

Internalization of the Prophet's Eating Etiquette through the Free Nutritious Meals Program in Shaping Students' Religious Character

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the internalization of the Prophet Muhammad's eating etiquette through the Free Nutritious Meals Program in forming the religious character of eleventh-grade students at MA Ulul Absharr. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the madrasah principal, Islamic education teachers, homeroom teacher, students, and parties involved in the meal program. The findings show that the Free Nutritious Meals Program was not only implemented as a food distribution activity, but also functioned as a pedagogical space for habituating religious values. Teachers guided students to recite basmalah, eat with the right hand, maintain order, avoid criticizing food, eat moderately, keep the eating area clean, and recite hamdalah after eating. These practices supported the formation of gratitude, discipline, responsibility, simplicity, cleanliness, politeness, and social care. The study concludes that the meal program can strengthen religious character when it is integrated with teacher role modeling, habituation, supervision, and Islamic value reinforcement.

Keywords: Eating Etiquette; Free Nutritious Meals; Religious Character; Value Internalization

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan internalisasi adab makan Rasulullah saw. melalui Program Makan Bergizi Gratis dalam membentuk karakter religius siswa kelas XI MA Ulul Absharr. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan jenis studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi dengan melibatkan kepala madrasah, guru pendidikan agama Islam, wali kelas, siswa, serta pihak yang terlibat dalam pelaksanaan program makan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Program Makan Bergizi Gratis tidak hanya berjalan sebagai kegiatan pembagian makanan, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai ruang pedagogis untuk membiasakan nilai religius. Guru membimbing siswa membaca basmalah, makan dengan tangan kanan, menjaga ketertiban, tidak mencela makanan, makan secukupnya, menjaga kebersihan tempat makan, dan membaca hamdalah setelah makan. Praktik tersebut mendukung pembentukan sikap syukur, disiplin, tanggung jawab, sederhana, bersih, sopan, dan peduli sosial. Penelitian ini

menyimpulkan bahwa program makan dapat memperkuat karakter religius apabila diintegrasikan dengan keteladanan guru, pembiasaan, pengawasan, dan penguatan nilai Islam.

Kata Kunci: Adab Makan; Karakter Religius; Makan Bergizi Gratis; Internalisasi Nilai

INTRODUCTION

Adab holds an essential position in Islamic education because it shapes how students regulate themselves, interact with others, and practice religious values in daily life. Islamic education is not only directed toward the transfer of religious knowledge, but also toward the formation of polite, disciplined, clean, modest, and responsible behavior. In this context, the adab exemplified by Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, becomes a central source of moral guidance for students. Herawati et al. (2020) state that the internalization of the Prophet's adab can serve as the foundation of knowledge because it guides children to behave according to religious norms, speak gently, and perform good actions spontaneously without continuous instruction.

Adab education needs to be embedded in real activities that are close to students' daily lives. One of the most common activities in school is eating together. Eating is often understood only as an activity to fulfill physical needs. However, in Islamic education, eating also contains the values of gratitude, cleanliness, moderation, discipline, self-control, and social care (Rohmatin et al., 2025). Budiyanto et al. (2021) explain that eating character education in Indonesian schools can be strengthened through daily meal policies, eating manners, halal and thayyib food literacy, healthy eating habits, healthy canteens, nutrition programs, and outdoor learning activities. This view indicates that eating can function as a medium of character education when it is guided by clear pedagogical purposes.

The Free Nutritious Meals Program, known as MBG, in madrasah can be seen as an opportunity to connect nutritional needs with adab education. The program should not only be understood as a food distribution activity, but also as a medium for habituating religious values through eating practices based on the Prophet's guidance. Through this program, students can be guided to recite basmalah before eating, use the right hand, eat in an orderly manner, avoid criticizing food, avoid excess, maintain cleanliness, take food appropriately, and express gratitude after eating. These practices seem simple, yet they are closely related to religious character formation because they are carried out through repeated habits.

Madrasah Aliyah, as an Islamic educational institution, has a responsibility to strengthen students' religious character through learning activities and school culture. Religious character is not only formed through Islamic subjects, but also through daily routines outside the classroom.

Basri et al. (2023) show that religious character formation in Madrasah Aliyah can be carried out through habituated religious activities, such as the 5S culture, dhuha prayer, Qur'an recitation, prayer, cleanliness, discipline, charity, and other Islamic activities. This finding shows that madrasah culture plays an important role in shaping students' religious behavior gradually.

In practice, the internalization of adab cannot be achieved only through verbal instruction. It requires role modeling, habituation, reinforcement, and consistent supervision. Alwi et al. (2024) found that adab-based education in madrasah can be internalized through exemplary behavior, habituation, storytelling, reward, and punishment involving the principal, teachers, and students' guardians. Teachers do not only deliver knowledge, but also become models who demonstrate adab in daily life. In MBG activities, teachers play an important role because they guide, remind, observe, and directly model civilized eating behavior.

Students' religious character can also be formed through activities that connect religious values with social life. Amin et al. (2024) explain that religious character values in Madrasah Aliyah can be internalized through religious activities, social activities, daily habituation, teacher monitoring, and Islamic programs. The values developed through these activities include faith, obedience in worship, honesty, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance, and social care. In the context of MBG, these values may appear through queuing, receiving food politely, praying before eating, eating moderately, avoiding food waste, sharing, and maintaining cleanliness.

Islamic eating patterns are also related to health, discipline, and religious lifestyle. Romdloni (2025) shows that Islamic dietary patterns, including halal and thayyib principles, eating etiquette, moderation, cleanliness, and role modeling in Islamic educational settings, can contribute to students' health control. This finding is relevant to MBG because the program contains nutritional, health, and behavioral dimensions. When implemented in madrasah, MBG can be expanded into a character education medium through eating practices that reflect Islamic values.

Based on the discussion above, this study views eating activities in the MBG program as a space for internalizing the Prophet's adab. The focus of this study is not directed toward the nutritional content or administrative effectiveness of the program, but toward the character education process that occurs through the habituation of eating etiquette. This focus is important because Madrasah Aliyah students are in the adolescent phase, where religious values need to be strengthened through concrete daily practices. Eating together provides a close and practical space for students to experience adab directly.

The main problem in this study is how the MBG program can be used as a medium for internalizing the Prophet's eating etiquette in forming the religious character of eleventh-grade

students at MA Ulul Absharr. MBG may be implemented as a routine activity, but not all students necessarily understand the adab values contained in it. Some students may only perceive the activity as food distribution. Others may not consistently practice eating etiquette, such as praying before eating, maintaining order, avoiding criticism of food, eating moderately, and keeping the environment clean after eating.

This study aims to describe the process of internalizing the Prophet's eating etiquette through the MBG program in forming the religious character of eleventh-grade students at MA Ulul Absharr. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the implementation of MBG, the forms of eating etiquette that are habituated, the role of teachers in the internalization process, and the religious character reflected in students' behavior. This study also explores the supporting and inhibiting factors in habituating eating etiquette within the madrasah environment.

Several previous studies have discussed the internalization of adab, akhlaq, and religious character in Islamic educational institutions. Herawati and Hermanto (2020) examined the internalization of the Prophet's adab as a foundation for educating children from early childhood. Their study placed adab as an essential part of shaping polite behavior, gentle speech, and spontaneous good actions. This study is relevant because it provides a foundation for understanding how the Prophet's adab can be introduced through role modeling and habituation. Alwi et al. (2024) investigated adab-based education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Their findings show that adab in daily activities can be internalized through role modeling, habituation, storytelling, reward, and punishment. The study emphasizes that adab education must be consciously managed by the principal, teachers, and students' guardians. Unlike that study, the present research focuses more specifically on the Prophet's eating etiquette within the MBG program at the Madrasah Aliyah level.

Basri et al. (2023) studied religious character formation through habituated religious activities in Madrasah Aliyah. Their study included activities such as the 5S culture, dhuha prayer, Qur'an recitation, prayer, congregational zuhur prayer, cleanliness, charity, and Islamic programs. The findings show that religious character can be formed through structured habits in the madrasah environment. The present study takes a more specific space by examining the habituation of the Prophet's eating etiquette in the implementation of MBG.

Amin et al. (2024) discussed the internalization of religious character values through religious and social activities in Madrasah Aliyah. Their study shows that religious values can be internalized through routine activities, social activities, daily habituation, Islamic culture, teacher monitoring, and tahfidz programs. The values include faith, worship obedience, honesty,

responsibility, simplicity, tolerance, and social care. The present study shares a similar concern with religious character in Madrasah Aliyah, but it differs in the context of activity, namely MBG as a medium for habituating eating etiquette.

Budiyanto et al. (2021) made an important contribution by discussing eating character education strategies in Indonesian schools. Their study explains that eating character education can be strengthened through daily meal policies, eating manners, halal and thayyib food, healthy eating habits, healthy canteens, nutrition programs, and outdoor class activities. Their work connects eating activities with character education. The present study extends this discussion by placing the Prophet's eating etiquette as the main value in the MBG program in madrasah.

Romdloni (2025) examined the integration of Islamic dietary patterns and lifestyle in controlling students' health in modern Islamic boarding schools. The study found that halal and thayyib principles, eating etiquette, moderation, cleanliness, discipline, and role modeling can shape students' healthy behavior. This study is relevant because it shows that Islamic dietary patterns are not only related to physical health, but also to religious habituation. The present study places this idea in the context of MBG in Madrasah Aliyah, particularly in forming the religious character of eleventh-grade students.

This study uses the concept of value internalization to understand how adab values become part of students' awareness and behavior. Value internalization does not only mean that students know the rules, but also that they are able to practice those values in daily life. In Islamic education, internalization occurs through role modeling, habituation, advice, reinforcement, supervision, and a supportive environment. This process places teachers in an important position as guides, facilitators, and models in madrasah life.

The Prophet's eating etiquette in this study refers to a set of Islamic values and behaviors practiced before, during, and after eating. These include reciting basmalah, eating with the right hand, eating from the nearest food, avoiding criticism of food, avoiding excess, maintaining cleanliness, respecting food, expressing gratitude, and reciting hamdalah after eating. These values are not merely ritual practices. They also contain character dimensions because they train discipline, politeness, moderation, responsibility, self-control, and care for others.

Religious character in this study refers to students' behavior that reflects religious values in daily life. Religious character is not only shown in formal worship, but also in social behavior, speech, eating habits, cleanliness, and gratitude for Allah's blessings. Through the MBG program, religious character can be observed in students' habits of praying before eating, receiving food in

an orderly way, avoiding food waste, maintaining cleanliness, showing respect to teachers and peers, and expressing gratitude after eating.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on integrating the Free Nutritious Meals Program with the internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette in forming the religious character of Madrasah Aliyah students. Previous studies have discussed the internalization of adab, akhlaq, habituated religious activities, religious character, and eating character education in schools. However, limited attention has been given to MBG as a pedagogical space for habituating the Prophet's eating etiquette among Madrasah Aliyah students.

This study offers the perspective that eating activities in the MBG program can become a medium of religious character formation when supported by teacher role modeling, habituation, supervision, and Islamic value reinforcement. This focus distinguishes the present study from previous studies that mainly discussed nutrition, health, general religious activities, or adab education in a broader sense. This study places eating etiquette as a concrete practice that connects religious values with the daily life of eleventh-grade students at MA Ulul Absharr.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design (Hardani et al., 2020). The qualitative method was used because this study aimed to understand the internalization process of the Prophet's eating etiquette through the Free Nutritious Meals Program, known as MBG, in the real context of madrasah life (Sugiyono et al., 2024). The descriptive approach was used to describe the implementation of the program, the forms of eating etiquette habituation, the role of teachers, and the religious behavior shown by students during the activity. The case study design was selected because this research focused on a specific case, namely eleventh-grade students of MA Ulul Absharr in the implementation of MBG as a medium for religious character formation.

The case study design was considered relevant because this study did not merely describe MBG as a meal program, but also examined the process of value education embedded in it. Yin (2018) explains that a case study is used to understand a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly separated. In this study, the internalization of eating etiquette cannot be separated from madrasah culture, teacher roles, student habits, and the technical implementation of MBG.

Research Setting And Participants

This research was conducted at MA Ulul Absharr with eleventh-grade students as the main research subjects. This setting was selected because the madrasah implemented the MBG program and had an Islamic educational environment that supported the habituation of religious values. MBG in this madrasah was not only viewed as a program to fulfill students' nutritional needs, but also as a space for adab education through teacher guidance, religious culture, and shared eating practices.

The research participants were selected through purposive sampling. This technique was used because the participants had direct involvement in the implementation of MBG and the formation of students' religious character. The participants included the madrasah principal, Islamic Education or Akidah Akhlak teachers, the eleventh-grade homeroom teacher, eleventh-grade students, and parties involved in the management of MBG activities. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to obtain data that were relevant to the research focus and useful for explaining the process of eating etiquette internalization in depth (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Collection Techniques

The data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine the implementation of MBG in the eleventh grade of MA Ulul Absharr. The observed aspects included food distribution, students' habits before eating, students' behavior while eating, orderliness, the use of the right hand, prayer recitation, cleanliness, and students' attitudes after eating. Observation was also directed toward identifying the teacher's role in guiding, reminding, supervising, and modeling proper eating etiquette.

Interviews were conducted with the madrasah principal, teachers, homeroom teacher, students, and related parties to obtain information about the purpose of MBG implementation, strategies for internalizing eating etiquette, forms of habituation, student responses, and supporting and inhibiting factors. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing the researcher to use prepared questions while giving participants space to explain their experiences and perspectives in more detail. This technique is suitable for qualitative research because it emphasizes the understanding of meaning, experience, and social context (Moleong, 2019).

Documentation was used to support the data obtained from observation and interviews. The documents included the madrasah profile, MBG schedule, activity photos, teacher notes, school rules, and other documents related to religious character habituation. Documentation helped the researcher examine the relationship between planned programs, field implementation, and students' visible behavior during MBG activities.

Research Instruments

The main instrument in this study was the researcher. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the key instrument who plans the study, collects data, interprets information, and constructs the research findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To support the data collection process, the researcher used observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation guidelines.

The observation guidelines were developed based on indicators of the Prophet's eating etiquette and students' religious character. The indicators of eating etiquette included reciting basmalah, eating with the right hand, eating in an orderly manner, avoiding criticism of food, avoiding excess, maintaining cleanliness, respecting food, and reciting hamdalah after eating. The indicators of religious character included gratitude, discipline, responsibility, politeness, social care, cleanliness, and obedience to Islamic values in daily activities.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data condensation was conducted by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and grouping the data obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation. The data related to MBG implementation, habituation of the Prophet's eating etiquette, teacher roles, and students' religious character were given primary attention during the analysis process.

Data display was conducted in the form of narrative descriptions explaining the relationship between MBG implementation and the internalization of eating etiquette. The data were organized based on several themes, including program implementation, forms of eating etiquette habituation, teacher strategies, student behavioral changes, and supporting and inhibiting factors. Data display helped the researcher identify patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the research findings.

Conclusion drawing was conducted through continuous verification throughout the research process. Initial findings from observation were rechecked through interviews and documentation. This process was carried out to ensure that the interpretation of data was not based on a single source. Through this process, the analysis could describe the internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette through MBG more comprehensively.

Data Validity

The validity of the data was examined through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from the principal, teachers, homeroom teacher, students, and MBG managers. Technique triangulation was

conducted by comparing data obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation. This technique was used to examine data consistency from different perspectives and to strengthen the credibility of the findings (Sugiyono, 2022).

In addition to triangulation, the researcher also rechecked the data obtained from the participants. This process was conducted to ensure that the information presented in the study was consistent with the participants' experiences and statements. During the research process, the researcher maintained objectivity by recording data based on field conditions and avoiding forced interpretations that only supported initial assumptions.

Research Procedure

The research procedure consisted of several stages. The first stage was preparation, which included determining the research focus, preparing instruments, selecting participants, and obtaining research permission. The second stage was data collection through observation of MBG implementation, interviews with participants, and collection of supporting documents. The third stage was data analysis by organizing the findings based on research themes. The fourth stage was writing the research findings in the form of scientific descriptions that explain the internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette in forming students' religious character.

Throughout the research process, the researcher paid attention to research ethics by obtaining permission from the madrasah, explaining the purpose of the research to the participants, and protecting participant identity when necessary. The data obtained were used only for academic purposes and presented objectively based on the field findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of MBG as a space for eating etiquette habituation

The findings show that the Free Nutritious Meals Program, known as MBG, in the eleventh grade of MA Ulul Absharr was not only implemented as a food distribution activity, but also functioned as a space for habituating religious values within madrasah life. Eating together allowed teachers to guide students to recite basmalah before eating, receive food in an orderly manner, use the right hand, maintain cleanliness, avoid food waste, and end the activity by reciting hamdalah. This practice gave educational meaning to the meal activity because students did not only receive food, but also learned to relate eating to adab, gratitude, and responsibility.

During the implementation stage, teachers played an important role in organizing the flow of MBG activities. Teachers reminded students to queue, avoid rushing for food, avoid criticizing the menu, and maintain order while eating. Some students showed positive habits, such as praying

before eating, reminding their peers not to waste food, and cleaning the eating area after finishing their meals. However, several students still needed repeated reminders, especially in relation to orderliness, cleanliness, and eating appropriately.

These findings indicate that MBG can serve as a medium for eating character education in school. Budiyanto et al. (2021) explain that eating character education can be strengthened through eating manners, halal and thayyib food literacy, healthy eating habits, and daily meal policies in schools. In the context of MA Ulul Absharr, MBG provides a concrete space for teachers to connect nutritional fulfillment with the habituation of the Prophet's eating etiquette. Eating is not placed merely as a biological activity, but also as a social and religious practice that can shape students' behavior.

Table 1. Thematic findings of MBG implementation and eating etiquette internalization

No.	Main finding	Students' behavior	Religious character value
1	Prayer habituation before and after eating	Reciting basmalah and hamdalah	Gratitude and obedience
2	Orderliness in receiving food	Queuing, avoiding rushing, receiving food politely	Discipline and responsibility
3	Eating etiquette	Using the right hand and avoiding food criticism	Politeness and moderation
4	Care for food	Avoiding food waste and taking food appropriately	Qanaah and responsibility
5	Cleanliness after eating	Cleaning the eating area and disposing of trash properly	Cleanliness and social care

Internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette through role modeling and habituation

The internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette in the MBG program was carried out through role modeling, direct guidance, and repeated habituation. Teachers did not merely instruct students to pray before eating or maintain order, but also modeled proper attitudes, language, and ways of treating food. When teachers accompanied students during the meal activity, adab values became easier to understand because students observed direct examples in real situations. This process provided a learning experience that differed from merely delivering moral instruction in the classroom.

The eating etiquette habituated in the program included reciting basmalah, eating with the right hand, avoiding criticism of food, eating moderately, maintaining cleanliness, respecting food, and reciting hamdalah after eating. These habits did not appear instantly, but were developed through repetition in MBG activities. Students who initially needed reminders gradually showed behavioral changes when the activity was carried out regularly. These changes appeared in students' awareness to pray before eating, receive food more orderly, and pay attention to cleanliness after eating.

This finding is in line with Alwi et al. (2024), who explain that adab internalization in madrasah can be carried out through role modeling, habituation, storytelling, reward, and punishment. In this study, role modeling and habituation became two main strategies observed in the implementation of MBG. Teachers acted as guides and behavioral models, while eating activities became a medium for practicing values in real situations. This supports the view that adab internalization cannot rely only on advice, but needs repeated activities that are close to students' daily lives.

Muslimah et al. (2024) also emphasize that akhlaq karimah values can be formed through continuous habituation programs supported by teacher role modeling. The findings at MA Ulul Absharr show a similar pattern. Students were more receptive to adab values when teachers did not only give instructions, but also created a supportive atmosphere. The habituation of eating orderly, praying, maintaining cleanliness, and avoiding food criticism became a simple form of moral training embedded in students' daily experiences.

Religious character formation through shared meal activities

MBG activities provided a space for the formation of students' religious character through shared eating practices. The religious character values observed in this activity included gratitude, discipline, responsibility, moderation, politeness, social care, and cleanliness. Gratitude appeared when students prayed before and after eating. Discipline was reflected in students' ability to follow queues and food distribution rules. Responsibility appeared when students cleaned the eating area and avoided disposing of food waste carelessly.

Shared meals also trained students to respect food and others. Students learned to accept the provided menu without criticism. They also learned to control themselves by not taking food excessively and not disturbing friends while eating. In several situations, students showed care by helping their peers, reminding others to pray, or cleaning food waste around their seating area. These behaviors show that eating activities can become a social space that connects personal adab with care for others.

This finding relates to Amin et al. (2024), who show that religious character in Madrasah Aliyah can be formed through religious activities, social activities, daily habituation, and teacher monitoring. The values formed include faith, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance, and social care. In this study, these values appeared through shared meal activities in the MBG program. Students did not only learn about nutritious food, but also practiced religious values through simple actions performed in daily routines.

Basri et al. (2023) found that religious character formation in Madrasah Aliyah can be carried out through habituated religious activities, such as the 5S culture, dhuha prayer, Qur'an recitation, prayer, cleanliness, and obedience to school rules. This study extends that form of habituation through eating activities in the MBG program. While previous studies positioned worship activities and religious culture as media for character formation, this study shows that eating activities can also become a space for religious habituation when guided by the Prophet's adab.

Integration of nutrition, adab, and religiosity in the MBG program

MBG contains an important nutritional dimension for students, yet in the madrasah context, it also has the potential to strengthen adab and religiosity. Nutritious food supports students' physical needs, while the habituation of eating etiquette helps form religious attitudes in daily activities. The integration of these two aspects appeared when teachers connected food with gratitude to Allah, cleanliness, moderation, and responsibility not to waste food.

In practice, students learned that food should not be viewed only from taste or menu variety, but also from the values of blessing, sufficiency, and responsibility. Teachers guided students to respect food, eat appropriately, and maintain cleanliness as part of adab. This value is important because eleventh-grade students are in the adolescent stage, where religious values need to be strengthened through awareness rather than mere compliance under supervision. MBG provides a direct space for students to practice these values.

Romdloni (2025) explains that Islamic dietary patterns include halal and thayyib principles, eating etiquette, moderation, cleanliness, discipline, and role modeling in educational environments. The findings at MA Ulul Absharr show a relationship between Islamic dietary practices and religious character formation. MBG provides the nutritional context, while the Prophet's eating etiquette provides the value orientation. This combination allows the meal program in madrasah to go beyond physical fulfillment and contribute to students' spiritual and social development.

Budiyanto et al. (2021) also highlight the importance of eating character education strategies in schools through the strengthening of healthy eating habits and eating manners. In this study,

those strategies were strengthened by Islamic values through the Prophet's eating etiquette. Students were not only encouraged to eat healthily, but also to eat politely, orderly, cleanly, and gratefully. This pattern gives a distinctive character to MBG implementation in madrasah because the nutrition program is integrated with religious character education.

Supporting and inhibiting factors in eating etiquette internalization

The supporting factors for the internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette through MBG at MA Ulul Absharr included the religious culture of the madrasah, teacher involvement, program routine, and the closeness of adab values to students' daily lives. A madrasah environment that is familiar with prayer, religious habituation, and respect for teachers helped students accept guidance on eating etiquette. Teachers also became an important factor because they were directly present in the activity, modeled proper behavior, gave reminders, and built an orderly meal atmosphere.

The routine nature of MBG also supported internalization because adab values could be practiced repeatedly. Students did not only hear explanations about eating etiquette, but also practiced it in the same activity on a regular basis. This repetition helped some students develop new habits. Habituation worked better when teachers gave guidance using polite language, avoided humiliating students, and reinforced positive behavior.

The inhibiting factors were related to differences in students' habits, limited awareness among some students, limited teacher supervision time, and eating habits outside the madrasah. Some students still needed reminders to pray before eating, maintain cleanliness, or avoid excessive joking while eating. This condition shows that value internalization requires a continuous process. Adab values do not always become personal awareness when habituation is not yet carried out consistently.

Alwi et al. (2024) state that one of the challenges in adab internalization is the readiness of teachers to continue learning, remain patient, and provide good examples. This finding is relevant to MBG implementation because teachers need to be present not only as supervisors, but also as value educators. When teachers consistently accompany meal activities, students have a greater opportunity to develop adab habits. When supervision becomes weak, MBG can easily return to being an ordinary meal routine.

The meaning of the findings for students' religious character formation

The findings indicate that MBG can become a pedagogical space for forming the religious character of eleventh-grade students at MA Ulul Absharr. Religious values were not only taught through classroom materials, but also practiced through shared eating activities. This process

allowed students to experience the connection between Islamic teachings and daily behavior. Religious character appeared in the way students began eating, treated food, maintained cleanliness, and interacted with peers.

This study provides a new understanding that meal programs in madrasah can become a medium for adab internalization when teachers provide clear value orientation. MBG has not only a nutritional function, but also educational and religious functions. The habituation of the Prophet's eating etiquette turns eating into a practice of gratitude, discipline, responsibility, moderation, and social care. This finding broadens the discussion on religious character formation, which has often focused on formal worship activities and general religious programs.

In the context of MA Ulul Absharr, MBG became a meeting point between students' physical needs and spiritual development. Nutritious food supported students physically, while eating etiquette provided moral and religious direction in treating Allah's blessings. When both aspects were integrated, MBG gained added value as an Islamic educational practice close to students' daily lives. This position distinguishes the present study from previous studies that discussed adab internalization in general, habituated religious activities, or eating character education without specific attention to the Prophet's eating etiquette in the MBG program.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Free Nutritious Meals Program, known as MBG, in the eleventh grade of MA Ulul Absharr has a broader meaning than merely fulfilling students' nutritional needs. The program can become a space for religious character education when eating activities are directed through the internalization of the Prophet's eating etiquette. The practices of reciting basmalah, eating with the right hand, maintaining order, avoiding criticism of food, avoiding excess, keeping cleanliness, respecting food, and reciting hamdalah become simple actions with strong pedagogical value in shaping students' religious attitudes.

The internalization of eating etiquette in the MBG program takes place through teacher role modeling, habituation, direct guidance, supervision, and reinforcement of Islamic values in daily activities. Teachers play an important role as behavioral models who help students understand that eating is not only a physical activity, but also part of religious practice. Through shared meal activities, students learn gratitude, discipline, responsibility, moderation, care for peers, and environmental cleanliness.

The findings indicate that religious character formation does not always have to be carried out through formal worship activities. Daily activities such as eating together can also become a medium of Islamic education when they are managed consciously and consistently. In the context of MA Ulul Absharr, MBG becomes a meeting point between students' physical needs and spiritual development. The program does not only support students' health, but also provides an opportunity for the madrasah to embed the Prophet's adab in students' real behavior.

This study contributes to Islamic education studies by offering the view that school meal programs can function as spaces for religious value internalization. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of the MBG program and the Prophet's eating etiquette in forming the religious character of Madrasah Aliyah students. This study differs from previous research that mostly discussed adab internalization in general, habituated religious activities, or eating character education without positioning MBG as a specific medium for religious character formation.

Madrasah should develop a simple guideline for implementing the Prophet's eating etiquette in the MBG program so that the activity has a clearer educational direction. Teachers also need to be actively involved in accompanying meal activities, not only as technical supervisors but also as role models and value guides. Future research may examine the influence of eating etiquette habituation on students' behavioral changes more broadly, either through qualitative studies in several madrasahs or quantitative approaches to examine the relationship between eating etiquette habituation and students' religious character.

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