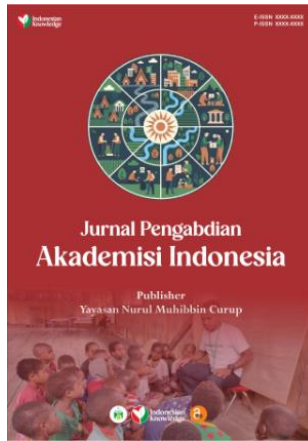


## Indonesian Knowledge Publisher

Editorial Office: WR Supratman Street, Bentiring Permai, Muara Bangka Hulu, City of Bengkulu, Province of Bengkulu, Sumatera, Indonesia  
Email: [editor@indonesianknowledge.org](mailto:editor@indonesianknowledge.org). Website: [indonesianknowledge.org](http://indonesianknowledge.org)

Volume 01 Issue 01 2026 (April-Juli)



# Jurnal Pengabdian Akademisi Indonesia

ISSN XXXX-XXXX (Online)  
Editor: Mika Arsela

Publication details, including author guidelines

Url: <https://ejournal.indonesianknowledge.org/index.php/pakai/about/submissions>

**Empowerment of MDTA Students through Gebyar Muharram as a Means of Developing Islamic Talent and Character.**

Nadia Utami, Tuti Nurhaliza, Tia Ristika Sari, Hasyimi Aliana, Tri Aulia Sari, Elvira Purnamasari

### Article History

Received: 20 Maret 2026

Revised: 24 Maret 2026

Published: 20 April 2026

### How to cite (APA 7th)

Utami, N. et al., (2026). Empowerment Of MDTA Students through Gebyar Muharram as a Means of Developing Islamic Talent and Character, Jurnal Pengabdian Akademisi Indonesia, 1(1), 25-32.

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to:

Utami Nadia. UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Raden Fatah Street, Pagar Dewa, Selebar, Bengkulu City, Indonesia.

Email: [nutami912@com](mailto:nutami912@com)



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# Empowerment of MDTA Students through Gebyar Muharram as a Means of Developing Islamic Talent and Character



Nadia Utami\*, Tuti Nurhaliza, Tia Ristika Sari, Hasyimi Aliana, Tri Aulia Sari, Elvira Purnamasari  
Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University Bengkulu

\*Correspondin Author: [nutami912@gmail.com](mailto:nutami912@gmail.com)

## ABSTRAK

**Tujuan:** Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) berbasis riset masjid yang dilaksanakan oleh Kelompok 4 FUAD UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu bertujuan untuk memberdayakan peserta didik Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah (MDTA) di Masjid Syuhada. Pemilihan lokasi ini didasarkan pada fenomena belum optimalnya fungsi Masjid Syuhada sebagai pusat peradaban anak, di mana rutinitas pembelajaran MDTA cenderung monoton dan kurang memberikan ruang untuk apresiasi bakat, di tengah ancaman disrupsi digital terhadap karakter anak. **Metode:** Melalui program Gebyar Muharram, dilakukan upaya pengembangan bakat anak serta pembentukan karakter Islami sejak dini. Metode yang digunakan dalam kegiatan pengabdian ini adalah pendampingan partisipatif (Asset-Based Community Development/ABCD) dan pelaksanaan berbagai perlombaan edukatif yang diikuti oleh sekitar 50 peserta didik. Perlombaan yang diselenggarakan meliputi Lomba Azan, Tahfiz Al-Qur'an, dan Peragaan Busana Islami. **Temuan:** Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan rasa percaya diri, stimulasi potensi keagamaan, serta penguatan nilai-nilai moral pada peserta didik. **Implikasi:** Masjid terbukti tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai tempat ibadah ritual, tetapi juga sebagai pusat peradaban dan pendidikan nonformal yang efektif bagi generasi muda.

**Kata Kunci:** MDTA; Gebyar Muharram; Karakter Islami; Pemberdayaan Peserta Didik

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The Independent Learning Community Service Program (KKN) and Independent Campus (MBKM) program, based on mosque research, conducted by Group 4 of FUAD UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, aims to empower students at the Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah (MDTA) at the Syuhada Mosque. The choice of this location is based on the phenomenon of the Syuhada Mosque's suboptimal function as a center of children's civilization, where the MDTA learning routine tends to be monotonous and there is minimal space for talent appreciation, amidst the threat of digital disruption to children's character. **Method:** Through the "Gebyar Muharram" program, efforts are made to develop children's talents and develop Islamic character from an early age. The methods used in this service include participatory mentoring (Asset-Based Community Development) and educational competitions, with approximately 50 students participating. Competitions included the Adhan competition, Quran memorization (Tahfiz Al-Quran), and an Islamic fashion show. **Findings:** The results of this activity indicate increased self-confidence, stimulation of religious potential, and strengthening of noble moral values in the students. **Implications:** Mosques have proven to function not only as places of ritual worship but also as centers of civilization and effective non-formal education for the younger generation.

**Keywords:** MDTA; Muharram Celebration; Islamic Character; Empowerment of Students

## INTRODUCTION

Mosques as a place of worship for the surrounding community are religious institutions that are close to the community. Adults and children are one of the worshippers in the mosque who need appreciation in the form of activities. The establishment of MDTA in each mosque is a form of mosque appreciation to the community, especially in helping parents educate their children's religion. The contribution of mosques is needed by the community, especially for the resilience and preservation of religious values and morals in the local community. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said. As our role models, we make the mosque the center of da'wah activities, including educating and fostering the people at that time. Then in the time of Khulafaur Rasyidin, the mosque was built magnificently side by side with buildings as the center of people's activities. The mosque was also built side by side with the campus. Mosques in Indonesia are like miniature mosques in the time of the Prophet PBUH. As a center for the development of the people, it is expected to be able to improve or defend their own environment (Anwar & Salim, 2018).

Mosques have a strategic role in the history of Islamic civilization, not only as a place of ritual worship but also as a center of education, culture, and community empowerment. In the modern context, the revitalization of mosque functions needs to be encouraged, one of which is through the optimization of non-formal educational institutions such as Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliah Awaliyah (MDTA). MDTA plays a crucial role in shaping the moral, spiritual, and religious foundations of children in the midst of the rapid flow of digital disruption (Sari et al., 2022). Historically, mosques have been the most ancient Islamic educational institution since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), which not only serves as a place of worship, but also as a center for science, teaching, and even Islamic law sites (Sholikatin et al., 2024).

Through the mosque-research-based MBKM KKN program carried out by Group 4 of the Faculty of Ushuluddin, Adab, and Da'wah (FUAD) UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu at the Syuhada Mosque, great potential was found in local MDTA students. However, appreciation rooms, competition forums, and means to spark children's confidence are still very limited in their daily learning routines. Departing from these conditions, the KKN team initiated the "Gebyar Muharram" program. This program is designed as a transformative empowerment instrument to explore potential, hone hidden talents, and internalize Islamic character values in the younger generation in the environment around the Martyr Mosque (Anwar & Salim, 2018). The month of Muharram is the first month in the Qamariyah Calendar (Islamic Calendar) system, so 1 Muharram is the beginning of the Hijri new year. The month of Muharram is also known as the month of Shuro/Ashura. Various traditions are carried out by the Islamic community during the month of Muharram in Indonesia, so there are many specific activities carried out by most Indonesian people (Jalil et al., 2022).

Character Education is defined as education that develops cultural values and national character in children so that they can apply good character values in life as a religious, nationalist, productive, and creative society. Character is the basic value that builds a person's personality. Character education needs to be introduced from an early age in order to instill concepts in children about religious character. The birth of a generation that has quality is the hope of the introduction of character education from an early age (Karakter, 2013). Character education from an early age is very important because childhood is a period of personality formation that will affect a person's behavior in the future. Through character education, children not only gain knowledge, but are also guided to habituate positive behaviors such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, social concern, and obedience in carrying out religious teachings (Ainiyah, 2013).

Education has a very important role in shaping future generations who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have good character. One of the education that is increasingly of concern is the development of students' talents and interests, especially through religious-based programs (Marzuqi, 2022). The development of talents and interests is not only aimed at improving academic abilities, but also helps students find their potential, increase confidence, and form useful social skills in community life. In the context of Islamic education, the development of talents and interests can be carried out through religious activities that provide space for students to express their abilities positively (Nasir & Malli, 2022).

## METHODS

This community service applies a participatory action research (PAR) approach combined with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) model. The ABCD approach was chosen because of its relevance in building sustainable empowerment programs that are based on the internal strengths of the community, rather than relying on temporary external assistance (Dureau, 2013; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

The subject of service was the students of MDTA Masjid Syuhada which amounted to around 50 children, with an age range of 6-12 years. In addition to students, stakeholders who were actively involved included the takmir management of the Syuhada Mosque, MDTA asatidz and asatidzah, and parents of students. This multi-stakeholder engagement is important to ensure that the program does not run sectorally, but rather produces an integrated supporting ecosystem (Salahuddin et al., 2015).

The stages of the implementation of the service by Group 4 include four main phases:

1. Mapping Stage (Research): Identify the potential of MDTA children and coordinate with the management of the Syuhada Mosque and the asatidz/asatidzah.
2. Mentoring Stage: Provide psychological motivation and guidance on religious materials to students before the competition starts.
3. Implementation Stage (Gebyar Muharram): Held a competition festival which was attended by ±50 MDTA students.

Evaluation and Reflection Stage: Measuring the level of participation, emotional response of students, and changes in their confidence level after the activity.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Implementation of Gebyar Muharram at the Syuhada Mosque

The implementation of the Gebyar Muharram program initiated by Group 4 of the MBKM KKN Faculty of Ushuluddin, Adab, and Da'wah (FUAD) UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu at the Syuhada Mosque is designed as a form of adaptive and inclusive educational intervention. Based on initial research conducted on the community around the mosque, it was found that there is an urgent need for a space for self-actualization for children who focus their religious education at Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awaliyah (MDTA). In order to bridge this, this festival integrates aspects of spirituality, intellectuality, and visual creativity through three main competitions, namely the Azan Competition, the Tahfiz Al-Qur'an Competition, and the Islamic Fashion Show Competition, which was enthusiastically attended by around 50 students and students.

In the Azan Competition branch, the main focus of service is directed to efforts to train the accuracy of makhraj, vocal strength, discipline, and mental courage of students to appear to voice the call to worship in public. Through this competition, KKN students conduct intensive assistance before the day of

implementation to correct the technique of pronunciation of thoyyibah sentences and the rhythm of the azan song (rhythm) to be in accordance with the correct rules of fiqh. This azan competition is not only about assessing the beauty of sounds, but also instilling a deep understanding in students that the azan is a symbol of a sacred vocation that requires mental readiness, accuracy of letters, and a high sense of responsibility as a future muezin in their environment.

Furthermore, in the Tahfiz Al-Qur'an Competition branch, the service team focused on strengthening the quality of memorization of short verses contained in Juz Amma (Juz 30). The competition is designed in such a way as to train short-term focus, test the power of memory under stage pressure, and foster a deep love (mahabbah) for the Qur'an from an early age. The approach taken by Group 4 students is not only to test memorization through verse continuation, but also to provide psychological reinforcement so that children do not feel afraid of making mistakes, but feel proud and happy because they are able to chant the divine kalam in front of parents and the general public.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Fashion Show Competition was presented as a representation of the dynamic Islamic aesthetic creativity space for the students. Through this branch of the competition, the MBKM KKN team seeks to instill a comprehensive understanding of the correct manners of dressing according to Islamic law, which is to cover the aurah politely, neatly, and cleanly, without eliminating the element of children's world cheerfulness. Students are taught to express themselves, harmonize their steps, and display their Muslim and Muslim women's clothing with confidence on stage, which indirectly breaks down the walls of social anxiety and stage fright that early childhood often experiences in large-scale social interactions.

The success of mobilizing around 50 children in the entire series of competitions reflects the high level of community acceptance and the effectiveness of the coordination of the KKN team with the takmir of the Syuhada Mosque and MDTA teachers. This strong synergy is realized thanks to the persuasive approach carried out by students through periodic gatherings, transparent socialization of work programs, and the active involvement of community leaders in the committee. Gebyar Muharram is no longer seen as a mere annual ceremonial event, but has turned into a momentum of academic and spiritual awakening for the non-formal education ecosystem based at the Martyrdom Mosque.

### **The Impact of Empowerment on Students and Mosque Optimization**

The positive impact resulting from the implementation of Gebyar Muharram by Group 4 of FUAD UINFAS Bengkulu touches on two main transformative dimensions, namely the exploration of student talent (skill mapping) and the formation of Islamic character (character building) in a sustainable manner. From the dimension of talent exploration, this series of competitions succeeded in identifying, mapping, and emerging superior seeds in the field of religious sound art and Qur'an memorization that have been hidden. The competition stage provided by KKN students acts as an effective space for self-actualization, providing an opportunity for students to jump out of the limitations of conventional classrooms that tend to be monotonous to a more dynamic and appreciative space of expression.

Through the post-competition evaluation process, it was seen that there was a significant spike in learning motivation in MDTA Syuhada Mosque students, where they became more diligent in repeating memorization and improving the quality of their reading in order to prepare themselves for the next activities. On the other hand, from the dimension of Islamic character building (character building), the healthy atmosphere of competition created in Gebyar Muharram teaches children applicatively about the essence of hard work, honesty, sportsmanship, and the ability to have a big soul (legowo) in receiving the results of the

jury's assessment. Children learn to understand that victory is the fruit of perseverance, while failure in the competition is not the end of the learning process, but a ladder to improve themselves in the future.

These moral values are internalized not through one-way lectures in class, but through direct emotional experiences when they compete, shake hands with competition rivals, and congratulate each other on their friends' achievements. Supportive environmental conditioning like this is very effective in shaping the psychological structure of children so that they grow into resilient individuals, do not get discouraged easily, and have high social empathy based on Islamic values. This impact also spreads to the increase in children's confidence in general, where their courage to appear on stage in front of dozens of pairs of eyes becomes a very valuable social capital for their mental development in the future.

Furthermore, the participatory action research carried out by Group 4 of the MBKM KKN succeeded in rekindling the collective awareness of the educational tripartite, namely the mosque takmir administrators, parents of students, and the teacher council of the Martyr Mosque MDTA. Prior to this program, the integration of roles between the three elements tended to run independently without a massive liaison program. Through the momentum of Gebyar Muharram, parents of students can witness firsthand the development of their children's religious competence, thereby fostering a sense of pride and awareness to further support the learning programs at MDTA.

For the mosque takmir itself, this activity is empirical proof that the Syuhada Mosque has great potential to transform into a child-friendly public space as well as the center of civilization of the people who live and move dynamically. The mosque is no longer quiet from children's activities and is no longer seen as just a place of worship for the five-hour prayer ritual for adults, but has transformed into an epicenter of character education, a social laboratory, and a nursery for the young generation of Muslims who are insightful and noble. The sustainability of the impact of this service is now in the hands of the local community who have been stimulated by the presence of the MBKM FUAD UINFAS Bengkulu KKN team.

## CONCLUSION

The Muharram Celebration which was carried out by Group 4 of the KKN MBKM FUAD UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu at the Syuhada Mosque succeeded in proving that the mosque can and should function beyond its role as a place of ritual worship alone. Through an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach and the implementation of an educational competition festival involving approximately 50 MDTA students, the program has succeeded in producing three interrelated transformative impacts:

1. The development of students' talents concretely, especially in the field of religious sound arts (azan), tahfiz Al-Qur'an, and aesthetic representation of Islamic fashion.
2. Internalize authentic Islamic character values through a healthy, sporty, and family-friendly competition experience.
3. Revitalizing the function of the Martyr's Mosque as a center for active, inclusive, and future-oriented children's civilization.

The success of this program provides an important lesson that educational interventions designed with local contexts in mind, involving the entire community ecosystem, and harnessing meaningful religious momentum, will be far more effective than generic, top-down programs. Recommendations that can be given to relevant stakeholders are: (1) Making Gebyar Muharram an annual agenda of MDTA Martyr Mosque with expanded scope; (2) Encourage MDTA institutions in other mosques to adopt similar models tailored to their

respective local contexts; (3) Integrate talent development programs into MDTA's regular curriculum so that they don't just take place incidentally.

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