



# Management of Spiritual Development Programs in Strengthening the Religious Character of Foster Children in Special Child Development Institutions

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the da'wah management function in the spiritual development program at the Class I Medan LPKA, identify supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation, and examine its contribution to strengthening the religious character of foster children. The method used in this study is a qualitative method with a case study design. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation with the Head of the Development Section, religious instructors, and three foster children. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model through data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the spiritual development program has implemented the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring, although the planning is not supported by documented material guidelines and supervision is not accompanied by systematic evaluation. The program is supported by cooperation with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the commitment of religious instructors, and good interpersonal relationships between mentors and foster children, while obstacles include low initial motivation of foster children, psychological conditions, and a suboptimal program evaluation system. The spiritual development program contributes to shaping the religious character of foster children through habituation of worship, emotional control, and increased spiritual closeness.

## INTRODUCTION

Children who come into conflict with the law cannot be viewed solely as perpetrators of criminal acts who must undergo punishment, but rather as individuals who are still in the development stage and have the right to receive guidance so that they are able to return to carrying out their social functions in society (Permatasari et al., 2025).

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This principle is emphasized in Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, which places the best interests of children as the basis for implementing the juvenile criminal justice system (Indonesia, 2003). Therefore, the Special Child Development Institution (LPKA) does not only function as a place for carrying out criminal acts, but also as an institution responsible for reshaping the character, morals, and spirituality of foster children through various development programs. In this context, spiritual development is an important instrument because it aims not only to improve religious understanding but also to build awareness, self-control, and religious character as provisions for foster children when they return to their social environment. Findings (Tullah et al., 2026) indicate that guidance and counseling based on Islamic values have a positive contribution to the formation of religious character and help individuals cope with psychological and social pressures.

As the largest child development institution in North Sumatra, the Medan Class 1 Child Development Institution (LPKA) carries out spiritual development through various religious activities, such as congregational prayer, Quran recitation, dhikr, religious lectures, and worship development organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and other religious counseling partners, and supported by LPKA's internal mentors. The program has been implemented continuously as part of the process of forming the religious character of the fostered children. However, the sustainability of a program does not necessarily indicate that the program has been managed optimally. Programs that are implemented routinely still require clear management mechanisms, starting from the planning process, organization, implementation, and supervision so that the development goals can be achieved effectively (Zulkarnain et al., 2025). From a da'wah management perspective, each management function plays an interrelated role in ensuring the sustainability and quality of a program. (Ramadan et al., 2025) emphasized that the function of *riqabah* or supervision not only aims to ensure activities are carried out according to plan, but also serves as an evaluation tool to prevent deviations and increase program effectiveness on an ongoing basis. Although the spiritual development program has been implemented routinely at LPKA Class 1 Medan, it is not yet clear whether all management functions, from planning, organizing, implementing, to monitoring, have been implemented optimally. This condition indicates the importance of examining not only the form of development activities, but also how the program is managed to support the achievement of the goal of developing the religious character of foster children.

This phenomenon demonstrates that studies on spiritual development are not sufficient to simply describe the types of activities implemented; they also require an examination of the program's management mechanisms. Aspects that need to be analyzed include the program planning process, the division of tasks among implementers, the implementation of the development, the oversight mechanism, the factors that support and hinder program implementation, and its contribution to strengthening the religious character of the children in their care (Idris & Marjuni, 2026). This analysis is important to carry out because the effectiveness of spiritual development is not only determined by the number of activities held, but also by the quality of program management that supports the achievement of development goals.

Several previous studies have examined religious development in correctional institutions and LPKA (Correctional Rehabilitation Institutions) with varying focuses. (Nashrillah et al., 2024) examined the implementation of da'wah values in the Class I LPKA Medan and found that activities such as *tadarus* (religious recitation), *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and *salawat* (prayer chanting) were routinely effective in shaping the Islamic character of inmates. However, this study focused more on the form of development activities without examining how the

program was managed through management functions. (Harimurti, 2019) examined the management of child development in the Class II LPKA Jakarta, but spiritual development was only one part of the overall development service and therefore had not been discussed in depth. (Sulistijaningsih et al., 2024) showed that Islamic boarding school-based habituation in the Class IIA LPKA Bandung was effective in shaping religious character, but its implementation still faced obstacles in the form of limited regulations, guidance staff, and budget. Meanwhile, (Akib & Amani, 2021; Saragih & Kurniawan, 2025) found that structured religious guidance management, implemented from the planning stage to the evaluation stage, can improve the morals of inmates, although the research was conducted on adult inmates in correctional institutions. Research by (Gani Kurniawan, 2019) also shows that spiritual guidance through individual and group guidance contributes to improving the faith of inmates, but the focus of the research is more directed at the guidance method than the overall program management.

Based on previous research, most studies still focus on the form of religious development activities, development methods, or their influence on the formation of the religious character of foster children. Meanwhile, research examining the management of spiritual development programs based on the functions of da'wah management, from planning, organization, implementation, to supervision, is still limited. Furthermore, there is not much research linking the implementation of these management functions with the strengthening of the religious character of foster children. The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of the spiritual development program using an integrated framework of da'wah management functions, namely takhthit (planning), tanzhim (organization), tawjih (implementation), and riqabah (supervision). This study also involved foster children with different lengths of training so that it can describe the development of religious character at each stage of development. Furthermore, this study not only analyzes program management but also examines its contribution to strengthening the religious character of foster children in LPKA.

## METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to deeply understand the implementation of the spiritual development program, the factors that influence it, and its contribution to strengthening the religious character of foster children. This approach was chosen because it focuses on understanding the meaning, experiences, and processes that occur in a real context, rather than examining the relationship between variables. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument in data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2018; Sugiyono, 2016). The case study design was chosen because this research focuses on the management of the spiritual development program at the Class I Children's Special Development Institution (LPKA) in Medan. This approach allows researchers to deeply understand the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising the program in a real context (Haki & Prahastiwi, 2024). LPKA Class I Medan was chosen as the research location because it continuously implements the spiritual development program in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, making it relevant to examine program management and its contribution to strengthening the religious character of foster children.

Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in the spiritual development program. The informants included the Head of the Development Section, a religious instructor from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and three foster children who had participated in the development program for varying lengths of time. The differences in length of

participation were taken into account to obtain a picture of the development of the foster children's religious character. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted based on the research focus, namely the management of the spiritual development program, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the program's contribution to strengthening the foster children's religious character. Observations were conducted during the development activities, while documentation included activity schedules, development reports, and other relevant documents (Auliya et al., 2020).

Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Auliya et al., 2020). Data from interviews, observations, and documentation were first selected and grouped according to the research focus, then presented in narrative form. Next, the researchers interpreted the emerging patterns to explain the management of the spiritual development program, supporting and inhibiting factors, and their contribution to strengthening the religious character of the foster children. Data validity was maintained through source and method triangulation. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information from the Head of the Development Section, religious instructors, and foster children, while method triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to increase the credibility of the research findings.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Spiritual Development Program Management at LPKA Class 1 Medan**

Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, the mechanism of the spiritual development program at LPKA Class 1 Medan is implemented through collaboration between internal LPKA parties and external partners from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In general, the program management process begins with the preparation of an activity schedule by LPKA, which is then coordinated with religious instructors as the implementing agencies. Once the schedule is agreed upon, the instructors carry out the development activities according to the predetermined time, while the internal instructors are tasked with accompanying, supervising the activities, and ensuring that all foster children participate in the development. If the religious instructor is unable to attend, the program is not stopped, but is still carried out by the internal instructors through routine worship activities such as the five daily congregational prayers, learning to read the Iqra and the Qur'an, learning to recite the Qur'an, getting used to daily worship, dhikr, and learning to rebana. This mechanism shows that the sustainability of the program does not depend entirely on the presence of partners, but is also supported by routine development that has become part of the development system at LPKA.

#### **At the planning stage (takhtit)**

During the planning (takhtit) stage, Purnama Laoli explained that the schedule for spiritual development activities was prepared by the LPKA and then provided to partners from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. He added that administratively, the schedule should be posted on the mosque information board, but this has not always been done due to administrative busyness (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). Similarly, Hj. Nunung Ismayati explained that the LPKA provides flexibility to counselors in determining the day of the visit according to available time. If the counselor is unable to attend, the development is still carried out by an internal mentor to maintain program continuity (Hj. Nunung Ismayati, interview, 2026). Purnama Laoli also explained that to date there are no written guidelines for development materials. The material presented by counselors is tailored to the

conditions and needs of the children in their care, while internal mentors focus more on learning to pray, reading the Qur'an, and getting used to daily worship.

These findings indicate that the planning function is operational, but remains adaptive and not yet fully documented. The flexibility afforded to extension workers is a realistic strategy given limited human resources. However, the lack of written guidelines means that the direction of the development materials is highly dependent on the experience of each extension worker. This situation has the potential to lead to variations in the materials received by the participants, thus preventing the continuity of learning between periods. According to (Munir & Ilaihi, 2021), the takhthit function in da'wah management encompasses not only the preparation of activity schedules but also the establishment of objectives, materials, strategies, and indicators of program success, all documented as shared guidelines. Thus, the results of this study indicate that the strength of planning in LPKA lies in the flexibility of implementation, while its weakness lies in the aspect of program standardization.

#### **At the organizing stage (tanzhim),**

In the organizing (tanzhim) stage, Purnama Laoli explained that religious instructors are tasked with delivering coaching materials, while ASN instructors assist in the implementation of activities, supervise the attendance of foster children, and maintain order during the activities (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). Hj. Nunung Ismayati added that the collaboration was implemented based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that had been in place since several previous leadership periods. Before entering the coaching class, the instructors also divided materials and tasks among team members so that the implementation of activities was more focused (Hj. Nunung Ismayati, interview, 2026).

This division of roles demonstrates that the organizational function is demonstrated not only through the formal division of tasks but also through the coordination established between the LPKA and external partners. Interestingly, although there is no specific organizational structure to regulate the spiritual development program in detail, each party understands their role, ensuring consistent program implementation. This finding demonstrates that interpersonal coordination is a crucial factor in maintaining organizational effectiveness. These findings align with the opinion of Munir & Ilaihi (2021), who stated that the function of tanzhim aims to place each implementer according to their competency so that all resources can work synergistically. This finding also supports research findings (Rakhma, 2022), which indicate that the success of a da'wah program is influenced not only by the formal organizational structure but also by the clarity of role division and coordination between implementers.

#### **At the implementation stage (tawjih)**

In the implementation (tawjih) stage, Purnama Laoli explained that the success of delivering material is greatly influenced by the instructor's ability to build close communication with the participants. Instructors who use simple language, humor, and examples from everyday life tend to be more easily accepted than instructors who deliver material in a formal manner (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). This was also felt by AB-R, who stated that instructors often deliver material in a relaxed manner and interspersed with humor, so that the coaching atmosphere becomes more comfortable and not boring (AB-R, interview, 2026).

In addition to the coaching carried out in collaboration with Ministry of Religious Affairs counselors, this study also found that there are a number of spiritual development programs that are routinely implemented by LPKA without relying on the presence of partners. These programs include the five daily congregational prayers, learning to read the Iqra and the Qur'an, learning to recite the Qur'an, getting used to daily worship, dhikr, and learning to rebana. The existence of these internal programs indicates that collaboration with partners serves to enrich the

coaching material through counseling and strengthening religious values, while the formation of daily religious habits is maintained by the LPKA's internal coaching system. These findings indicate that the sustainability of spiritual development does not solely depend on external counselors, but has become an ongoing culture of development within the LPKA environment.

These findings confirm that the function of *tawjih* is not only related to the implementation of activities, but also concerns the mentor's ability to build interpersonal relationships that can encourage the internalization of religious values. This aligns with (Faizah et al., 2025), which explains that a communicative, contextual, and relevant approach to participants' experiences is more effective in building intrinsic motivation than a one-way approach. Therefore, the success of spiritual guidance is determined not only by the frequency of activities but also by the quality of the interactions established between the mentor and the mentee (Sultan et al., 2023).

#### **At the supervision level (*riqabah*),**

At the monitoring (*riqabah*) stage, Purnama Laoli acknowledged that periodic program evaluations have not been formally implemented. Monitoring the success of the guidance program has been done primarily through observing changes in the behavior of the children in the program during the training (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). Meanwhile, Hj. Nunung Ismayati explained that every activity carried out is always accompanied by the preparation of a report as a form of accountability to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the LPKA (Hj. Nunung Ismayati, interview, 2026).

These findings indicate that the supervisory function is an aspect that still needs to be strengthened in the spiritual development program management system at the Class 1 LPKA Medan. Current supervision is more oriented towards monitoring activity implementation than evaluating the achievement of program objectives. As a result, changes in the religious character of foster children have not been systematically measured using agreed-upon indicators. According to (Ramadan et al., 2025), the ideal function of *riqabah* is not only to ensure activities run according to plan but also to evaluate program effectiveness as a basis for improving subsequent activities. The conditions of this study indicate that reports prepared by partners of the Ministry of Religious Affairs function primarily as a form of administrative accountability, while joint evaluations between LPKA and partners regarding the development of foster children have not been conducted regularly. Therefore, the development of joint evaluation instruments and regular evaluation forums is essential to ensure the complete management cycle of the spiritual development program, from planning to supervision.

#### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of the Development Program**

Based on the interview results, this study indicates that the successful implementation of the spiritual development program at LPKA Class 1 Medan was influenced by supporting factors stemming from institutional aspects and interpersonal relationships between mentors and inmates. Conversely, program implementation also faced various obstacles stemming from the inmates' psychological conditions and limitations in program management.

Purnama Laoli stated that the most helpful factor in the smooth running of the program was the presence of partners from the Ministry of Religious Affairs because internal mentors had limitations in reaching all foster children and providing in-depth religious material (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). Hj. Nunung Ismayati explained that the main motivation for herself and the counseling team to continue carrying out the guidance came from a sense of responsibility as religious counselors,

even though the available facilities were still simple and only supported by basic facilities such as a loudspeaker provided by LPKA (Hj. Nunung Ismayati, interview, 2026). Meanwhile, AB-R revealed that he felt comfortable participating in the guidance because he had a close relationship with one of the supervising ustaz who always listened to his complaints without judging (AB-R, interview, 2026).

These findings indicate that the program's supporting factors lie not only in the availability of external human resources, but also in the quality of the relationships established during the coaching process. The presence of counselors from the Ministry of Religious Affairs strengthens LPKA's capacity to provide more varied religious coaching, while internal mentors play a role in maintaining the program's continuity through the practice of daily worship. The synergy between the two parties creates a complementary coaching mechanism, ensuring the program's continued continuity. Thus, the program's success is determined not only by the presence of partners, but also by the coordination between external partners and internal mentors in carrying out their implementation (*tawjih*) functions together.

In addition, emotional closeness between mentors and students is an important asset in the process of internalizing religious values (Zain et al., 2026). AB-R's experience shows that children in their care are more receptive to guidance materials when they feel valued, listened to, and treated humanely. This finding corroborates a study by (Kunzita Lazuardi et al., 2025) which explains that religious guidance is more effective when built through relationships based on trust, empathy, and open communication. In the context of spiritual guidance, such relationships not only increase motivation to participate in activities but also encourage children to be more open in expressing personal issues, which are part of the behavior change process.

However, this study also found several factors that hampered program implementation. Purnama Laoli explained that the low initial interest of some of the children in the program was a major challenge in implementing the program (Purnama Laoli, interview, 2026). This was reinforced by AB-A's confession that he sometimes found it difficult to concentrate during the program because he often thought about his family and the situation he was facing (AB-A, interview, 2026). In addition, Hj. Nunung Ismayati revealed that some of the children in the program still exhibited undisciplined behavior, such as going in and out of the room while the program was in progress (Hj. Nunung Ismayati, interview, 2026).

These findings indicate that obstacles to program implementation stem not only from the technical aspects of activity implementation but are also influenced by the psychological condition of the children in their care. Low participation in the initial stages cannot be interpreted as a lack of interest in religion, but rather a form of adaptation to new situations, emotional stress, longing for family, and psychological burdens resulting from the ongoing legal process. Therefore, the effectiveness of spiritual guidance cannot simply rely on the delivery of religious material, but also requires an approach that can address the emotional needs of the children in their care. This finding is in line with (Djuaini & Huda, 2025), who explained that a spiritual approach combined with self-reflection (*muhasabah*) and individual counseling can help adolescents manage psychological stress while increasing their readiness to accept religious values.

On the other hand, the lack of orderly behavior still found during the program indicates that the organization and supervision aspects of the program still need strengthening. The absence of more detailed implementation guidelines regarding the management of coaching classes means that participant control relies more on the capabilities of each mentor (Maftuhah et al., 2026). This condition is related to findings on the *tanzhim* and *riqabah* functions, which indicate that coordination has been running well, but is not supported by operational standards

and a more systematic evaluation mechanism. Therefore, developing coaching implementation regulations and a more structured mentoring mechanism can be a step towards increasing the program's effectiveness while creating a more conducive coaching atmosphere.

Overall, the research results indicate that the success of the spiritual development program at the Class 1 LPKA Medan is determined by the institution's ability to integrate institutional factors, mentor competence, and psychological approaches to its inmates. Conversely, the obstacles identified not only require improvements in managerial aspects but also indicate the importance of a more holistic development approach, namely integrating religious development with psychosocial support to optimize the process of religious character change.

### **Program Contribution to the Religious Character of Foster Children at LPKA Class 1 Medan**

Based on interviews with three children who have participated in the program for varying lengths of time, this study shows that the spiritual development program's contribution to strengthening religious character occurs gradually over time. These differences in experience indicate that changes in religious character do not occur instantly, but rather through a continuous process of habituation, internalization of values, and mentoring.

AB-G, who has only been participating in the training for two months, stated that the changes he has felt are still limited, but he has begun to practice prayer and feels calm after participating in the training activities (AB-G, interview, 2026). AB-A, who has been participating in the training for one year, revealed that he still sometimes feels lazy, but is starting to try to improve himself. He also said that when he is angry, he often remembers the advice of the religious teacher to be patient, which has made him better able to control his emotions (AB-A, interview, 2026). Meanwhile, AB-R, who has been participating in the training for one year and six months, has felt a more comprehensive change. He said he has become more patient, calmer, able to control his emotions, thinks more carefully before acting, feels closer to God, and has a better hope for his future (AB-R, interview, 2026). This change is in line with (Ananda, 2024), which shows that the spiritual-logotherapy approach can foster the discovery of the meaning of life and hope for the future.

When these three experiences are analyzed based on the length of time they have been involved in the training, a gradual pattern of religious character development is evident. AB-G is still in the stage of forming basic habits through regular religious practices. AB-A has entered the stage of internalizing values, as evidenced by their beginning to consider religious advice when facing emotional conflicts. AB-R has demonstrated more comprehensive changes, where religious values are not only reflected in their religious practices but also influence their thinking, self-control, and outlook on life (Romadhoni et al., 2023). This finding aligns with the theory of character development proposed by (Zubaidi & Azizah, 2026), which states that character develops through stages of knowing the good, feeling the good, and acting the good. Therefore, spiritual development at LPKA not only results in changes in religious behavior but also encourages the internalization of values, which develops over time as the child continues to participate in the development.

This internalization process is evident in AB-A's experience recalling the religious teacher's advice when facing anger. This demonstrates that the guidance material does not stop at imparting religious knowledge but begins to function as a self-control mechanism in everyday life. This finding aligns with (Kartini et al., 2023; Kunzita Lazuardi et al., 2025), who explain that religious practice, spiritual advice, and Islamic guidance serve as a means of regulating emotions while helping

individuals build a more positive meaning in life. In other words, the success of spiritual guidance is measured not only by increasing the intensity of worship but also by the ability of the participants to apply religious values when facing life's challenges.

The changes experienced by AB-R also demonstrate that spiritual development contributes to the development of inner peace and optimism in life. These changes can also be reflected through the religious perspective of Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 28:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Meaning: "(Namely) those who believe and whose hearts are at peace with the remembrance of Allah. Remember, only by remembering Allah do hearts become at peace." (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019)

This verse demonstrates that peace of mind is the fruit of one's closeness to God through worship and remembrance of God. The findings of this study demonstrate alignment with this concept. The longer the children in the group participated in spiritual guidance and practiced religious practices, the stronger the changes they experienced, both in the form of inner peace, the ability to control emotions, and the emergence of more positive expectations for life after undergoing the guidance period. (Mursyid et al., 2022), these findings are also supported by studies in religious psychology, which explain that consistent religious practices are associated with increased psychological well-being, spiritual resilience, and decreased anxiety levels (Kunzita Lazuardi et al., 2025).

These findings also have important implications for the implementation of the spiritual development program at the Class 1 Medan Rehabilitation and Religious Education Institution (LPKA). The differences in religious character development among the three informants indicate that the development needs of each inmate are not entirely the same, but are influenced by the length of time they have been in the program and the level of internalization of values they have achieved. Therefore, the development material delivered by religious instructors and internal mentors should be structured in stages according to the inmate's development level. For inmates who have just started the program, the material can focus on strengthening motivation, developing basic worship habits, and adapting to the development environment. In the next stage, the material can be directed towards strengthening morals, controlling emotions, and resolving life problems through a religious approach. Meanwhile, for inmates who have been in the program for a longer period, the material can be developed to develop social responsibility, leadership, and preparation for reintegration into society based on Islamic values.

Grouping materials based on developmental levels can provide input for LPKA Class 1 Medan and partners from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in developing a more systematic developmental curriculum. Currently, developmental materials are flexibly adjusted by extension workers based on field conditions. While this approach has the advantage of adapting to participants' needs, the results of this study indicate that more structured developmental materials tailored to the developmental needs of the children in their care have the potential to increase the effectiveness of developmental materials and accelerate the internalization of religious values.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the spiritual development program at LPKA Class 1 Medan has made a positive contribution to strengthening the religious character of the children in its care, although there are still weaknesses in the organization and supervision of the program. The longer the children in its care consistently participate in the development, the more visible changes in aspects of worship, emotional control, ways of thinking, and spiritual closeness to God.

Therefore, strengthening the program management system followed by the gradual development of development materials according to the development level is expected to increase the program's effectiveness and accelerate the process of developing the religious character of the children in its care.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the management of the spiritual development program at LPKA Class 1 Medan has implemented the four functions of da'wah management (takhtit, tanzhim, tawjih, riqabah), although not optimally. Planning has been supported by an activity schedule and coordination with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but does not yet have systematically documented material guidelines. Organization is carried out through a division of roles between internal mentors and religious instructors, while implementation is collaborative by maintaining internal activities (congregational prayer, Quranic learning, worship habituation) even though the instructor is not present. The supervisory function is the weakest aspect because evaluations have not been carried out periodically and are still only based on behavioral observations.

The program's success was supported by cross-institutional collaboration, the commitment of counselors, and positive interpersonal relationships. While the main obstacles stemmed from the low initial motivation of the children in their care, psychological conditions due to longing for family, and weak classroom management and evaluation. These findings confirm that the effectiveness of spiritual guidance depends on the integration of managerial aspects and psychological approaches. In general, the program contributed positively to strengthening the religious character of the children in their care, which developed gradually from the formation of worship habits and emotional control, to spiritual maturity in line with the length of time participating in the guidance, underscoring the importance of program continuity in internalizing religious values.

## Suggestion

The Class 1 LPKA Medan is advised to develop written guidelines for spiritual development that include objectives, materials, task allocation, schedule, and evaluation mechanisms, as well as to develop a periodic evaluation system that measures the development of religious character in a structured manner. Together with the Ministry of Religious Affairs and its extension partners, the LPKA also needs to develop development materials in stages according to level: strengthening motivation and worship habits for new children, and strengthening morals, emotional control, and preparing for social reintegration for children who have been in the LPKA for longer. This study was limited to three informants who were fostered children in one LPKA, so the findings cannot be generalized; further research with a wider scope of informants and locations is needed to strengthen the findings and develop a more measurable religious character evaluation instrument.

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