person. (Barlenty, Artanayasa, and Suwiwa 2022)

The formation of religious character can be explained through several educational and psychological theories. Thomas Lickona's theory of character education emphasizes three important aspects: *moral knowing* (knowing the good), *moral feeling* (loving goodness), and *moral action* (doing good). (Farmawaty 2021) Aristotle's habituation theory states that virtue is formed through continuous practice until it becomes a habit. Albert Bandura's social learning theory explains that a person's character is formed through the process of observing and imitating the behavior of models or role models. Meanwhile, Spranger's value theory views religious values as an integral part of the value system that shapes human personality. In the context of religious character formation through GASMI pencak silat, all of these theories appear integrated because this martial art activity not only trains physical but also instills discipline, role models, and spiritual habits such as group prayer, respect for teachers, and involvement in religious activities at the mosque. Through this process, GASMI students are expected to be able to become religious individuals, have noble morals, and are highly disciplined. (Desmila and Suryana 2023)

Several studies have shown that character education through pencak silat has a positive impact on the development of students' personalities. Arisandi et al. (2022) emphasized that the art of pencak silat contains elements of discipline, sportsmanship, and spirituality, which are implemented through training activities and school ethics. Similarly, Pratama and Hidayah (2025) reported that the Tapak Suci extracurricular activity at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Blora plays a role in the formation of honesty and discipline through habituation, role modeling, and moral development. This evidence shows that pencak silat is not just a physical activity, but also a pedagogical instrument with educational value. (Jannah 2019)

In the realm of Islamic education, several silat schools affiliated with religious organizations integrate religious values into their training. Setiawan (2023), for example, found that Pagar Nusa fosters Islamic values through rituals, training ethics, and teacher-student relationships. Traditional silat groups in various regions, such as Sekinci-Kinci in Aceh, have also proven to be a channel for character development, particularly in the face of the onslaught of global culture (Suranti & Karsiwan, 2024). These empirical findings confirm the relevance of pencak silat in strengthening the moral and religious identity of the younger generation. (Fatmah 2018)

Although various studies have examined the relationship between pencak silat and character education, there is a literature gap in this aspect. The process of internalizing religious values in mosque-based community environments. (Zellatifanny and Mudjiyanto 2018) Most previous studies have focused on the context of formal Islamic boarding schools or Islamic boarding schools, but few studies have explored the dynamics of the

experiences of students participating in silat training in informal settings such as mosques. Furthermore, the dimensions of religious rituals integrated into the training process, such as prayer, tahlil (recitation of the Koran), congregational prayer, and forms of religious sanctions, have not been discussed in depth from a qualitative, phenomenological perspective or through case studies. (Fadhilah 2021)

Based on the results of a pre-survey conducted by researchers at the Ar-Rohman Mosque in North Metro District, data were obtained through three methods: observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the initial observation showed that most GASMI students still had a low level of understanding of religion, manners, and ethics before participating in pencak silat training. They tended to lack discipline, were less polite to teachers and parents, and did not yet have a habit of praying regularly. An interview with GASMI trainer, Mr. Muhammad Muflikhun, revealed that the main purpose of the training was not only to hone self-defense skills, but also to instill religious values such as discipline, courtesy, honesty, and responsibility through spiritual habits such as praying together, praying in congregation, and giving educational punishments in the form of the call to prayer and reciting tahlil for students who violated the training rules. Meanwhile, documentation of activities in the form of photos of training, congregational prayers, and religious activities at the mosque strengthens the evidence that the formation of religious character has begun to be integrated into every GASMI pencak silat activity. (Altıntaş 2025) The data shows that the implementation of coaching at the Ar-Rohman Mosque plays an important role in shaping changes in the behavior of students from being initially less civilized to being more religious, disciplined, and responsible. (Cynarski and Lee-Barron 2014)

The urgency of this research is further strengthened given that religious character is a fundamental component within the national character education framework. Based on Lickona's character education theory, character formation encompasses moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action; all three require a consistent and exemplary learning environment. Pencak silat practiced in a mosque setting has the potential to provide a more intense space for internalizing values through a combination of physical training, spirituality, and the practice of manners. (Luo et al. 2025)

Based on the proposal entitled "*Formation of Religious Character Through Pencak Silat GASMI Martial Arts at Ar-Rohman Mosque, North Metro District*", the formulation of the problem in this study is focused on two main things, namely how the process of forming religious character through GASMI martial arts pencak silat activities carried out at the Ar-Rohman Mosque, Metro Utara District, and what are the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the process of forming religious character. These two formulations aim to comprehensively describe how religious values, discipline, manners, and spirituality are instilled through martial arts activities, while identifying internal and external elements that strengthen or hinder the success of character development of GASMI students in the mosque environment. (Bali and Fadilah 2019)

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze in depth the process of forming the religious character of students through GASMI pencak silat activities at the Ar-Rohman Mosque, North Metro District. (Nurhidayat et al. 2025) This study also identifies supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the success of religious character development. (Kamalia 2025) Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the literature on culture and religion-based character education, while practically this study can be a reference for Islamic educational institutions, martial arts communities, and non-formal curriculum developers in designing effective character development programs. (Ats Tsauri and Andrian 2020)

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type that aims to understand in depth the process of religious character formation of students through GASMI pencak silat activities at the Ar-Rohman Mosque, Metro Utara District. (Karim et al. 2025) This approach was chosen because the case study allows researchers to examine phenomena contextually and holistically in a natural environment so that it is relevant to uncover the dynamics of values, religious practices, and social interactions within the silat community. The research location was determined at the Ar-Rohman Mosque, which functions as the center of GASMI's training and spiritual development activities. (Jauharuddin et al. 2024) This study lasted for six months, from January to June 2025, with 15 students and 2-3 trainers selected through purposive sampling based on certain criteria, such as a minimum of six months of training experience and active involvement in GASMI religious activities. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were used to explore the experiences, perceptions, and views of informants regarding religious values internalized during training. Participatory observation helped researchers directly understand character development practices through interactions between coaches and students, joint prayers, the implementation of educational sanctions, and religious activities at the mosque. Documentation in the form of activity photos, organizational records, rules of procedure, and GASMI's internal archives served as supporting evidence. To ensure data validity, this study utilized triangulation of sources and methods. *member checking*, as well as the preparation *audit trail* to ensure the credibility and dependability of the research results. Operationally, the data collection process was carried out in stages, combining direct field observations, recording religious activities, and in-depth interviews with trainers and students to obtain a complete picture of the integration of religious values into every aspect of training. (Fatmah 2018)

From a conceptual and theoretical perspective, this research is based on Thomas Lickona's (1992) character education theory which emphasizes three main moral components, namely *moral knowing* (moral knowledge), *moral feeling* (moral feeling), and *moral action* (moral actions), all of which interact with each other in shaping a moral personality. In the context of GASMI pencak silat, physical training and spiritual habituation become concrete vehicles for students to realize these three components through disciplined training, reciting prayers, and instilling the values of responsibility and noble morals (Fujji, Khanna, and Toma 2025). In addition, the theory of value socialization is used to explain how religious values are transferred socially through the silat community as a socialization agent. GASMI acts as a non-formal, religious-based institution that instills religious values, manners, and ethics through intensive interactions between trainers and students and through collective rituals such as *tahlil* and *hizrul jauzah*. This study also adopts a character education approach based on local wisdom, considering that pencak silat as a cultural heritage of the archipelago is rich in the values of responsibility, humility, discipline, and self-control. Operationally, the analytical framework of this research combines character education theory, value socialization theory, and the concept of local wisdom to explore how religious character formation takes place in the practice of GASMI silat, how social structures and rituals support the process of internalizing values, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence its success. (Tadesse 2017)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Indonesian Muslim Silat Action Movement (GASMI) is a silat school officially established on January 11, 1966, at the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in Kediri, on the initiative of KH. Abdullah Maksum Jauhari. GASMI was initially born as a self-defense movement for students and ulama to counter the threat of the Indonesian Communist

Party (PKI) and maintain the security of Islamic boarding schools and the community. In addition to functioning as a self-defense forum, GASMI also serves as a medium for preaching and character development for students to have physical, mental, and spiritual strength. In its development, GASMI became a pioneer in the formation of the Nahdlatul Ulama Pagar Nusa Silat School (PSNU-Pagar Nusa) and is known for its signature activities such as Pencak Dor, a silat competition in a bamboo ring with the motto "*Above enemies, below friends*" To instill sportsmanship and brotherhood among martial artists. To this day, the values inherited from GASMI remain a means of fostering morals, discipline, and religious character among the younger generation. (Santika and Arifin n.d.-a)

Character is an individual's personality quality reflected in consistent thought patterns, attitudes, and behavior in daily life. In the context of education, character is understood as the result of a continuous process of internalizing values through habituation, role models, and interaction with the social environment (Xu et al. 2026). According to Thomas Lickona, character is formed through the integration of three main components, namely moral knowledge (*moral knowing*), moral feelings (*moral feeling*), and moral action (*moral action*). Effective character education not only emphasizes understanding values, but also fosters emotional awareness and encourages individuals to embody these values in concrete actions. Thus, character develops when the value of goodness is understood, internalized, and habituated. Religious character is a dimension of character that is based on religious values and is reflected in adherence to religious teachings, noble morals, and moral responsibility in social life. (Liu and Danaa 2025) In an Islamic perspective, religious character is identical to good morals that originate from faith in Allah SWT and are manifested in good relationships with fellow human beings. Religious character is not only ritualistic, but also includes discipline, honesty, self-control, and a sense of responsibility. The formation of religious character takes place effectively through habituation and a conducive environment. (Li et al. 2025)

The theory of habituation asserts that character is born from repeated and consistent practice. An educational environment that integrates religious values into real-life activities, such as structured and disciplined training, plays a crucial role in deeply instilling moral and spiritual values. Therefore, religious character is the result of an educational process that addresses cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects in an integrated manner. Activity-based education that combines discipline, role models, and religious values is a strategic tool in shaping individuals with morals, responsibility, and strong spiritual awareness. (Li 2025)

The results of the study show that GASMI Pencak Silat activities have a significant positive impact on the formation of religious character of students (Prasetyo and Salim 2025). Before participating in GASMI activities, most students showed undisciplined behavior, low religious understanding, and minimal manners towards teachers and others. (Jiang et al. 2025) After participating in GASMI training for six months, there were striking changes in aspects of worship discipline, morals, responsibility, and social concern. This is in line with GASMI's goal to form a strong Muslim personality physically and spiritually.

Table 1  
GASMI Pencak Silat activities

Conditions Before GASMI	Conditions After GASMI	Change
Lack of discipline in prayer	Regular congregational prayers at the mosque	Significant increase

<b>Morals and Manners</b>	Impolite and often argues	Be more polite, obedient and respectful towards teachers	Significant increase
<b>Social Concern</b>	Religious Character Aspects	Actively helping friends and mosque activities	Significant increase
<b>Responsibility</b>	Discipline of Worship	Complete tasks with full responsibility	Significant increase
<b>Honesty and Sportsmanship</b>	Inconsistent during training	Admit mistakes and respect your opponent	Significant increase
<b>Humility (Tawadhu)</b>	Tends to be arrogant when winning	Be humble and accept criticism	Significant increase
<b>Patience</b>	Easily angered and emotional	More patient, calm, and able to hold back	Significant increase

Apart from the observation results, interviews with trainers showed that the formation of religious character was carried out through three main approaches, namely: (1)religious habituation, such as joint prayers, tahlilan, and fasting before the level increase exam; (2)exemplary coach,who acts as a moral figure; and (3)giving educational punishment, such as the call to prayer in the mosque or reciting salawat for students who break the rules. (Faza and Ubaidilah 2020) This habit strengthens the moral dimension.*i'tiqodiyah* (faith) and*moral character*(morals) of students, in accordance with the concept of Islamic character education. (Wijaya et al. 2025)

Table 2  
The Result Interview

Source person	Interview Focus	Key Findings	Formed Character Values
<b>GASMI Teacher/Trainer</b>	History and purpose of the founding of GASMI; the role of trainers in character development	GASMI was founded in 2023 on the initiative of young congregants to transform mosques into centers for youth development. Trainers not only teach silat techniques but also instill moral, religious, and ethical values through prayer, congregational prayer, and religious sermons.	Discipline, responsibility, manners, role model, religiosity.
<b>GASMI Assistant Coach</b>	Role in fostering the morals and discipline of students	Before joining, students tended to be impolite and frequently late. After joining GASMI, positive changes occurred through the practice of worship, communal prayer, and the example of the instructors. Assistant instructors also provided guidance, reminders for congregational prayer, and religious advice.	Manners, responsibility, discipline, respect, honesty.
<b>Student (Yusuf Aditia Rohman)</b>	Behavioral changes after participating in GASMI	Previously lazy about praying and impolite, he now attends the mosque more regularly, is disciplined, and dares to make the call to prayer. The practice of prayer and educational punishments have made him	Discipline, responsibility, courage, religiosity.

		accustomed to worship and respectful towards teachers.	
<b>Student (Ahmad Abu Abdillah)</b>	The influence of GASMI on spirituality	GASMI fosters awareness of worship, responsibility, and sincerity. Activities such as tahlilan (religious recitation) and communal prayer strengthen faith and a sense of closeness to the mosque.	Sincerity, patience, discipline, gratitude.
<b>Student (Wildan Kurniawan)</b>	The atmosphere and value of training	The training, filled with etiquette, begins with prayer and ends with repentance. The instructor emphasizes the importance of respecting teachers and restraining emotions.	Responsibility, discipline, politeness, self-control.
<b>Student (Rivka Maulida Putri)</b>	Women's experiences in GASMI	Training builds courage and patience. Punishment is educational, such as leading prayers, and fosters a sense of responsibility and self-confidence.	Patience, humility, responsibility, self-confidence.
<b>Student (Fidia Azzahra)</b>	Changes in attitudes and values of worship	Becoming more disciplined, honest, and diligent in worship. Habituating prayer and tahlilan (religious recitation) fosters spiritual and social sensitivity.	Honesty, responsibility, discipline, religiosity.
<b>Student (Maulana Adi Pratama)</b>	The meaning of silat in life	Silat is not just self-defense, but an exercise in patience and restraint. Tadarus exercises and prayers strengthen the spiritual aspect.	Responsibility, patience, discipline, religiosity.
<b>Student (Krisna Dwi Pranata)</b>	Moral values and sincerity	Training instills sincerity and respect for others; punishments like cleaning the mosque teach responsibility.	Sincerity, discipline, responsibility, togetherness.
<b>Student (Zikri Akbar Kusnanto)</b>	Values of honesty and responsibility	Taught to be honest and admit mistakes. GASMI increases awareness of worship and fosters sincere intentions in every action.	Honesty, responsibility, awareness of worship.

The results of this study confirm that GASMI Pencak Silat activities play a significant role in shaping religious character through the internalization of Islamic values in the process of self-defense training. (Cahyono 2016) This finding is in line with Lickona's (2012) theory on character education, which states that character formation involves three main dimensions: *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. In the context of GASMI, students not only understand the values of goodness (knowing), but also internalize religious feelings (feeling) and apply them in daily behavior (action). (Ediyono and Widodo 2019a)

This research also strengthens the research results of Muchammad Ukulul Mufarriq (2020) found that pencak silat contributes to the formation of disciplined and spiritual character among young people. Furthermore, this finding aligns with research by Fadhilah (2021) which shows that religious-based martial arts training can increase students' responsibility and morality. However, unlike research by Kumaidah (2012), which emphasizes pencak silat as a means of preserving national culture, this study focuses on the role of mosque-based pencak silat in fostering individual religiosity.



Figure 1 Joint training to strengthen brotherhood



Figure 2 giving a sermon during training

Conceptually, the results of this study indicate that self-defense activities combined with spiritual guidance can function as a model of Islamic character education based on mosque communities. (Vertonghen and Theeboom 2010) GASMI not only trains self-defense skills, but also fosters the values of faith, responsibility, and social concern as the moral foundation of students in everyday life. Therefore, activities such as GASMI are worthy of being used as examples of the implementation of effective religious character education in society. (Silkyanti 2019)



Figure 3

interview with students GASMI interview with teacher GASMI

The main supporting factors in the formation of the religious character of GASMI students include a conducive mosque environment, consistent exemplary patterns of coaches, and a training system that emphasizes discipline and togetherness. (Channon and Jennings 2014) The mosque as a training venue provides a religious atmosphere that helps internalize spiritual values. (Kim and Jang 2020) Coaches who act as moral guides reinforce value learning through real examples. (Setiawan, Suhono, and Asy'ari 2024) In addition, routine activities such as joint prayer and congregational prayer create religious habits that strengthen the morals of students. (Bali and Fadilah 2019) The inhibiting factors found include a less supportive family background, minimal supervision outside the GASMI environment, and the negative influence of the modern social environment that tends to be permissive towards value-free behavior. (Febriyanto, Haqiyah, and Iskandar 2024)

These findings confirm that GASMI Pencak Silat activities play an important role in the process of internalizing Islamic values through self-defense activities. (Lakes and Hoyt 2004) The training process not only emphasizes physical aspects, but also teaches moral, spiritual, and social values. These results are in line with the theory of character education

according to Lickona (2012), which emphasizes that character formation involves three main dimensions: *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. In the context of GASMI, students not only understand the values of goodness cognitively (*knowing*), but also fosters deep religious feelings (*feeling*) and practice it in everyday life (*action*). Thus, GASMI activities can be categorized as an integrative form of character education, as they combine the development of intellectual, emotional, and moral behavior simultaneously (Lickona, 2012; Fadhillah, 2021).

Conceptually, the results of this study indicate that martial arts activities combined with spiritual development can be used as a model for Islamic character education based on mosque communities. (Svitych 2021) GASMI not only functions as a forum for physical development and martial arts skills, but also as a means of developing morals, faith, and social awareness. (Kirana and Haq 2022) This activity fosters a spirit of brotherhood, discipline, and social responsibility among students. (Cynarski and Lee-Barron 2014) Therefore, GASMI Pencak Silat is worthy of being an example of the real implementation of community-based religious character education that is relevant in the socio-cultural context of modern Indonesia, while contributing to strengthening Islamic values in the younger generation (Suharto, 2020; Abdullah, 2018). This study illustrates that Formation of religious character of GASMI students at Ar-Rohman Mosque, North Metro District occurs through a process in instilling religious values, discipline and manners which is integrated into pencak silat training activities. The main findings can be summarized as follows: (2025)

The Character Education Theory proposed by Thomas Lickona serves as the primary basis for developing the religious character of students through GASMI pencak silat activities. Lickona explains that character formation is a comprehensive process involving three main components: *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*. *Moral knowing* related to the understanding of the values of goodness and truth, *moral feeling* reflects the emotional awareness to love good and shun evil, while *moral action* is the ability to embody moral values in concrete actions. In the context of GASMI silat training at the Ar-Rohman Mosque, this theory is seen through the habit of praying before and after training, the obligation to fast before the level increase exam (UKT), and the implementation of religious punishments such as serving as muezzin or reciting tahlil for students who violate discipline. Routine religious activities such as Friday night tahlilan and congregational prayers serve as a means of spiritual strengthening and habituating religious behavior. As a result, GASMI students show real changes in attitude: they are more disciplined, polite to teachers, diligent in worship, and have a strong sense of responsibility and solidarity among fellow members. Supporting factors for the success of this program include the spiritually conducive environment of the Ar-Rohman Mosque, the exemplary behavior and worship of the trainers and ustaz, as well as the support of the community and mosque administrators who see GASMI as a positive platform for developing the younger generation.

However, the process of developing religious character also faces several obstacles, including students with limited religious and ethical knowledge, limited training time and facilities, and a lack of support from some parents for integrating martial arts and religious character education. To overcome these challenges, trainers can implement *progressive spiritual training* by providing basic religious and ethical material, collaborating with the mosque's religious teachers for routine guidance, and using a mentoring system between senior and junior students. Silat activities can also be integrated with the mosque's religious activities so that character development occurs naturally. Meanwhile, a communication forum for student guardians needs to be established to increase parental understanding and support for the development goals. With this solution, the character education process at GASMI can run more optimally and sustainably. Overall, the GASMI pencak silat training program has proven effective in

shaping the religious character of students through a combination of physical discipline, habituation of worship, and spiritual role models, thus producing a young generation that is not only physically tough, but also has noble morals, civilized, and possesses strong faith.

This study demonstrates significant conceptual and contextual distinctions compared to several previous studies. The study by Lilik Nur Fadhilah (2021) entitled "*Formation of Religious Character through Pagar Nusa Pencak Silat at SMPI Abu Ghonaim Bumiaji, Batu City*" emphasizes the process of habituation, role modeling, and the application of educational punishment in extracurricular activities at Islamic boarding schools. Unlike the aforementioned studies, this study focuses on the implementation of GASMI Pencak Silat activities in a mosque environment with students with low religious backgrounds. Therefore, religious character development is carried out through habituation of worship such as congregational prayer, the call to prayer, and tahlil as a medium for internalizing spiritual values. Furthermore, Faza and Ubaidillah's (2020) research on "*The Urgency of Islamic Educational Values in GASMI Pencak Silat Activities at Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School, Kediri*" while highlighting the context of Islamic boarding schools that are structurally established in fostering religiosity, this study presents the context of the general community outside of Islamic boarding schools with a mosque-based orientation towards da'wah and youth character rehabilitation. Meanwhile, Muchammad Ukulul Mufarriq's (2019) research on "*Youth Character Building through Pencak Silat PSHT at Gadjah Mada University*" emphasizes more on the aspects of nationalism and social morality, while this research integrates the spiritual and religiosity aspects of Islam as the core of character formation through martial arts training.

Furthermore, Kumaidah's research (2012) entitled "*Strengthening the Nation's Existence through the Traditional Martial Art of Pencak Silat*" is more oriented towards preserving cultural values and national spirit, while this study emphasizes the function of pencak silat as an instrument for forming concrete Islamic morals and values in the lives of Islamic boarding school students. Similarly, Hibatullah's (2019) research entitled "*Islamic Values in Pagar Nusa Pencak Silat in the Nahdlatul Ulama Environment*" emphasizes the role of Pagar Nusa as a cultural da'wah medium organized under the structure of religious organizations, while this study focuses on the transformation of santri behavior in the mosque environment from low moral conditions to religious, disciplined, civilized, and noble individuals. Thus, this study has a novel contribution that lies in three important aspects, namely the context (non-pesantren mosque environment), approach (habituation of religious worship and punishment), and objectives (individual religious transformation through self-defense as a medium of character education). (Zellatifanny and Mudjiyanto 2018)

The contribution of this research has significance in three main domains, namely conceptual, practical, and contextual. Conceptually, this research expands the theoretical framework of religious character education in the perspective of Islamic religious education by presenting an integrative coaching model between physical, moral, and spiritual dimensions. This model shows that pencak silat training can function not only as a self-defense activity and physical strengthening, but also as a medium for internalizing Islamic values such as discipline, responsibility, humility, honesty, and brotherhood through the mechanism of habituating worship and the application of Islamic manners in every training activity (Ediyono and Widodo 2019). Practically, the results of the research provide a real contribution for trainers, educators, and religious institutions in designing strategies for community-based religious character formation. (Santika and Arifin n.d.-b) The implementation of activities such as prayer before training, congregational prayer, habituation of tahlil, and the provision of religious sanctions in the form of religious duties such as the call to prayer, reciting shalawat, or tahlil has proven effective in building discipline, ethics, and spiritual awareness of participants. In addition, this approach also

strengthens socio-religious relations between members by instilling the values of brotherhood, social concern, and a sense of togetherness within the framework of Islamic spirituality.

Contextually, this study offers an important innovation by positioning the mosque as a center for religious character development outside of formal institutions such as schools and Islamic boarding schools. The GASMI pencak silat activities at the Ar-Rohman Mosque have proven to be an effective means of da'wah and social transformation for adolescents with low levels of religious understanding and behavior. Through these activities, the mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a center for community-based moral and spiritual education. This study provides a substantive contribution to the development of a mosque-based character education paradigm and enriches academic discourse on the integration of local culture with religious values in character formation for the young generation in the modern era. Thus, this study not only presents methodological updates but also broadens understanding of how cultural activities such as pencak silat can be adapted into a medium for Islamic character education that is contextual, applicable, and relevant to the social needs of today's society. (Wijaya and Fadilah 2023)

However, this study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged as a basis for further research. Methodologically, the qualitative approach used—through observation, interviews, and documentation—makes the results descriptive and contextual, making them difficult to generalize broadly to different social environments or institutions. The reliance on interview data also opens up the possibility of subjectivity and interpretive bias. (Sein and Thobroni 2022) Furthermore, this study did not use quantitative instruments or psychometric measurements to empirically assess the level of change in participants' religious character after participating in GASMI pencak silat activities. Contextually, the study's limited location at the Ar-Rohman Mosque in North Metro District limits the representativeness of the findings to other regions that may have different social and cultural characteristics. External factors such as family support, community influence, and the role of social media have also not been explored in depth, even though these aspects have significant potential to influence the process of internalizing religious values. Therefore, further research is recommended to use a multidisciplinary design. mixed methods by expanding the study location, involving more participants, and integrating a quantitative approach so that the results obtained are more comprehensive, measurable, and have strong external validity in assessing the effectiveness of religious character formation through GASMI pencak silat activities in various socio-religious contexts..(Nurbaiti et al. 2020)

Based on the findings and identified limitations of the study, several recommendations can be used as a reference for future researchers. From a methodological perspective, further research is recommended to use a mixed methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, to obtain more comprehensive and measurable data. The use of quantitative instruments such as scales of religiosity, discipline, and morality will help increase empirical validity and strengthen findings related to the effectiveness of the religious character building program through GASMI pencak silat activities. In terms of location and population coverage, future research is expected to expand the study area to various GASMI branches in other regions so that the results have greater generalizability and can represent socio-cultural diversity and different religious conditions. Furthermore, a more in-depth analysis of external and internal factors such as the role of the family, community support, the influence of educational institutions, and the contribution of religious organizations is also important to understand the dynamics of religious character formation more comprehensively..(Syaroh and Mizani 2020)

From the perspective of developing an educational model, future research is expected to formulate a conceptual and implementative model for Islamic martial arts-based character education that can be adapted by both formal and non-formal educational institutions as a strategy for fostering religious values in the younger generation. Longitudinal research is also recommended to track changes in participants' character on a sustainable basis over the long term, in order to assess the consistency of internalization of religious values instilled through pencak silat activities. Thus, further research is expected to strengthen academic contributions in developing a paradigm for Islamic-based character education, while simultaneously expanding the use of pencak silat as a medium for spiritual, moral, and social development within the context of the religious life of Indonesian society.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of this study indicate that the GASMI Pencak Silat activities at the Ar-Rohman Mosque in North Metro District function effectively as a model of mosque-based religious character education. The formation of the students' religious character does not occur instantly, but rather through a structured and continuous process of internalizing values, which are integrated into every martial arts training activity. This process includes habituating worship, exemplary behavior of the trainer, and the consistent application of spiritual discipline, so that religious values are not only understood cognitively, but also internalized and manifested in the students' real behavior. (Li 2025)

Empirically, this study found significant changes in the religious character dimensions of students after participating in GASMI activities, particularly in aspects of religious discipline, responsibility, manners towards teachers and others, honesty, patience, and self-control. The integration of religious practices such as communal prayer, congregational prayer, regular tahlilan (religious recitation), fasting before level advancement exams, and religiously nuanced educational sanctions proved to be effective mechanisms in shaping students' moral and spiritual habits. These findings confirm Thomas Lickona's character education theory that the formation of a complete character involves the synergy of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. (Wahyono and Hutahayan 2020)

The main supporting factors for the success of religious character development in GASMI activities include a spiritually conducive mosque environment, the role of coaches as moral role models, and the support of administrators and the surrounding community for mosque-based youth development activities. Conversely, inhibiting factors still encountered include students' minimal religious understanding, limited time and training facilities, and less than optimal support from some parents. However, these obstacles can be minimized through gradual spiritual development, collaboration with mosque religious teachers, and strengthened communication between coaches, students, and their guardians. (Duncan 2017)

Conceptually, this study confirms that pencak silat does not merely function as a means of physical training, but can transform into an integrative medium for Islamic character education when combined with spiritual development and Islamic values. Thus, GASMI Pencak Silat deserves to be positioned as a strategic alternative in strengthening religious character education outside of formal educational institutions. This research contributes to expanding the paradigm of mosque-based character education and provides empirical evidence that the integration of local culture and religious values can be a contextual solution in developing the morals of the younger generation amidst modern social challenges. (Fuller 2022)

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