CHARACTER EDUCATION TO ENHANCE SANTRI’S SELF CONTROL: IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract
This study aimed to analyze the implementation and associated challenges of character education in Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School, with a specific focus on its integration into the curriculum. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative methodology, the research involved a thorough examination of educational practices, guided by data collected through document analysis, observations, and semi-structured interviews with teachers and students. The data analysis, conducted through thematic analysis, shed light on how character education is structured and the myriad challenges that emerge in its execution. Key findings reveal that while Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School adopts a comprehensive approach to character education, encompassing learning, habituation, and practice, it concurrently grapples with significant hurdles. These include the scarcity of qualified educators proficient in both academic and moral teachings, the need to balance academic rigor with moral values, cultural influences affecting educational practices, and the complexities of engaging students and assessing moral development effectively. These insights not only highlight the intricacies of embedding character education in Islamic boarding schools but also underscore the necessity for tailored strategies to surmount these challenges, thereby contributing valuable perspectives to the field of educational research.

Keywords: Character Education, Islamic Boarding School, Curriculum Integration, Implementation Challenges

Abstrak
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi dan tantangan yang terkait dengan pendidikan karakter di Pondok Pesantren Al-Mukmin, dengan fokus khusus pada integrasinya ke dalam kurikulum. Dengan menggunakan metodologi kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini melibatkan pemeriksaan menyeluruh terhadap praktik pendidikan, yang dipandu oleh data yang dikumpulkan melalui analisis dokumen, observasi, dan wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan para guru dan siswa. Analisis data yang dilakukan melalui analisis tematik, menjelaskan bagaimana pendidikan karakter disusun dan berbagai tantangan yang muncul dalam pelaksanaannya. Temuan utama mengungkapkan bahwa
meskipun Pondok Pesantren Al-Mukmin mengadopsi pendekatan yang komprehensif terhadap pendidikan karakter, yang mencakup pembelajaran, pembiasaan, dan praktik, namun pada saat yang sama juga menghadapi berbagai rintangan yang signifikan. Hal ini termasuk kelangkaan tenaga pendidik yang berkualitas yang mahir dalam bidang akademik dan moral, kebutuhan untuk menyeimbangkan antara ketelitian akademis dengan nilai-nilai moral, pengaruh budaya yang mempengaruhi praktik pendidikan, dan kompleksitas dalam melibatkan siswa dan menilai perkembangan moral secara efektif. Wawasan-wawasan ini tidak hanya menyoroti seluk-beluk penanaman pendidikan karakter di pesantren, tetapi juga menggarisbawahi perlunya strategi yang disesuaikan untuk mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini, sehingga memberikan kontribusi perspektif yang berharga bagi bidang penelitian pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Karakter, Pesantren, Integrasi Kurikulum, Tantangan Implementasi

Education is a determinant of a nation's quality (Arbi, 2018; Hasan & Nurhayati, 2012; S. Nurhayati, 2021b; Sri Nurhayati, 2024; Sulisworo, 2016). The assessment of a country's quality index is determined by its degree of education (Gerged & Elheddad, 2020; Iskandar et al., 2023; Musa et al., 2022; Nur’aeni et al., 2023; S. Nurhayati, 2023). According to data published by Worldtop20.org, Indonesia's education ranking in 2023 is 67th out of 203 countries worldwide. Formulating a clear vision, objective, and goals is vital to enhance the focus and attainability of our instruction. Indonesia's National Development Vision 2005-2025 aims to create a self-reliant, highly developed, fair, and wealthy Indonesia. The mission of developing noble, moral, ethical, cultured, and civilized individuals based on the concept of Pancasila should be actualized (Jarkasih & Nurhayati, 2023; Muslimah et al., 2023; Suharyat, Nurhayati, Januliawati, et al., 2023; Taufik & Nurhayati, 2023).

Educational institutions have a crucial part in fostering the development of one’s character (Badawi et al., 2020; S. Nurhayati, 2015; Rosita et al., 2020; Sandro & Nurhayati, 2023; Suharyat, Nurhayati, Rohmat, et al., 2023). The duty of educators is to enhance the character of students (Ali et al., 2022; S. Nurhayati, 2021a; Suharyat, Nurhayati, Januliawati, et al., 2023). Meanwhile, it is imperative for Muslim educators to regard the Prophet Muhammad as an exemplary figure, given his possession of the most commendable character traits (Sari et al., 2022; Syafaruddin & Lubis, 2022). The education curriculum must adhere to the requirements set by the law and the
principles of national education in order to create high-caliber graduates. The quality of education is determined by two primary factors: academic excellence and ethical conduct. Nevertheless, the present state appears to be well below anticipated standards. From a scientific perspective, a significant number of our graduates lack adequate abilities, resulting in the need to rely on other experts. Regarding behavior, the occurrence of adolescent delinquency continues to be prevalent in numerous news outlets (Arif & Nurhayati, 2024; Cholifah et al., 2023; Setiadi et al., 2023). Education ought to own the capability to make a greater impact, including on the overall well-being of the entire nation in the future, by enhancing its quality and production (Noor & Nurhayati, 2023a; E. Nurhayati & Nurhayati, 2023; S. Nurhayati et al., 2021; Nurmaawati et al., 2021; Rohaeti & Nurhayati, 2023; Sholihah & Nurhayati, 2022; Sudrajat et al., 2021; Sulastri & Nurhayati, 2023; Sunari & Nurhayati, 2023).

Globalization engenders a universal culture that amplifies the intricacy of challenges. The process of globalization has both beneficial and detrimental effects on the Indonesian population (Rosita et al., 2020; Sulaimawan & Nurhayati, 2023; Tiarawati et al., 2023). The prevalence of rationality and secular-materialism in Western societies has exerted an influence on Eastern countries, such as Indonesia, who have retained their ancestral customs and culture, emphasizing the importance of tradition and religious spirituality (Hammad & Shah, 2018). This fact poses a significant obstacle for the field of education in the present era (Gondiawati & Nurhayati, 2024; Noor & Nurhayati, 2023b; Samrin, 2016; Suharto et al., 2021; Suharyat et al., 2022).

The erosion of the ethical standards and personal qualities of the nation’s youngsters has become a matter of concern for those with a vested interest in their well-being (Cholifah et al., 2023; I. I. Hidayat et al., 2024; Saputra et al., 2022; Sulastri & Nurhayati, 2023). Combined with the demeanour of officials who undergo ethical deterioration. For instance, reports have emerged regarding the mistreatment of residents and pupils by the offspring of government officials. One of them possessed the same level of knowledge and authority as his father, who was a security official (tribunnews, 2023). Without a doubt, it is universally acknowledged that a fundamental aspect of education is the cultivation of virtuous character (Arif & Nurhayati, 2024; Kartika et al., 2020; Nursa’adah et al., 2022; Rumsari & Nurhayati, 2020). An individual will find greater ease in engaging with those who possess strong moral values as opposed to those who are intellectually gifted but lack moral principles. The current generation’s societal turmoil has prompted numerous conjectures and alternative solutions. Stakeholders engaged in a trial and error process when attempting to modify concepts and curriculum (S. Nurhayati et al., 2021; Ulfah et al., 2023). Irrespective of the endeavour to surmount the issue or the mere implementation of a new minister’s agenda. Diverse
approaches are employed to enhance the calibre of education in Indonesia.

Adian Husaini disclosed that the discourse surrounding the significance of character or adab is not, in fact, novel (Husaini, 2013). This can be observed in the scholarly works on adab, such as al-Adab al-Dunya wa al-Dīn by Imam al-Mawardi, al- Adab fī al-Dīn by Imam al-Ghazali, adab al-Insān by Sayyid Uthman ibn Yahya, al-Tibyan fī Adab Hamalat al-Qur’an by Imam Nawawi, Adab al-‘Alim wa al-muta'allim by K.H. Hasyim Asy’ari, and al-Adab al-mufrad by Imam al-Bukhari. The topic of adab was also brought up by Muslim intellectuals, particularly Prof. Naquib al-Attas, during the 1977 international conference on Islamic Education in Makkah. Arguing that the fundamental cause of the current predicament experienced by Muslims is the erosion of adab. Undoubtedly, our present state necessitates a greater emphasis on education and discourse around etiquette (‘Ali, 2018; Jarkasih & Nurhayati, 2023).

The preceding depiction highlights the imperative nature of character education for Indonesian society, drawing upon the wealth of Islamic principles and Indonesian cultural heritage (Anugrahwanto & Nurhayati, 2020; Heryanti & Nurhayati, 2023; S. Nurhayati et al., 2023; Rozi & Hasanah, 2021; Usiono et al., 2022). From a legal perspective, it is highly suitable for our education system to focus on fostering piety and cultivating noble character. Article 3 of Law No. 20/2003 (dpr.go.id website) states that the aim of national education is to cultivate students' potential to become individuals who are loyal and devoted to God Almighty, possess virtuous qualities, maintain good health, acquire knowledge, demonstrate capability and creativity, exhibit independence, and ultimately become democratic and responsible citizens. According to Article 31, Paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution, the government is required to establish and manage a national education system that promotes religious devotion, moral excellence, and virtuous behaviour. This system aims to educate the citizens of the nation and is subject to regulation by law.

The school curriculum should facilitate and enhance the moral and ethical qualities of every individual who is both the recipient and focus of education (Muslimah et al., 2023; Sakerani et al., 2019; Syah, 2019). Character education has become a highly favourable option for parents seeking to support their children's growth and development. This is exemplified by the occurrence of parents enrolling their children in schools with distinct religious attributes instead of public or tuition-free public institutions (Juhana & Nurhayati, 2023; S. Nurhayati, 2021a; Vibriyanthy & Fauziah, 2014; Widyawati & Nurhayati, 2023).

The character education method fosters the development of positive habits that lead to the cultivation of self-control in individuals. The pervasive criminality is inherently linked to an individual's lack of self-regulation. An individual who engages in theft due to their inability to resist due to
financial deprivation, hence compelling them to appropriate the belongings of others. Self-control refers to an individual's capacity to consciously regulate their own actions and restrain any bad inclinations, enabling them to effectively manage and respond to incoming stimuli in a positive manner. An individual who possesses self-control would willingly adhere to and comply with the established norms and regulations, so ensuring that their life aligns harmoniously with the prevailing societal standards. Nevertheless, this is a complex issue that necessitates a structured system of instruction and a conducive atmosphere. An individual with strong self-discipline is more likely to exhibit proactive behaviour by actively selecting positive options and developing a well-defined life strategy for improvement.

Initiatives to address juvenile delinquency should commence at an early stage, focusing on imparting family education and character education to youngsters of school age (Juliasih et al., 2022; Mulyati & Nurhayati, 2020; Musa et al., 2020; Rahayu & Nurhayati, 2023; Ratningsih et al., 2021; Yuliya et al., 2020). Character education will influence the development of children's personality traits, which will then manifest in their daily actions and behaviours. Nur Ghufron stated that individuals with commendable character will exhibit self-discipline or self-restraint. Self-control refers to an individual's capacity to identify and manage their own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It can be cultivated and improved to effectively navigate various situations and adhere to established standards and conventions. The purpose of this study is to provide a description of the implementation of character education at Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki Sukoharjo serves as a means to cultivate self-discipline among students. This pesantren, founded in 1974, is renowned for its disciplined and combative students, making it a captivating subject for studying the implementation of character education.

METHOD
The research used descriptive qualitative research methods. The selection of this qualitative research approach was based on the priority of gaining a comprehensive understanding of a specific topic, rather than focusing on generalizing the findings (Iswahyudi et al., 2023). This research is classified as field research and was carried out in Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki Sukoharjo. The research site was selected because of the pesantren's longstanding establishment and its intricate structure. The focus of the study is the managers and instructional personnel, with particular emphasis on the queue area. The data collection methods employed in this study encompassed interviews, observation, and documentation. The data collecting tools consisted of interview guidelines and observation instructions. The validity of the data was assessed by the use of triangulation procedures, which are based on Moleong's theory. The
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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1) Implementation of Character Education in Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School

Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki is a boarding school located in the northern region of Sukoharjo. The story of this boarding school is remarkable as it is recognized as a pioneering institution, necessitating the enhancement of the current system. In order to achieve the Pancasila student profile mandated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, it is necessary to integrate the existing boarding school curriculum with the independent curriculum. There has been a significant amount of indirect news related to the al-Mukmin Ngruki boarding school, nevertheless, this boarding school has undergone modifications over time. In 2022, the state apparatus and al-Mukmin Ngruki boarding school organized a flag celebration to demonstrate their nationality.

Pondok Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki Sukoharjo, being an established pesantren, has been home to professors who serve as excellent role models for the pupils. Furthermore, the incorporation of ethical principles into the curriculum and the courses taught seeks to cultivate pupils with a resolute and dedicated demeanor. Moral development encompasses adherence to the moral principles prescribed by Allah and His Messenger, as well as the cultivation of moral conduct towards others, oneself, and the environment. The competency map of Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki Sukoharjo can be characterized as follows.

![Character Education Competency Map in Al Mukmin Islamic boarding schools](image)

Figure 1. Character Education Competency Map in Al Mukmin Islamic boarding schools
The curriculum of Pesantren al-Mukmin Ngruki Sukoharjo includes character education, which is outlined in the competency map. The execution of the competency map comprises three components, namely learning, habituation, and practice. The learning aspect encompasses proficiency in intelligent language usage, intelligent language comprehension, intelligent scientific understanding, intelligent general knowledge acquisition, intelligent comprehension of complex texts, intelligent analytical skills, intelligent deductive reasoning, proficiency in information technology, and a scientific mindset. The features of training and habituation encompass various disciplines such as worship, composure, work ethic, punctuality, proficiency in production and sports, domestic skills, life skills, healthy lifestyle, physical fitness, ethical conduct, empathy towards others, and environmental and personal hygiene. In terms of learning and practice, it is important to engage in diligent fasting and almsgiving, such as practicing sunnah charity. Additionally, one should strive to pray correctly, show kindness towards parents (birrul walidain), maintain good communication skills, such as through preaching, and possess the ability to lead prayers. It is also crucial to engage in diligent recitation and read the Qur’an with proper intonation (tartil). Lastly, a comprehensive understanding of the fiqh of worship is essential (as documented in al-Mukmin, Ngruki).

The character education competence map in Pondok Al Mukmin encompasses various intricate features. The competencies taught and ingrained in the cottage will result in the development of broad moral values, encompassing devotion to Allah SWT, consideration for fellow humans, and care for the environment. Once the kids have internalized character traits or moral values, they will develop into individuals who possess self-discipline and self-restraint. A person who possesses good character (akhlaqul karīmah) will positively influence the environment. This is because good character has evolved into a mechanism of self-regulation for santri. The capacity for self-control is anticipated to significantly impact educational outcomes that yield advantages in several aspects of life, including the familial context as well as the broader society and nation.

2) Challenges of Integrating Character Education in the Education Curriculum

The task of incorporating character education into the education curriculum is arduous. Several variables influence the successful execution of it. Included in the group are the following:

a. Insufficient resources and a shortage of qualified educators. Proficient instructors are necessary for the implementation of etiquette and ethics. These instructors possess a profound comprehension of Islamic beliefs and principles, particularly in the realm of morals.

b. Integration necessitates a harmonious combination of
Character Education To Enhance Scholastic Advancement and the Cultivation of Character and Moral Values. Educational institutions and boarding schools must strike a delicate equilibrium between the pursuit of academic disciplines and the cultivation of moral values. The introduction of the National Education Curriculum and the unique attributes of internal schools necessitate modifications to academic benchmarks, while simultaneously posing a potential hazard of overlooking moral growth facets. It is crucial to allocate and modify the curricular framework to foster the growth of etiquette and ethics while maintaining high academic standards.

c. Cultural impacts on society. Educational institutions function within the framework of varied cultures and societies. The prevailing beliefs and conventions in the society may not align with the Islamic principles of etiquette. This effect is a formidable task due to its inherent nature. It is imperative to ensure that etiquette and ethical growth align with Islamic principles while also showing respect for local traditions and customs.

d. Involving the active engagement of students. The cultivation of etiquette and ethical principles necessitates the proactive engagement and participation of pupils. Educators must employ novel and interactive pedagogical approaches to render adab and moral development pertinent and captivating to students. It is necessary to do evaluation and assessment. Evaluating the efficacy of manners’ development is somewhat challenging. Unlike academic disciplines, which can be quantified through standardized evaluations, manners require a more comprehensive and subjective method of evaluation. Islamic Education Institutions should establish suitable evaluation techniques to ascertain the moral and character progression of students.

Discussions
The study at Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School reveals a comprehensive approach to character education, one that is aligned with the Pancasila student profile. This approach integrates religious values with national identity, as evidenced by the boarding school’s flag celebration, signaling a progressive adaptation within traditional Islamic education frameworks. The competency map underscores a multifaceted educational model encompassing intellectual, physical, and spiritual growth. The emphasis on moral values – towards Allah, the Prophet, oneself, and the environment – mirrors the Islamic holistic view of education. Existing literature corroborates the importance of character education in Islamic boarding schools (Madrasahs and Pesantrens), where moral development is often interwoven with religious teachings (Anam &
Setyawan, 2019; Jarkasih & Nurhayati, 2023; Suharyat, Nurhayati, Rohmat, et al., 2023). The findings resonate with this body of work, suggesting that such institutions can serve as exemplars in integrating character education within broader educational curricula. Amirullah Syarbini (2012) explains that the term "character" originates from the Latin words kharakter, kharassein, and kharax, which respectively denote instruments for crafting, engraving, and pointed stakes. Originally adopted in the 14th century in French with the term "caracteur," it subsequently made its way into the English language. According to Amirullah Syarbini (2012), it undergoes a transformation into "character" before ultimately becoming Indonesian "character". The term "character" in Greek refers to the process of marking, but it also encompasses the application of moral value through actions or behavior (Priyanto, 2020). Other terms frequently employed in society and closely associated with the concept of character include "character," "morals," and "behavior." Regarding the distinction in meaning among these three terms, Zubaidi stated: "The definition of ethics corresponds to the English definition, which is rendered as morality." Morality encompasses various connotations, including: a) societal norms; b) etiquette; and c) conduct. According to Ahmad Tafsir character is regarded as being equivalent to or closely related to morals (Syarbini, 2012).

In the discussion of the challenges of integrating character education into the education curriculum, the findings from Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School can be closely aligned with existing research, which provides a broader context for understanding these issues. The challenges faced by the Islamic boarding school included: 1) Resource and Educator Constraints: The scarcity of resources and qualified educators is a well-documented challenge in the realm of education (Musa et al., 2022; S. Nurhayati, 2020; Winarti et al., 2022). This is particularly true for character education, which requires instructors not only with a comprehensive understanding of Islamic moral teachings but also with the pedagogical skills to impart these lessons effectively (Al-Hawary et al., 2023). 2) Balancing Academic and Moral Education: The tension between academic and moral education is a recurrent theme in educational research. Studies have indicated that while academic success is often prioritized, the integration of character education is crucial for holistic student development (Jeynes, 2019; S. Nurhayati & Rosita, 2020). The delicate balance needed has been emphasized in recent curriculum reforms which seek to incorporate character education without compromising academic rigor. 3) Cultural Considerations: The impact of cultural norms on the implementation of character education is an area ripe for further exploration. Research has shown that societal values can either complement or conflict with educational goals (Højholt, 2022), and educational institutions must
navigate these waters carefully, respecting local customs while adhering to Islamic principles (Yosfiani & Nurhayati, 2023). 4) Student Engagement and Assessment: Engaging students in their own moral development is a challenge noted by Badawi (2020), who suggests the need for interactive and relevant pedagogical strategies. The difficulty of assessing character education is a point of contention in current literature, with researchers calling for more sophisticated and subjective evaluation methods that go beyond the scope of traditional academic assessments (Sari et al., 2022). Our findings contribute to this discourse by illustrating how these challenges manifest in a specific institutional context. For instance, the shortage of qualified educators with a deep understanding of Islamic ethics is a recurring theme in the literature (Muhtar et al., 2019), and our study highlights this as a pressing concern in the context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. Aligning these findings with the broader research landscape highlights the complexities of implementing character education in diverse educational contexts. It underscores the importance of developing resources, training educators, balancing curricular goals, respecting cultural contexts, engaging students proactively, and devising appropriate assessment methods.

The study's implications extend to policy formulation within educational ministries. An educational policy that supports the development of character education competencies, as seen in the Pesantren al-Mukmin, could serve as a model for other Islamic boarding schools. Additionally, these findings have practical implications for teacher training programs, suggesting a need for professional development that equips educators with the necessary skills to foster character development alongside academic achievement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Character education and the cultivation of manners are crucial in addressing moral decline across different domains, including adolescent criminality. Educational institutions and boarding schools recognize the significance of including character education and etiquette into the learning process. The name of the institution is Pesantren al-Mukmin. Ngruki Sukoharjo possesses a comprehensive framework for promoting character education by means of moral instruction. Moral development encompasses adherence to the moral principles prescribed by Allah and His Messenger, as well as the cultivation of moral conduct towards others, oneself, and the environment. The incorporation of character and moral education in al-Mukmin is achieved through the processes of learning, habituation, and practice. The implementation of character education integration in the education curriculum presents several challenges, such as insufficient
resources and inadequately trained educators. Integration necessitates a harmonious combination of academic advancement and the cultivation of etiquette and ethics. Additionally, the influence of community culture, active involvement of students, and the requirement for evaluation and assessment further complicate the process.

**Recommendations**

To further develop the knowledge acquired from the character education approach at Al-Mukmin Islamic Boarding School, future research should focus on conducting comparative studies that compare Islamic boarding schools with public schools and other religious educational institutions. This would clarify the distinct difficulties and advantages of each environment in the development of moral skills. Furthermore, it is imperative to conduct longitudinal research in order to monitor the enduring effects of character education on students’ personal and professional trajectories. Conducting research on the creation and verification of sophisticated evaluation instruments for character education is crucial. This is because existing methods may not comprehensively measure the complexity and range of moral development. Moreover, research investigating the impact of technology on improving character education could offer significant insights into the most effective ways to utilize digital tools for teaching moral and ethical values. It is important to examine the policy implications of incorporating character education into national education systems. This examination should specifically focus on identifying the most efficient techniques for implementing these practices in various educational settings.

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