School Culture-Based Internalization of Nationalism and Religious Characters in Islamic Elementary School

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Abstract
The character of nationalism and religion forms the identity of the younger generation, not solely as knowledge but also as manifested in action. This study aims to unveil the culture of nationalism and religious character at Nasima Elementary School (SD Nasima) in Semarang. A qualitative case study methodology involving observation, interviews, and documentation was employed. The findings highlight that school residents perceive nationalism and religion as an environment characterized by nuanced patriotism and religious commitment, shaping the core values of the school. The internalization of nationalism and religious characters is evident through the attitudes and behavior of school residents during commemoration and celebration activities, engagements reflecting...
nationalism and religious character, appreciation for the diversity of Nusantara culture, and discipline in executing activities related to these characters. The habitual integration of these characters is discernible in various facets, including daily routines, incidental programs, learning activities, extracurricular engagements, and environmental conditions. The results suggest that learning transcends the cognitive domain; character development, as an essential aspect of the affective domain, emerges as a crucial facet in education.

**Keywords:** nationalism, religious, character, school culture

**INTRODUCTION**

The topic of character education, specifically nationalism, holds significant interest in the field of education in Indonesia (Erliyana & Huda, 2019; Mariani, 2012; Supranoto, 2015a; Widayani, 2016). This underscores the critical need for attention to the nationalist character development of the younger generation. This nationalist character is intricately intertwined with complementary religious traits. With a recorded 4,312 juvenile crimes, the precarious state of patriotic and religious character among the youth poses a serious threat to the Indonesian nation. This contrasts Imam Ghazali’s assertion that morals represent a steadfast state of soul strength, facilitating actions that naturally emanate without necessitating extensive thought and consideration. These actions should align with what is virtuous and commendable, guided by reason and sharia (Al-Ghazali, 2020). Therefore, the character of nationalism and religion is the identity of the younger generation, not solely confined to knowledge but also tangibly expressed through their actions.
Presently, the focus of programs aimed at developing national culture and character education is predominantly directed toward the learning process. Conversely, there is a notable lack of serious attention to school culture within educational institutions. Despite the fact that the responsibility for internalizing character is not exclusive to specific subjects or programs, it falls upon all members of the school community entrenched in the school culture (Anggraini & Zulfiati, 2017; Labudasari & Rochmah, 2018; Marini, 2017; Sukadari, Suyata, & Kuntoro, 2015; Wardani, 2014).

This study aims to explore how the characters of nationalism and religion have evolved into a culture at SD Nasima. The culture was examined through an analysis of the school residents' knowledge, the character values of the residents, and symbols (artifacts) of school culture.

The research presents findings in the form of a portrait depicting how the characters of nationalism and religion manifest as school culture. The findings encompass how the residents of SD Nasima perceive these characters and how both are internalized through habituation. Moreover, these findings serve as a reference for educational observers in developing character education based on school culture.

Studies on the character of nationalism and religious in schools have been carried out (Anggraini & Zulfiati, 2017; Labudasari & Rochmah, 2018; Marini, 2017; Sukadari et al., 2015; Wardani, 2014). However, these studies primarily focus on the classroom learning environment. Meanwhile, successful character cultivation cannot rely solely on concepts and value scores (D’Alessandro & Sadh, 2017). Therefore, understanding how
character can be effectively instilled requires an examination of the culture within the school environment.

The layers of school culture are observable through interactions and group behavior that evolve based on the shared beliefs and values held. The next layer involves values and trust, which are developed within personal group members. At the deepest level are the basic assumptions that underlie these personal actions (Schein, 2010). Focusing on these three layers, this research aims to investigate how schools cultivate a culture of nationalism and religious character.

The study was conducted at SD Nasima, an Islamic elementary school in Semarang. Established by the Nasima Islamic Education Foundation (YPI Nasima), this educational institution positions nationalism and religious character as integral aspects, branding itself as "Schools with Nationalist and Religious Character."

The research addresses two main questions. First, it explores a portrait of nationalism and religious culture, and second, it delves into the character values of nationalism and religion within the school culture. Subsequently, the empirical and theoretical aspects of the two research findings are discussed. The discussion was undertaken to ascertain whether the findings of this study corroborate existing theories, affirm established concepts, or contribute to the formulation of a novel theory concerning the culture of nationalism and religious character.
METHOD
This study focused on the characters of nationalism and religion, which had become a culture in SD Nasima, leading to a process of internalization of these two characters. The research adopted a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. Instruments for data collection, including observation, interview, and documentation guidelines, were prepared. These instruments underwent scrutiny by both a language expert and a specific teacher. Informants in this study comprised the headmaster, two vice principals (responsible for curriculum and student affairs), teachers, and selected students. Two methods, technical triangulation, and source triangulation were employed to validate the data. Data analysis involved the reduction, display, and drawing of conclusions. The analytical process commenced with the categorization of data, assigning codes to differentiate data relevant to the research focus from those unrelated. Selected data were then presented using narrative texts in the form of paragraphs, supplemented by visual aids such as pictures. To conclude findings, the data obtained from the school were scrutinized for alignment with the theory employed and compared with relevant research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
School Community Views About School Culture
A teacher from SD Nasima expressed that the school actively practices a culture of love for one's country. Nationalism is reinforced through
activities such as singing Indonesia Raya, while religious character is nurtured through mujahadah, reading short Quranic verses, and praying before and after various activities.

The SD Nasima community perceives nationalism and religious character as integral components of the school environment, embodying commitment and core values. The attitudes and behaviors reflective of these characters are evident in the daily routines of SD Nasima residents. Routine activities, including flag salutes, singing national and regional songs, and Indonesia Raya, showcase nationalist values among teachers, students, and educators. Similarly, the religious character is exemplified through the solemnity, enthusiasm, and orderliness displayed during activities such as reading asmaul husna, congregational prayers, and the Nasima Pledge. Active participation in these activities by school residents, including students, teachers, educators, and the school principal, highlights a deep engagement with the values promoted by the school.

The overall atmosphere at SD Nasima exudes a sense of nationalism and religiosity. Daily interactions between students, teachers, counselors, and administrative staff contribute to this cultural environment (Supinah & Parmi, 2011).

The physical environment of SD Nasima further supports its nationalist and religious atmosphere. Class displays showcasing Indonesian diversity, uniforms adorned with nationalist symbols, and routines infused with nationalist and religious nuances contribute to this cultural identity.
The architectural design of classrooms also reinforces a sense of nationalism and religion.

The environmental atmosphere emerges as a crucial element in fostering character values, and SD Nasima actively structures its surroundings to reinforce these values. A clean and aesthetically pleasing school environment, complete with green spaces, trees, and inspirational posters, contributes to the implementation of character education (Supranoto, 2015). Leadership, discipline, and order are also deemed essential for creating a conducive environment for character development (Abdullah, 2019).

Instilling character through school culture involves structuring the physical environment and implementing effective classroom management (Nurizka, Irawan, Sakti, & Hidayat, 2020). A school environment infused with patriotic and religious nuances significantly aids in fostering these character traits.

The commitment and shared responsibilities within the Nasima academic community, encompassing teachers, educators, school principals, and parents, are vital for guiding students towards developing patriotic and religious character values.

SD Nasima has ingrained this commitment from its inception, aligning with the ideals of its founder, Yusuf Nafi’. It aims to produce student outputs who have both patriotic and religious characters. Anything divergent from the school's vision and mission is actively discouraged, and
control measures and sanctions are in place for school residents who do not reflect the desired character traits.

Commitment plays a crucial role in transforming character values into a pervasive culture. As outlined in the PPK implementation guide, Article 2, paragraph 2 emphasizes that character values are instilled through habituation, example, and commitment demonstrated by teachers, school principals, education staff, and school committees. This underscores the necessity of a collective commitment within the school community for the formation of a character culture.

The Character of Nationalism and Religious of the Nasima School Community

The conduct of school residents stands out as one of the three pivotal factors determining the success of character education based on school culture. It plays a crucial role in shaping the goals, norms, regulations, code of ethics, and the overall sense of identity within educational institutions. Behavioral interactions within the school environment contribute significantly to the formation of school culture (Koesoema, 2018). Behavior serves as a reliable barometer reflecting the underlying values, beliefs, norms, and assumptions prevalent within the educational community. Consequently, the evaluation of behavior by school residents should align with the institution's vision, mission, and goals (Bambang & Adi, 2012).

At SD Nasima, the characters of nationalism and religion are regarded as core values. This echoes the aspirations of Nasima's founder, who
envisioned nationalism and religion as the cornerstone, orientation, and foundation in establishing the school. The internalization of nationalist character can be readily observed through the indicators (Daryanto, 2013) outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1. Indicators of nationalism character for elementary school students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1-3</th>
<th>Class 4-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admire the geography and soil fertility of Indonesia</td>
<td>Proud of the geographical position of the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love the diversity of culture and art of the country</td>
<td>Amazed by Indonesian culture and art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loves the various ethnicities and languages of Indonesia</td>
<td>Love the diversity of tribes, languages, ethnic beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is in Indonesian territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be amazed at the variety of natural products, agriculture and animals'</td>
<td>Amazed by agricultural products, fisheries, etc that make a contribution to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endemic</td>
<td>Indonesian nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proud of the beauty of the country's forests</td>
<td>Amazed by the role of Indonesia's forests in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazed by the sea and its role in the nation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mustari (2014) presents a slightly different perspective, suggesting five indicators of nationalist character. These include: 1) appreciating the services of heroes; 2) consuming local products; 3) demonstrating love for the beauty of nature and national culture; 4) memorizing national and regional songs; and 5) exhibiting a preference for travel to domestic tourist destinations.

Daryanto (2013) identifies specific indicators of religious character that can be observed through students' activities or attitudes, as outlined in Table 2.
### Table 2. Indicators of religious character for elementary school students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1-3</th>
<th>Class 4-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appreciate and recognize the parts of the body as they are God’s creation, then always take care of it</td>
<td>Amazed by the perfect organ system in the body adjust organ function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazed at the majesty of God because only with Him was he born into world and respect for both parents</td>
<td>Thank God, because s/he (student) has a loving family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obey and comply with class and school rules as well common interest</td>
<td>Believing in the greatness of God who has created him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy to hang out with classmates and school friends even though they have various differences</td>
<td>Realizing that classroom and school rules are beneficial and aimed at the common good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willing to help friends when they need help intended as worship or kindness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Deputy Head of Administration and Infrastructure highlighted that H. Yusuf Nafi combined nationalism and religion due to his deep love for the Republic of Indonesia. Observing the state of education at that time saddened him, motivating him to play a role in shaping a generation with both a profound love for Indonesia and strong religious character. This led to the establishment of Nasima, an educational institution derived from the fusion of nationalism and religion (acronym: Nasima). Even before the Ministry of Education issued regulations on character education, Nasima had already been actively developing both nationalist and religious characters.

The Head of Student Affairs argued against the separate development of love for the country and religion, asserting that such an approach could potentially confuse the current generation. The belief was that if someone embraces a religion, they may prioritize it over their allegiance to the
country, and vice versa. Therefore, it was deemed essential to consider religion as the core and nationalism as its practical application.

The principal emphasized that SD Nasima aims to cultivate new leaders, not merely followers, and this requires a combination of nationalism and strong religious characters. The rationale was that solely religious individuals might lack love for Indonesia, while a focus on nationalism alone, without religious grounding, might be inadequate. The interdependence of these characters was stressed, with the understanding that nationalism and religious spirit jointly constitute the foundational principles of the school. The establishment of Nasima aligns with the ideals of its founder,

and the core values laid the initial foundation for shaping a distinctive school culture. Creating a school culture with a unique character involves structuring all elements of the institution based on specific character values (Bambang & Adi, 2012)

The Symbol of Culture of Nationalism and Religious Characters

The embodiment of patriotism and religious character as a cultural entity is a product of the extensive history of the school. Various artifacts and activities serve as representations of these two character values. The cultural manifestation of nationalism is evident in several aspects within the school setting. The study results identified five cultural forms representing nationalism and religious characters, namely daily routines, incidental programs, learning activities, extracurricular activities, and environmental
conditions. These five facets of school culture are symbolic representations embodying the essence of nationalism and religion. Each of these cultural symbols serves as a deliberate effort to instill nationalism and religious characters in students. The subsequent section provides a detailed description of the five cultural forms embodying nationalism and religious characters.

**Daily Routines**

Nasima's daily routine encompasses scheduled activities from morning until the end of the learning day, divided into morning, afternoon, and evening routines. This discussion specifically focuses on routine activities embedding the character values of patriotism and religion. Noteworthy activities identified in the research include: (1) Welcoming students, (2) Reading the pledge, Pancasila, the pillars of Islam, and the pillars of faith, (3) Saluting the flag along with singing Indonesia Raya, national, and folk songs, (4) Reading Asmaul Husna and short suras, (5) Eating lunch together, (6) Eating lunch and BMT (Bacaan Membangun Tauhid) together, (7) Praying in congregation

Figure 1. Saluting the Indonesian flag and congregational prayer as part of daily routines
Incidental Programs

Nasima's incidental programs are activities held on specific dates to commemorate events associated with Islamic teachings and the values of love for the country. These programs include: (1) Commemoration of national holidays (PHBN): Celebrations for Independence Day, Scout Day, Youth Pledge, Heroes Day, Kartini Day, National Education Day, and National Heroes Day. (2) Commemoration of Islamic holidays (PHBI): Observing Islamic events such as Eid al-Adha, Hijriyah New Year, Prophet's Birthday, and Isra Mi'raj. (3) Commemoration of Nasima's special day (PHKN): Marking Nasima's birthday, Nasima's circumcision, special costumes on the 7th, 17th, and 22nd, and end-of-year performances. (4) Activities to address the nation's condition (KPKB): Engaging in activities related to natural disasters, wars, mass accidents, environmental damage, and disease outbreaks.

Learning Activities

Within classroom teaching and learning activities, several practices instill the character values of patriotism and religion, such as: (1) Integrating
Nasima material (including content with nationalist and religious themes) in lesson plans, (2) Special program for the Quran, (3) Routines WIFLE before learning, (4) Praying for the heroes.

For instance, in a Grade 6 science lesson on plant and animal reproduction, Nasima material is integrated by explaining the process of generative reproduction in plants using a Quranic reference from Surah Al Hijr verse 22, even though the science lesson doesn’t directly discuss religion.

**Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities at SD Nasima take three forms: compulsory, special, and optional. Several extracurricular activities embed the character values of patriotism and religion, such as: (1) Integrating Nasima material (including content with nationalist and religious themes) in lesson plans, (2) Special program for the Quran, (3) Routines WIFLE before learning, (4) Praying for the heroes.

![Figure 3](image)

Figure 3. Figure 3: Pramuka (Scouts), school security police (PKS), and the rebana team

**Environmental Conditions**

The school environment plays a pivotal role in shaping the culture, and at SD Nasima, it supports the formation of a culture of patriotism and
religious characters. Environmental conditions fostering these characters include: (1) School displays, (2) Learning media, (3) School symbols and artifacts, (4) Uniforms.

In terms of school symbols, class names at SD Nasima are derived from several cities in Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Bogor, and others (Pram, 2023). This naming convention reflects the acknowledgment of Indonesia's pluralistic nature, showcasing the diverse characteristics of each region. It underscores the importance of protecting and cherishing this diversity rather than opposing it.

Regarding uniforms, SD Nasima opts for red and white attire, worn daily during school/work hours and on the 7th day of each month, along with other designated days, symbolizing a reminder of the birth and spirit of YPI Nasima. Additionally, traditional Javanese clothing and attire representing various Indonesian tribes are worn on specific occasions.

Figure 4. Red-and-white as school displays

Upon closer examination, the development of nationalist character at SD Nasima shares similarities with the approach taken at SD Negeri Gembongan Sentolo. Both schools maximize their school culture, incorporating elements such as scouting, musical arts, and the
commemoration of national holidays. An interesting distinction emerges at SD Negeri Gembongan, where PPK greetings are introduced, encompassing five important pillars of character—religious, nationalist, independent, mutual cooperation, and integrity (Atma, 2019). Diverse approaches to nationalist character development are also observed, such as the "expression stage" at SD Muhammadiyah Terpadu Ponorogo (Mizani, 2021), "folklore literacy" at SDN Dewi Sartika (Hasanah, Hidayat, & Pranana, 2022), and "Pencak Silat Bandrong" at SDN Drangong 1 Kota Serang (Ariyani, Jumyati, & Rosmilawati, 2023). These unique elements contribute significantly to fostering the development of students' nationalism.

In contrast, the development of religious character at SD Nasima takes a different trajectory compared to SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sepanjang. At SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sepanjang, religious culture is built and internalized through specialized teaching programs embedded in routine school activities—spanning both academic and non-academic fields. These programs include the development of worship, manners, initiatives to enhance student Quranic proficiency (BTQ and Al-Qur'an literacy of Juz 30), morning live murotal sessions, fostering the habit of Dhuha prayers, regular Dhuhr prayers, congregational Friday prayers, greeting activities, ISMUBA subject implementation, and the MUMTAZ Al-Qur'an recitation program for teachers and employees (Imron & Tirtoni, 2023).

The habituation of Dhuha and Dhuhr prayers at SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sepanjang is also observed at SDN Jambean 01 Pati. Dhuha prayers take
place before rest, and midday prayers are performed before students return home from school (M. A. Kurniawan, Ysh, & Artharina, 2021). Additionally, the routine of Dhuha and Dhuhr prayers is also observed at SD Khadijah Surabaya. Notably, the term "central prayer" is found specifically at SD Khadijah Surabaya and is not present at SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sepanjang, SDN Jambean 01 Pati, and SD Nasima (Esmael & Nafiah, 2018).

A shared characteristic between SDN Jambean 01 Pati and SD Nasima is the integration of religious values in shaping students' character, both within and outside of learning activities. The practice of reading Asmaul Husna is an example of applying religious character in learning activities at both schools. Furthermore, outside of learning activities, SDN Jambean 01 Pati emphasizes the application of religious values by encouraging behaviors such as giving greetings, timely congregational prayers, honesty in speech, providing assistance to those in need, and promoting tolerance during prayer times (M. A. Kurniawan et al., 2021).

The five cultural forms of nationalism and religious characters outlined above reinforce the notion that SD Nasima possesses distinct values and traditions, aligning with the concept of school culture as defined by Guthrie and Schuermann (as cited in Febriantina & Aliyyah (2020)). According to Guthrie and Schuermann, school culture not only distinguishes a school from others(Febriantina & Aliyyah, 2020) but also influences across every aspect of the school, including its effectiveness (Ismail, Khatibi, & Azam, 2022). Furthermore, school culture plays a
crucial role in advancing education (Amtu, Makulua, Matital, & Pattiruhu, 2020).

The values and traditions cultivated in SD Nasima constitute integral components of its school culture. To delve into the specifics, the school's culture can be analyzed through the lens of 12 elements, namely vision, mission, rituals, language, ceremonies, symbols, values and beliefs, characters, climate, norms, guidelines, and stories (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015). These elements intricately contribute to shaping the overall cultural landscape of the school. In alignment with the definition of school culture, as posited by Pol, Hlouskova, Novotny, Václavíková, & Zounek (2005), it serves as the foundation for the actions undertaken by school members. This foundation is manifested in the form of underlying assumptions and values that are actively implemented in various school activities.

**CONCLUSION**

The residents of SD Nasima perceive nationalism and religion as integral aspects of their environment, marked by the presence of nuanced patriotism and religious commitment, forming the core values of the school. The internalization of these characters is evident in the attitudes and behaviors exhibited during commemoration and celebration activities, as well as in activities reflecting nationalism and religious values. Furthermore, there is a demonstrated love for the diverse cultures of Nusantara and a disciplined approach in undertaking activities associated with these characters. The habituation of these characters is systematically embedded within daily
routines, incidental programs, learning activities, extracurricular engagements, and environmental conditions. This research implies that every institution, including elementary schools, should articulate core values that guide its members toward shared objectives. SD Nasima, with its emphasis on nationalism and religion, exemplifies how Islamic elementary schools can actively contribute to fostering love for the country while also addressing Islamic aspects. As a recommendation for future research, it is suggested that subsequent studies focus more specifically on individual characters or values, or explore these aspects in different schools.

REFERENCES


