

Building the Character of a Religious Young Generation

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ABSTRACT

This activity aims to improve the religiosity of the younger generation in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City, by providing character development based on religious values. This program is expected to equip the younger generation with a strong moral foundation, so that they are able to avoid negative behavior and become role models in society. Data were collected through interviews with participants and local community leaders, and analyzed qualitatively to assess the impact of the program. The results showed a significant increase in the understanding and application of religious values among participants. The younger generation showed more positive changes in attitudes, such as increased discipline, honesty, and participation in religious activities. Community leaders also reported improvements in behavior and increased social involvement among the younger generation. This program makes an important contribution to the character development of the younger generation by providing an effective model to improve their religiosity and morality. The findings of this program can be used as a basis for the development of similar policies and programs in other areas, in order to create a younger generation that is based on strong religious and moral values, and contributes positively to society.

Keywords: Building Character, Mentoring, Religiosity, Young Generation

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1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomena occurring in the current era of globalization show a shift in moral and religious values among the younger generation (Akrim, 2022; Pudjiastuti, 2020). The increasingly rapid flow of modernization and technology has had a major influence on their mindset, attitudes and behavior (Anggraini et al., 2023; Sulistyan et al., 2022). In Gedawang Subdistrict, Banyumanik, Semarang City, this phenomenon is also inevitable. Many young generations are starting to move away from religious values and are more influenced by consumer culture and hedonism. According to Jannah (2023), the importance of religious character building activities for the younger generation cannot be ignored. The younger generation is an important asset for the future of the nation (Soomro et al., 2019; Woodman, 2022). If they are not equipped with strong religious values, they will easily fall into negative behavior such as juvenile delinquency, drugs, and promiscuity (Sukino & Utami, 2020). Without proper guidance, the younger generation will lose their true direction and purpose in life.

Implementing character development activities for the young generation with a religious soul in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City, is very important because this area, like many other areas, is not free from the negative influences of modernization and globalization that can damage the morals of the young generation. With this development program, it is hoped that the young generation in Gedawang will be better able to internalize and practice religious values in everyday life, so that they can avoid negative behavior such as juvenile delinquency, drugs, and promiscuity. In addition, this development also aims to strengthen social ties and increase

awareness of the importance of maintaining moral and ethical values in society, which in turn will create a more harmonious and resilient environment to the challenges of the times.

If there is no guidance for the young generation in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City, the risk of behavioral deviation and moral decline will be even higher. Without proper guidance, the young generation will be more easily influenced by the negative currents of globalization, such as free association, drugs, and various other forms of juvenile delinquency. This not only harms the individuals involved, but can also damage the social order in society, reduce the sense of security, and reduce the quality of life in the surrounding environment. The absence of religious guidance can also cause the young generation to lose direction and meaning in life, and move away from the noble values that should be the basis for attitudes and actions. It is hoped that the young generation can internalize positive values derived from religion and apply them in everyday life. The benefits of this activity are enormous, both for individuals and society as a whole. For individuals, this guidance will help them find the true meaning of life, develop good character, and strengthen their relationship with God. For society, the young generation who are religious will be an important pillar in creating a safe, peaceful, and harmonious environment. In addition, they are also expected to be role models and agents of positive change for the surrounding community.

This coaching activity aims to improve the religiosity of the younger generation, so that they can live their lives with strong religious values. With this mentoring, it is hoped that the younger generation can internalize positive values that come from religion and apply them in their daily lives. The benefits of this activity are enormous, both for individuals and society as a whole. For individuals, this coaching will help them find the true meaning of life, develop good character, and strengthen their relationship with God. For society, the younger generation who are religious will be an important pillar in creating a safe, peaceful, and harmonious environment. In addition, they are also expected to be role models and agents of positive change for the surrounding community.

2. METHODS

The research method in character development activities for the young generation with a religious soul in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City, will be carried out through systematic and structured stages. According to Sulistyan (2021) and Sopanah et al. (2023), stages of mentoring activities such as starting from planning, implementation and evaluation. Mentoring will take place from March 5, 2024 to April 10, 2024, with participants consisting of 15 local young generations. The stages of activities begin with planning from March 5 to 10, 2024, where the implementing team will prepare a program plan, materials, and mentoring strategies that are right on target. The implementation of activities is scheduled from March 11 to 30, 2024, including coaching sessions, group discussions, and religious activities aimed at improving understanding and practice of religious values. The final stage is an evaluation that will be carried out from April 1 to 10, 2024 to assess the effectiveness of the program and its impact on participants.

Data collection in this study will use the interview method, both to participants of the activity and local figures. This interview aims to obtain in-depth information about the changes felt by participants after participating in the coaching activities, as well as the views of community leaders regarding changes in the behavior of the younger generation in their environment. The data collected will cover aspects such as increasing religious understanding, changes in attitudes and behavior, and the contribution of activities to the social life of the local community. Interviews will be conducted in a structured manner with a guide to questions that have been prepared in advance, making it easier to obtain relevant and in-depth data.

Data analysis will be conducted qualitatively (Lukiana & Sulistyan, 2021), by interpreting information obtained from interviews to understand the phenomenon in depth. The analysis process will involve coding data, grouping key findings, and compiling descriptive narratives that describe the impact of the coaching activities. This qualitative approach allows researchers to capture the nuances and complexities of changes that occur in participants, as well as understand the social and cultural contexts that influence the success of the program. The results of the

analysis are expected to provide constructive recommendations for the improvement and development of character coaching programs for young generations with religious souls in the future.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

The results of the Character Development Activities for the Religious Young Generation in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City are explained as follows:

a. Planning Phase (March 5-10, 2024)

In the planning stage, the implementing team successfully developed a structured and comprehensive coaching program plan. The plan includes a schedule of activities, materials to be delivered, learning methods, and tools and materials needed. In a coordination meeting attended by local community leaders, it was agreed that the activities would focus on strengthening religious values through lectures, group discussions, and practical religious activities such as congregational prayers and religious studies. The materials were designed to be relevant to the daily lives of the younger generation, so that they could be easily internalized and applied. An agreement was also reached regarding the division of tasks between the facilitator and the local committee to ensure smooth implementation of the program.

b. Implementation Phase (11-30 March 2024)

During the implementation phase, the coaching activities went according to plan. Each session was attended by 15 enthusiastic and actively participating young participants. The activity began with a lecture by a local religious figure discussing the importance of religious values in daily life. Group discussions were then held to further examine the material presented, where participants were given the opportunity to share their experiences and views. In addition, practical activities such as congregational prayers and regular religious studies were also carried out to strengthen togetherness and the application of the values taught. Participants showed an increased understanding of the material, which was reflected in positive responses and active involvement in each session.



Figure 1. Mentoring Activities

Source: Results of Activity Implementation (2024)

c. Evaluation Phase (1-10 April 2024)

In the evaluation stage, the implementation team conducted interviews with participants and local community leaders to assess the effectiveness of the program. From the interview results, it was found that the majority of participants experienced a significant increase in their understanding and application of religious values. They felt more focused and had a stronger moral foundation in living their daily lives. Community leaders also reported

positive changes in the behavior of the younger generation in their environment, such as increased participation in religious activities and reduced deviant behavior. Qualitative data analysis showed that this coaching activity succeeded in achieving its goal of increasing the religiosity of the younger generation, as well as having a positive impact on social life in Gedawang Village. The conclusion of this evaluation shows the importance of continuing similar programs to ensure sustainable character development of the younger generation.

3.2. Discussion

The results of the character building activities for the young generation with a religious soul in Gedawang Village showed a significant and positive impact on the participants. One of the main findings was an increase in understanding and application of religious values in everyday life. Participants showed more positive changes in attitudes, such as increased honesty, discipline, and a sense of responsibility. Group discussions conducted during the activities allowed participants to share views and experiences, thus creating an atmosphere of mutual support and strengthening a shared understanding of the importance of religious values. In addition, practical activities such as congregational prayer and religious studies provided direct experience in implementing religious teachings, which further strengthened participants' commitment to religious practices. The results of this activity support the results of research conducted by Sukirman and Mirnawati (2020) and Winia et al. (2020) which showed that mentoring the young generation by forming religiosity actually has a positive impact on the environment.



Figure 2. Final Discussion of Implementation
Source: Results of Activity Implementation (2024)

Local community leaders also noted significant changes in the behavior of young people in their neighborhood. Reports from community leaders showed that after participating in the mentoring program, young people were more actively involved in religious and social activities in their neighborhood. This reflects the success of the program in instilling religious values that are not only beneficial for individual participants, but also for the community as a whole. The qualitative approach in data analysis also revealed that this mentoring helped reduce juvenile delinquency rates and increase a sense of togetherness and solidarity among young people.

The benefits of this coaching activity are very diverse and have a wide impact. First, for individual participants, this activity provides a strong moral foundation and improves their spiritual quality. Participants become more aware and motivated to practice religious teachings in their daily lives, which helps them face various challenges more wisely and ethically. This increase in religiosity also has a positive impact on their mental and emotional health, because religious values often provide inner peace and clear moral guidance. Second, the benefits are also felt by the surrounding community. A more religious and highly moral younger generation contributes to the creation of a safer and more harmonious environment. They become role models for their peers and even for the younger generation, thus indirectly helping to spread positive values in the community. The presence of a religious young generation also increases participation in social and religious activities, which strengthens social ties and a sense of

togetherness in the community. Third, this program also provides benefits for the development of policies and coaching programs in the future. The findings and evaluations of this activity can be used as a basis for designing more effective and sustainable coaching programs. This ensures that efforts to foster the character of the younger generation can continue to be carried out with better strategies and have a wider impact. The success of this program in Gedawang Village can be a model for other areas facing similar challenges, so that its benefits can be felt by more young generations in various places.

4. CONCLUSION

The character building activity for young people with religious souls in Gedawang Village, Banyumanik, Semarang City, successfully achieved its goal of increasing the understanding and application of religious values among participants. The program, which was implemented from March 5 to April 10, 2024, showed a positive impact, both for individual participants and the surrounding community. Participants experienced improvements in discipline, responsibility, and participation in religious activities. Community leaders also reported significant positive behavioral changes among the younger generation, which contributed to a more harmonious and safe environment.

Although the program was successful, there were several limitations that need to be noted. First, the limited number of participants, which was only 15 people, may not be enough to produce a broader impact in the community. Second, the relatively short duration of the program, only about one month, may not be enough to produce deep and sustainable changes. Third, the data collection method using interviews may not be able to capture all aspects of changes in participant behavior and attitudes, so additional approaches are needed to get a more comprehensive picture.

For a more effective character building program in the future, several suggestions can be considered. First, expanding the reach of participants so that more young people can participate in this program, allowing for a broader impact. Second, extending the duration of the program and implementing follow-up activities to ensure more sustainable and profound changes. Third, using more diverse evaluation methods, such as direct observation and assessment by parents or teachers, to obtain more comprehensive data on changes in participant behavior. In addition, involving more community leaders and related institutions can help create a more holistic program that is integrated with daily community life.

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