

CHARACTER EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL (PESANTREN): AN IMPLEMENTATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), addressing a significant gap in previous studies that have largely emphasized cognitive outcomes while marginalizing the emotional and spiritual dimensions of character formation. Although prior research has acknowledged the importance of character education in pesantren, limited attention has been given to how pesantren-based values are systematically conceptualized, implemented, and evaluated as an integrated educational model. Employing a qualitative field research design with a descriptive-analytical approach, data were collected through observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews, and analyzed using an interactive model comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that character education at MTs Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng Jombang is fundamentally rooted in the five basic principles formulated by the founder of Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, namely honesty, responsibility, hard work, tolerance, and discipline. These values are implemented through a structured three-stage process: planning (identification of character values and development of character-based teaching modules), implementation (learning activities and habituation practices conducted both inside and outside the classroom), and evaluation (assessment of students' character development and program effectiveness). Theoretically, this study contributes an integrated pesantren-based character education model that bridges cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, thereby enriching the discourse on Islamic character education. Practically, it offers a systematic framework that underscores the necessity of coherent planning, implementation, and evaluation in character education programs. Nevertheless, as the study focuses on a single institution, its findings are context-specific and invite further multi-site research to enhance generalizability.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools are development institutions that are closely linked to the education of values and morals, both religious values and the noble values of the nation (Ikhwan et al., 2025;

Sutrisno et al., 2023). So that Islamic boarding schools are called effective institutions for teaching character education to students (Shiddiq et al., 2024). A holistic development model develops not only cognitive abilities but also affective and psychomotor aspects of students. Character education is a key factor in national development. In Indonesia, character education began to be promoted in 2010 (Idharoelhaq & Aziz, 2018; Kristi & SUPRAYITNO, 2020). Character education has begun to be discussed and debated in formal and non-formal education, scientific discussions, and national and international seminars. Quoted from nu online.com (Pendidikan Karakter Khas Pesantren, 2015) Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) have a strategic position to participate in overseeing the development of character education. Character education is a systematically designed and implemented effort to help students understand the values of human behavior in the practice of life in society (Lickona, 1999a). Habits and role models are essential to creating a young generation with character. These habits can be acquired through Islamic boarding schools, as quoted from Kompasiana.com. (Kompasiana.com, 2019). Many institutions have promoted the implementation of character education in both schools and Islamic boarding schools, but many educational institutions are still considered too knowledge-oriented and pay little attention to developing attitudes, values, and behavior in learning. This research offers a method for developing character that aligns with the basic principles of Islamic boarding schools.

This research focuses on character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools. Previous research has discussed the importance of implementing character education in Islamic boarding schools. These studies have shown that character education in Indonesia often focuses on cognitive aspects, with little attention paid to emotional and spiritual intelligence. Some researchers (Martono, 2023; Maslani et al., 2026; Maulidiyah, 2023) In his research, he revealed that Islamic boarding schools have carried out the role of Islamic boarding schools as character builders in facing the era of globalization through studying yellow books, studying reading and writing the Qur'an, providing role models in the daily life of Islamic boarding schools, instilling good habits in daily life at Islamic boarding schools, providing advice and punishments, and also through other supporting activities.

The reality of ongoing activities in Islamic boarding schools and the collaboration between the boarding school and parents and the community have instilled the characters that become the students' identities. This is the success of Islamic boarding schools in instilling character education, because in principle, character development is more effective through habituation and role models, as Apiyah stated in her research (Apiyah & Suharsiwi, 2021). In his research (Fahham, 2013) conveyed that the Islamic boarding school environment can be described as a social environment that possesses values, traditions, and norms that always guide students to do good deeds, because if any boarding school member violates the values, traditions, or norms of the boarding school, then sanctions will be immediately imposed on the student. Therefore, it can be said that the Islamic boarding school is an educational institution that totally applies character education in all its educational and learning activities. Fadhilah in his book (Fadhilah, M.Pd et al., 2021) explains that character education is a conscious or unconscious effort by every element of education to instill good moral values or ethics in students (Srivastava, 2025; Wardi et al., 2025).

Terminologically, Thomas Lickona, as quoted by Nofiaturrahmah, defines character as "A reliable inner disposition to respond to situations in a morally good way." Furthermore, Lickona states, "Character so conceived has three interrelated parts: moral knowing; moral feeling; and moral behavior." Good character includes knowledge of goodness (moral knowing) which gives rise to a commitment to goodness (moral feeling), and ultimately to actually doing good (moral behavior) (Lickona, 1999b). Thus, character refers to a series of knowledge (cognitives), attitudes (attitudes), and motivations (motivations), as well as behaviors (behaviors) and skills. (Nofiaturrahmah, 2014). Sanudin Ranam in his research (Ranam et al., 2021) revealed that Islamic boarding schools are both formal and informal learning places that can significantly change the character of students through the habits they develop while studying at Islamic boarding schools. Character education is an effort

made to educate someone that can help shape/strengthen a person's character, carried out in the family, school, and environmental environments by utilizing learning media. Islamic boarding schools are considered suitable places to form character education, but their character values are not adapted to the specific conditions of Islamic boarding schools and their application is still general. This study offers the implementation of specific character values that are characteristic of Islamic boarding schools (Absori et al., 2024; Maarif et al., 2020).

This study aims to identify gaps in previous research on character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). This study raises two questions. First, how is character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools? This question focuses on analyzing character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools. Second, how is character education implemented from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools? This question focuses on analyzing the implementation of character education from the perspective of Islamic boarding schools.

This research is necessary because Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) play a crucial role in shaping students' character, particularly in the context of character education, which is a primary focus of national development. In Indonesia, character education began to be promoted in 2010, and Islamic boarding schools are considered effective institutions in teaching noble religious and cultural values. Although numerous previous studies have examined character education in Islamic boarding schools, most have focused on cognitive and academic aspects, while emotional and spiritual aspects tend to receive less attention. A gap identified in previous research is that many studies have failed to address the distinct characteristics of each Islamic boarding school, which could influence the implementation of character education there. Most previous studies are general in nature and do not delve deeper into the implementation of character values that are characteristic of a particular Islamic boarding school. For example, although research such as that conducted by (Maulidiyah, 2023) revealed the importance of habituation in character education in Attholibiyah Islamic boarding schools, but the application of character values in other Islamic boarding schools has not been discussed in depth.

METHODS

This research was conducted at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, with the consideration that this institution is a madrasah within an Islamic boarding school environment and systematically integrates Islamic boarding school values into formal education, particularly in the development of students' morals and character education. The selection of this location was based on three main reasons, namely: (1) MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng has strong and consistent characteristics of Islamic boarding school-based education; (2) this institution has structured and sustainable character education policies and programs; and (3) the availability of data access and openness of the school in supporting the implementation of the research. Thus, this location is considered relevant and representative for studying the implementation of Islamic boarding school-based character education in depth. Students are trained to develop characters consistent with the basic principles of Islamic boarding schools and are expected to produce the best students. To achieve optimal results, this research employed qualitative research with a case study approach (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Moleong, 1989). To obtain precise and accurate data and information and to obtain results that are in accordance with what we mean, it is necessary to choose the right method.

Several data collection methods that will be used in this study are as follows: observation, interviews, and documentation. Interviews were conducted using a structured interview method, conducted by the researcher with informants in the study, namely the Principal, Vice Principal for Curriculum, Vice Principal for Student Affairs, and students at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng with the aim of digging in depth information related to the planning, implementation, and evaluation

of Islamic boarding school-based character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. Therefore, the research time was relatively long, approximately five months. After various data were collected, the next step was the analysis process using descriptive analysis techniques, namely the researcher attempted to re-analyze the data that had been collected (Andewi, 2023; Jaya, 2020). Data analysis in this study includes data reduction, data display, and verification. In this study, the author used data validity testing with triangulation techniques to test the credibility of the data and gain greater confidence in the research results. By comparing data obtained from various sources and using various data collection techniques, the researcher was able to ensure the validity and reliability of the collected data (Yin, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Character Education from the Perspective of Islamic Boarding Schools (Pesantren)

The results of this study indicate that there are five main character traits taught to students at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, which are derived from the basic principles of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School. These five principles are honesty, responsibility, hard work, discipline, and tolerance. As explained by the Principal of the Madrasah:

"At the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, there are five basic principles first taught by the founder of the boarding school, Hadratus Syaikh KH. Hasyim Asyari. These five principles must be taught to students at all institutions under the auspices of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, including MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng."

In addition to these five characters, MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah also teaches several additional characters. These characters are tailored to the needs and values upheld within the madrasah. Each character taught plays a crucial role in developing quality students with noble morals. As explained by one of the educators, Iskandar:

"There are many character traits we teach besides these five basic principles. For example, the character of love for the madrasah, which can be taught by taking care of the existing facilities, teaching students that the facilities belong to them and they must protect them".

The character values developed at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng are understood to focus on five core values: honesty, responsibility, hard work, tolerance, and discipline. Honesty is instilled through the habit of speaking and acting truthfully, both during the learning process and in students' daily lives within the Islamic boarding school. Teachers consistently instill the importance of honesty, for example, in completing assignments, taking exams, and interacting with other students. An interview with one teacher stated that *"honesty is not just taught; it must be cultivated, starting with small things like admitting mistakes and not cheating."* This statement demonstrates that honesty is understood as a fundamental character trait that forms the foundation for other character development.

The value of responsibility is taught by encouraging students to consciously carry out their duties and obligations, both as students and as part of the Islamic boarding school community. Responsibility is not only manifested in completing academic assignments but also in complying with the rules of the Islamic boarding school and the Islamic boarding school. An interview with the Deputy Head of Student Affairs explained that students are trained to be responsible through class assignments, being on duty, and participating in Islamic boarding school activities. He stated that *"children are accustomed to completing their responsibilities without constant supervision."* This demonstrates that character education is geared toward developing students' internal awareness, not merely temporary compliance or external pressure.

The character of hard work is developed by encouraging students to be diligent, serious, and persistent in their studies and other activities. Teachers motivate students to continue their efforts

even when facing academic difficulties. The Islamic boarding school environment, which demands independence and perseverance, is a supporting factor in instilling this character. One teacher stated in an interview that *"we value the process more than the outcome. As long as students are willing to try and don't give up, that reflects hard work."* This statement emphasizes that hard work is understood as a mental attitude that must be instilled from an early age, not solely the achievement of high academic grades.

The value of tolerance is also an important character developed at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, given the diverse backgrounds of the students, both in terms of culture, customs, and academic abilities. Tolerance is fostered through group study activities, discussions, and communal living at the Islamic boarding school, which requires students to respect each other and cooperate. In an interview, one teacher stated that *"children are accustomed to respecting each other, not discriminating against friends, and resolving differences through deliberation."* This demonstrates that tolerance is not merely taught as a concept, but is directly practiced in students' social lives, thus fostering mutual respect for diversity.

Meanwhile, discipline is cultivated through the practice of obeying rules, being punctual, and behaving in an orderly manner throughout all madrasah and pesantren activities. Discipline is reflected in student attendance, adherence to activity schedules, and adherence to applicable regulations. In an interview, the Madrasah Principal emphasized that *"discipline is the gateway to developing other character traits, because without discipline, other values are difficult to implement."* This statement demonstrates that discipline is positioned as a key characteristic that underpins the success of character education overall. With consistent practice, students are expected to carry this discipline not only within the school environment but also throughout their lives in society.

Table 1: Summary of Character Education from the Perspective of Islamic Boarding Schools (Study at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng)

No.	Core Character	Source of Pesantren Values	Forms of Implementation
1	Honesty	Fundamental principles of Pesantren Tebuireng	Habituation of truthful speech and actions; honesty in assignments, examinations, and daily interactions
2	Responsibility	Fundamental principles of Pesantren Tebuireng	Fulfillment of academic duties, classroom responsibilities, and participation in madrasah and pesantren activities
3	Hard Work	Fundamental principles of Pesantren Tebuireng	Perseverance in learning, diligence in completing tasks, and resilience in facing academic challenges
4	Tolerance	Fundamental principles of Pesantren Tebuireng	Group work, discussions, and communal life that foster respect for differences
5	Discipline	Fundamental principles of Pesantren Tebuireng	Compliance with rules, punctuality, and orderly behavior in all school and pesantren activities
6	Love for the Madrasah	Locally developed madrasah values	Maintaining school facilities, environmental cleanliness, and fostering a sense of ownership

Based on table 1, determining the focus of character development is very important to support the instillation of Islamic boarding school-based character education values while still paying attention to the characteristics of each Islamic boarding school and instilling a love for the madrasah.

Implementation of Character Education

Understanding the importance of character education in Islamic boarding schools is crucial. One way to instill and develop character in students is through consistency from each teacher. As the Deputy Head of Student Affairs explained:

"One inhibiting factor is the consistency of the teachers. For example, if all teachers arrive on time, I'm sure no students will be late. Each teacher always reminds students about the importance of good behavior and corrects any mistakes. If teachers are inconsistent, students will assume their actions are correct."

MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah is located within an Islamic boarding school complex, which is a supporting factor in the implementation of Islamic boarding school-based character education, as conveyed by the Deputy Head of Curriculum:

"Because our madrasah is under the auspices of an Islamic boarding school (pesantren), the priority is on etiquette. The legacy is the traditions of the pesantren that were previously unknown to students, such as how students behave towards teachers and how to use the facilities at the school and the pesantren. These factors support pesantren-based character education in our madrasah."

Traditions within pesantren have historical value and local wisdom that have been passed down from generation to generation. These traditions are an important part of shaping the character and identity of the students.

Data obtained by researchers through interviews, observations, and documentation shows that the implementation of pesantren-based character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is divided into three stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. This was conveyed by the Deputy Head of Curriculum:

"Before we implemented pesantren-based character education, we first prepared everything that needed to be done. In the implementation process, we divided it into three stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation."

The implementation stages of character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng demonstrate that character education is systematically implemented through three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. The planning stage is the initial foundation for ensuring that character education is not sporadic but rather structured and directed. At this stage, the madrasah develops a character education program that is integrated into teaching and learning activities and various other school activities. Character values are formulated and aligned with the pesantren's vision, the madrasah curriculum, and the needs of students. An interview with the Madrasah Principal explained that the character education plan "does not stand alone, but is integrated with the existing curriculum and culture of the pesantren." This demonstrates that character education is designed as an integral part of the madrasah's education system, not as an additional program separate from the main learning process.

The implementation stage represents the realization of the developed plan. At this stage, character education is implemented directly in various contexts, including in the classroom, extracurricular activities, and in the students' daily lives within the pesantren. Teachers play a central role as the primary implementers of character education through role models, instilling habits, and reinforcing values in the learning process. An interview with the Vice Principal for Student Affairs revealed that character education is "more effective when students see direct examples from teachers and the environment, rather than simply hearing explanations in class." This statement emphasizes that character is not simply taught conceptually; it must be experienced and practiced by students

repeatedly. Extracurricular activities, group work, and Islamic boarding school routines are strategic tools for instilling values such as discipline, responsibility, tolerance, and hard work in a contextualized manner.

The evaluation stage is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of character education implementation. Evaluation is not conducted solely through written tests, but also through observation of student behavior, teacher reflection, and feedback from the students themselves. Each teacher maintains records of student character development obtained from daily interactions, both inside and outside the classroom. One teacher stated in an interview that *"character assessment is carried out continuously, not just at the end of the semester, because character develops over time."* Furthermore, students are involved in the reflection process through peer assessment and class discussions. This holistic evaluation approach allows the madrasah to continuously monitor students' character development and make program improvements as needed. Thus, character education does not stop at the implementation stage but is continuously refined through reflective and participatory evaluation.

During the planning stage, as explained above, teachers specifically identify the character values to be taught to students. These values originate directly from the founder of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, KH. Hasyim Asyari, and are then passed on to the boarding school administrators to be instilled in the students. As the Deputy Head of Student Affairs explained: *"Because our madrasah is under the auspices of a boarding school, we break down these values from the boarding school leadership, who serves as role models in both words and actions."*

Islamic boarding schools are considered highly effective in developing character education due to their 24-hour educational system, where students live on campus and engage in learning, worship, and other activities around the clock. One approach used at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is to integrate character education into subjects to ensure that character education is carried out in a focused and integrated manner within the curriculum. Each teacher is responsible for incorporating character values into their teaching modules. Furthermore, the use of teaching modules that incorporate character values helps teachers direct learning and ensure that character education goals are achieved. As stated by the Deputy Head of Curriculum: *"Since the beginning of character education, character has not only been taught in specific subjects, but has been integrated into all subjects, not solely the responsibility of the morality teacher or guidance counselor."*

In interviews, it was revealed that MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah uses two national curricula. Each curriculum contains guidelines for instilling character in students, which serve as a reference for implementing character education at the madrasah. The teachers specifically identified the character values to be taught to students, which originated directly from the founder of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, KH. Hasyim Asyari, and were then passed on to the Islamic boarding school administrators to be instilled in the students. The Deputy Head of Student Affairs explained: *"Because our madrasah is under the auspices of a pesantren, we incorporate the teachings of the pesantren leadership, who serve not only as examples in words but also in actions."*

In the implementation phase, character is taught from the moment students first enter the madrasah. The Head of Madrasah explained:

"From the Madrasah Student Introduction Period (Matsama), students are introduced to character education. The implementation of character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah originates directly from the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School. The character traits instilled in students come from the instructions of the Islamic boarding school administrators."

Character education can be taught both inside and outside the classroom by setting good examples. As the Deputy Head of Student Affairs stated: *"Character education cannot simply be*

taught." Character is transmitted through example, and students tend to understand character better through visuals, because they can directly imitate it.

By integrating character education into all subjects, MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah ensures that character formation is not limited to religious studies, but also permeates all aspects of education. As the Principal stated: *"Character education is also incorporated into the subject matter, for example in the subject of morals, where the teaching material is aligned with the scriptures and incorporated into the lesson plan."*

In character assessments, teachers record various aspects of character relevant to learning activities and daily interactions at school as a form of evaluation of the implementation of character education. For example, attitudes of cooperation, responsibility, discipline, initiative, honesty, and caring. Teachers provide assessments based on observations and interactions with students' behavior in the context of learning and daily life. The Principal emphasized: Assessments at this madrasah are of two types: academic and non-academic. Academic assessment is clearly based on students' understanding of the material, while non-academic assessment refers to the rules of santri that apply in Islamic boarding schools and madrasas. At MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah, students are given the right to assess the character of their classmates, which is part of an effort to provide a more objective character assessment and involve active student participation in the assessment process. As conveyed by the Deputy Head of Curriculum: *"Students are also given the opportunity to assess the character of their friends because of the interaction between students which is quite intense, they understand their friends' nature better, especially in group work activities or projects."* This approach creates a more inclusive, mutually supportive, and responsible environment in character development at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah.

DISCUSSION

Character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is directed toward developing students who are not only cognitively superior but also possess strong personalities and morals. This educational orientation places character at the core of the entire educational process, not merely a supplement or additional subject. Values such as honesty, responsibility, hard work, discipline, and tolerance are not taught fragmentarily but are instilled throughout all learning activities and the students' daily lives within the Islamic boarding school environment. Thus, the Islamic boarding school serves not only as a space for the transfer of knowledge but also as a space for the internalization of values that shape students' attitudes and behaviors in a sustainable manner. This holistic approach is relevant to the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasizes a balance between intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence. In this context, Islamic boarding schools are strategic environments due to their strong religious culture, ongoing development systems, and intense social relationships between educators and students. All of these elements enable the character-building process to occur naturally, consistently, and contextually within students' daily lives.

The concept of character education applied at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is in line with Thomas Lickona's view, which defines character as an inner disposition that encourages a person to respond to situations morally and responsibly (Lickona, 2022). This definition emphasizes that character is not just knowledge about values, but rather habits of action that are formed through a long-term habituation process (Glăveanu, 2012; Tanszil, 2018). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, these habits are reflected through worship routines, time discipline, social interactions based on ethics, and the exemplary behavior of Islamic boarding school educators and caretakers (Irfani et al., 2025; Nasruddin, 2026). This structured, religiously nuanced environment provides ample space for the consistent internalization of values. Students are not only encouraged to understand moral concepts but also trained to practice them in various real-life situations. Thus, character education

does not stop at the normative level but develops into an ingrained attitude within the students. This strengthens the argument that Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) are an effective educational model for building character because they simultaneously integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions.

The success of character education in Islamic boarding schools is also largely determined by the strength of a supportive social and cultural environment. Islamic boarding schools have a unique value system, such as brotherhood (*ukhuwah*), simplicity (Arif, 2024), obedience, and respect for moral authority, which directly shape the behavior of students. These values are not only taught through lectures or advice, but are also brought to life through daily practices directly experienced by students. The intense interaction between students, teachers, and *kyai* (Islamic religious leaders) creates a personal and sustainable educational relationship. In this context, the *kyai* and teachers serve as moral role models (Abdullah, 2014), serving as primary references for students in their attitudes and actions. This exemplary behavior has a powerful influence because students directly witness the consistency between the words and actions of educators. Therefore, character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng relies not only on the formal curriculum but also on the Islamic boarding school culture (Pribadi, 2014), which creates a conducive educational climate for the comprehensive moral and spiritual development of students.

The implementation of character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is carried out systematically through three main stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation (Arif et al., 2023). During the planning stage, the madrasah formulates the character values to be developed, referring to the national character education policy established by the Ministry of Education and Culture. These values are then integrated into the madrasah curriculum, both in religious and general subjects. This integration demonstrates that character education is not positioned as the exclusive domain of a particular subject (Abrori et al., 2024), but rather is the responsibility of all teachers and the entire learning process. Careful planning allows for alignment between the objectives of character education and the learning strategies used. Furthermore, this planning also takes into account the characteristics of the students and the socio-cultural context of the Islamic boarding school, ensuring that the values instilled are relevant to students' real lives. Therefore, character education is designed not to be abstract, but rather contextual and applicable.

During the implementation phase, character values are internalized through various learning methods and students' daily activities. Teachers not only convey material cognitively but also instill values through role models, habituation, and positive reinforcement. Characters such as honesty and responsibility, for example, are instilled through an evaluation system that emphasizes academic honesty, while discipline and hard work are cultivated through adherence to madrasah rules and consistent completion of assignments (Nurizah & Amrullah, 2024). The integration of character values into general subjects demonstrates that each discipline has the potential to shape students' attitudes and behavior. Furthermore, the teacher's role as a behavioral model is a key factor in the success of this implementation phase. When teachers are able to demonstrate attitudes that align with the values being taught, students are more likely to understand and emulate those character traits. Thus, learning becomes an effective means of building character in a tangible and sustainable way (Arif, 2025).

The integration of character education is also reflected in various non-academic activities organized by the Islamic boarding school (madrasah) (Agus et al., 2023). Activities such as group work, collaborative projects, and extracurricular activities serve as strategic channels for instilling the values of tolerance, cooperation, and leadership. In these activities, students learn to navigate differences, resolve conflicts constructively, and take responsibility for shared tasks. This hands-on experience has a stronger impact than purely theoretical learning, as students are actively involved in the character-building process. The Islamic boarding school environment, which emphasizes communal living, reinforces this process, as students become accustomed to living together and

interdependent on one another. Thus, character education occurs not only in the classroom but also throughout the Islamic boarding school's life. This demonstrates that character is formed through authentic and repeated social experiences (Jesica Dwi Rahmayanti & Muhamad Arif, 2021).

Evaluation of character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng is conducted using a holistic and continuous approach. Assessment focuses not only on cognitive learning outcomes but also on the development of students' attitudes and behaviors in various contexts. Each teacher maintains specific records regarding student character development, obtained through daily observations, both inside and outside the classroom. These notes serve as the basis for providing more objective and comprehensive character assessments. This approach allows madrasas to continuously monitor students' character development and provide appropriate interventions if inappropriate behavior is detected. This formative evaluation emphasizes that character education is a long-term process that requires consistency and the involvement of all parties. Therefore, character assessment is not punitive, but educational and nurturing.

Student involvement in the character evaluation process is one of the interesting practices implemented at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. Students are given the opportunity to assess the character of their classmates in the context of group work or joint projects. This practice not only increases the objectivity of assessments but also trains students to be honest, fair, and responsible in assessing others. Furthermore, student involvement in character evaluations fosters a culture of reflection and mutual encouragement within the learning community (Pearson, 2023). Students become more aware that character is not just a personal matter but also impacts the social environment. Thus, character evaluation serves not only as a measuring tool but also as a means of learning about character itself. This participatory approach strengthens the internalization of values and creates an inclusive and collaborative educational climate.

Overall, character education at MTs. The Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng school demonstrates that Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) possess structural and cultural advantages in shaping students' character. The integration of character values into the curriculum, learning, social environment, and evaluation system ensures a holistic and sustainable character education process. This success is inseparable from the role of educators, the pesantren culture, and the active involvement of students in the learning and evaluation process (Maarif et al., 2023). This character education model is relevant as a reference for other educational institutions, particularly in the context of strengthening character amidst increasingly complex social and moral challenges. By placing character as the foundation of education, madrasas not only produce intelligent students but also individuals with morals, responsibility, and readiness to contribute positively to community life.

In the future, character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng needs to be directed toward strengthening character that is responsive to global challenges and modern developments, without abandoning the core values of Islamic boarding schools. One strategic idea is to integrate character education with digital literacy and media ethics. In the era of digital transformation, students are not only required to develop good character within the physical Islamic boarding school environment, but also in the virtual world. The values of honesty, responsibility, and tolerance need to be translated into social media practices, the use of information technology, and ethical digital interactions. Islamic boarding schools can develop a digital ethics-based character curriculum that remains grounded in Islamic values and Islamic boarding school traditions. Thus, character education is not defensive against modernity, but rather adaptive and contextual (Loka et al., 2022). This approach will broaden the relevance of Islamic boarding school character education in shaping a generation of students who are both morally upright and technologically literate, enabling them to contribute positively in an increasingly complex and global social space.

Furthermore, strengthening character education in the future can be achieved through broader collaboration between the Islamic boarding school, parents, and the community. Character education

will not be optimal if it occurs only in the school or Islamic boarding school environment, without continuity at home and in the community. Therefore, it is necessary to design a character education partnership model that involves parents and community leaders in the character development process. Pesantren-based parenting programs, character communication forums, and social activities can serve as a means for broader internalization of values. Through this approach, values such as social awareness, empathy, and social responsibility are not only learned theoretically but also directly practiced in community life. Going forward, pesantren can also serve as centers for the development of community-based character education, impacting not only students but also the surrounding social environment. This will strengthen the position of pesantren as agents of values-based social change.

From a scientific perspective, future research on character education in Islamic boarding schools needs to be directed at measuring its long-term (longitudinal) impact on the lives of alumni. Further research can examine the extent to which the character values instilled in Islamic boarding schools influence alumni leadership attitudes, work ethics, and social responsibility in society. Furthermore, the development of more standardized and contextualized character evaluation instruments is also an urgent need, so that character assessments are not merely subjective but have a strong academic basis. Going forward, Islamic boarding school character education has the potential to be developed into a national and even international model, particularly in the context of values-based and spiritual education (Shiddiq et al., 2024). By strengthening innovation, collaboration, and ongoing research, Islamic boarding schools can become a primary reference in the development of holistic, relevant, and sustainable character education in the future (Bridges, 2000).

The novelty of this research lies in the integrative and participatory approach to Islamic boarding school-based character education implemented at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng, where character education is positioned not only as curriculum content or normative activities, but as a value system that is thoroughly internalized through planning, implementation, and evaluation involving the entire educational ecosystem. Different from previous research that tends to emphasize role models or general habits, this study demonstrates the novelty of a holistic, sustainable, and participatory character evaluation mechanism, including student involvement in peer character assessment as an instrument of moral learning. Furthermore, this research enriches the study of character education by showcasing the integration of Islamic boarding school values into all subjects and activities of the madrasah, so that character is not fragmented in the cognitive or affective domains alone, but develops as a contextual and applicable life practice. These findings provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of an adaptive, measurable, and relevant model of Islamic boarding school-based character education to meet the challenges of contemporary education (Darlan et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

The character values taught to students at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng Jombang are derived directly from the founder of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. These five values are honesty, responsibility, hard work, tolerance, and discipline, as outlined in the Five Basic Principles of the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School. The implementation of Islamic boarding school-based character education at MTs. Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng Jombang is carried out both inside and outside the classroom and is divided into three stages: planning, which involves identifying the character to be taught and developing teaching modules containing the character values; implementation, which involves character education learning activities; and evaluation, which involves assessing student character and assessing the effectiveness of character education.

This research aims to contribute and serve as a reference in the world of education, particularly in the field of character education, both in the process of instilling character in students and in the learning process that develops student character. Implementation is not solely focused on application

but must go through three stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. To ensure that character education from an Islamic perspective truly aligns with national education goals, a limitation of this study that needs to be addressed for further study is that the primary focus of this study was limited to only one institution, namely MTs Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Tebuireng. Therefore, these findings cannot be broadly generalized to the context of character education in other Islamic boarding schools. Furthermore, although the qualitative approach provides an in-depth overview of the dynamics of character education, not all character strengthening indicators can be measured qualitatively or standardized. Therefore, it is recommended that further research use mixed methods and involve more institutions to obtain stronger generalizations of the findings, as well as formulate more structured and objective indicators of character education from an Islamic boarding school perspective.

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