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Actualizing Character Values in Akhlaq Learning: A Study of Moral Formation at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, Rajun Pasongsongan, Madura, Indonesia

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Abstract

Character education and akhlaq formation constitute foundational dimensions of Islamic moral pedagogy, yet their actualization within pesantren-based learning environments remains insufficiently examined in the existing literature. This study investigates the relationship between character values and akhlaq formation in the learning process at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, Rajun Pasongsongan, Madura, Indonesia, with particular attention to how character education values are actualized through the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah (TTI) instructional framework. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data validity was ensured through triangulation, while analysis followed systematic stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that akhlaq learning at Al-Amin Al-Khidary is implemented through two complementary channels. Within the classroom, moral education is delivered through classical texts including *Bidayatul Hidayah* and *At-Tafsir*, providing students with a structured foundation in Islamic ethical principles. Beyond the classroom, akhlaq formation is reinforced through structured extracurricular activities encompassing *Khutbatul Tholib*, pilgrimage, *Muhadloroh*, Quranic recitation, *Sholawat Nabi*, and community devotion. Together, these channels create an integrated moral learning environment that extends character formation across all dimensions of santri life. These findings suggest that the TTI framework constitutes a distinctive pesantren-based model of character education with significant implications for Islamic moral pedagogy in Indonesia.

Key Word:

Character Values,
Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah,
Moral Education
Islamic Pedagogy,

INTRODUCTION

The moral crisis confronting Indonesian society has emerged as one of the most pressing challenges facing the national education system in the contemporary era. Empirical data consistently document the deterioration of moral conduct among young

Indonesians, manifested in rising rates of student brawls, substance abuse, sexual misconduct, academic dishonesty, and various forms of antisocial behavior that have penetrated educational environments at all levels (Suyadi, 2013). These phenomena are not isolated incidents but symptoms of a deeper structural problem rooted in the weakening of moral formation processes across the three principal educational environments — family, school, and community — that collectively bear responsibility for the character development of the younger generation. The rapid advance of digital technology and globalization has accelerated this erosion, exposing young people to cultural influences that frequently conflict with the Islamic values and national character ideals (Pancasila) that Indonesian education is mandated to cultivate (Kurniawan, 2014).

In response to this challenge, character education (*pendidikan karakter*) has been elevated to a national educational priority in Indonesia, formalized through Ministry of Education policy and integrated into curriculum frameworks across all educational levels. However, scholarly consensus increasingly recognizes that character education is most effective when it operates not merely as a curricular add-on within formal schooling but as a comprehensive and integrated moral formation process that permeates all dimensions of learners' daily lives (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2014). This recognition has directed scholarly and policy attention toward *pesantren* — Indonesia's oldest Islamic educational institutions, dating to the fifteenth century — as sites where the conditions for genuinely integrated character formation are most fully realized (Qomar, 2002). Unlike formal schools, *pesantren* create total educational environments in which religious instruction, moral exemplification, communal living, and structured daily routines combine to produce a comprehensive and immersive character formation experience that extends across every dimension of students' lives.

The relationship between character education and *akhlaq* learning within *pesantren* institutions has attracted growing scholarly attention in recent years. Zubaedi (2011) argued that *pesantren* represent the most institutionally coherent model of character education available in the Indonesian context, precisely because they integrate the transmission of moral knowledge with the cultivation of moral habits and dispositions through sustained communal practice. Marzuki (2015) further demonstrated that *akhlaq* learning — the systematic study and practice of Islamic moral conduct — constitutes the primary vehicle through which *pesantren* operationalize character education, providing students with both the theoretical foundations and the practical behavioral dispositions necessary for moral character formation. More recently, Hasan (2019) has shown that *pesantren* graduates demonstrate significantly stronger indicators of civic character, religious commitment, and prosocial behavior than graduates of comparable formal

educational institutions, suggesting that the pesantren model of integrated moral formation generates measurable and durable character outcomes.

Despite this growing body of evidence for the effectiveness of pesantren-based character education, significant gaps remain in the existing literature. The majority of studies focus on large and well-established pesantren institutions with extensive resources and national reputations, with relatively limited attention to smaller and more locally rooted pesantren that serve rural communities and operate within more constrained institutional contexts. The specific mechanisms through which character values are actualized within akhlaq learning — the pedagogical strategies, curricular frameworks, and extracurricular practices through which moral knowledge is translated into moral conduct — remain insufficiently examined at the level of concrete institutional practice. Furthermore, the relationship between the formal and informal dimensions of akhlaq learning within pesantren — between classroom instruction in classical ethical texts and the character formation that occurs through communal living, ritual practice, and structured extracurricular activities — has received limited systematic analytical attention.

Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren in Rajun, Pasongsongan, Sumenep, Madura represents a particularly instructive case for examining these questions. As a pesantren that combines salaf and modern educational orientations, Al-Amin Al-Khidary has developed a distinctive approach to akhlaq learning through the *Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiah* (TTI) framework, which integrates classical text-based moral instruction with a structured program of extracurricular character formation activities. This convergence of traditional and contemporary pedagogical approaches within a single institutional framework creates a rich site for examining how character values are actualized through akhlaq learning in practice. The pesantren's location in a rural Madurese community further ensures that its character formation practices are deeply embedded in the specific cultural and social context of its students, making it a representative case for the many smaller pesantren that serve rural Muslim communities across the Indonesian archipelago.

This study addresses the identified gaps by investigating two interrelated research questions: first, how is akhlaq learning implemented at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, Rajun Pasongsongan, Madura? Second, how are character education values actualized through the akhlaq learning process at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren? By examining these questions through qualitative phenomenological fieldwork, this study contributes to the theoretical understanding of pesantren-based character education as a distinctive model of integrated moral formation, with implications for policy and practice in Islamic education more broadly.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative phenomenological approach to examine how character values are actualized through akhlaq learning at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, Rajun Pasongsongan, Madura, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables deep and contextually grounded understanding of social and educational phenomena as experienced by participants in their natural setting, prioritizing meaning and interpretation over measurement and causal explanation (Creswell, 2014). The phenomenological design is particularly appropriate for this study because it facilitates systematic description of the lived experiences of students and educators engaged in akhlaq learning, reducing diverse individual perceptions to the essential structures and meanings that constitute the phenomenon under investigation (Moustakas, 1994).

The research was conducted at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, selected on the basis of its distinctive convergence of salaf and modern educational orientations and its implementation of the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiah (TTI) framework as the primary vehicle for akhlaq learning and character formation. Research subjects were selected through purposive sampling, a technique that identifies information-rich cases capable of providing deep and relevant insight into the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2015). Informants comprised three categories of participants: kiai and ustadz directly involved in akhlaq instruction, senior santri with a minimum of two years of enrollment at the pesantren, and pesantren administrators responsible for the design and implementation of the TTI curriculum. This multi-category sampling strategy ensured that perspectives from across the pesantren's educational ecosystem were adequately represented in the data.

Data were collected through three complementary methods. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants using a semi-structured guide developed on the basis of the study's research questions and theoretical framework, allowing sufficient flexibility for informants to articulate their experiences and perspectives in their own terms (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Participant observation was conducted across both formal classroom settings — where akhlaq instruction through classical texts including Bidayatul Hidayah and At-Tafsir takes place — and informal extracurricular settings, including Khutbatul Tholib, Muhadloroh, Quranic recitation sessions, and community devotion activities, in order to capture the full range of contexts within which character values are actualized through the TTI framework (Spradley, 1980). Documentation analysis encompassed institutional curricula, instructional materials, program

schedules, and administrative records relevant to the implementation of akhlaq learning at the pesantren (Bowen, 2009).

Data analysis followed the systematic qualitative procedure developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), comprising three interrelated stages. In the data reduction stage, raw data from interviews, observations, and documents were systematically coded, filtered, and organized according to their relevance to the research questions. In the data display stage, reduced data were arranged into coherent thematic narratives and descriptive structures that facilitated the identification of patterns and relationships across data sources. In the conclusion drawing and verification stage, emerging findings were synthesized into substantive responses to the research questions and subjected to iterative verification against the full dataset to ensure analytical consistency and interpretive accuracy.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied triangulation as the primary validity strategy, cross-checking data obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation to verify the consistency of findings across multiple sources and methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Member checking procedures were additionally employed, with key findings shared with informants for confirmation of accuracy and representativeness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These layered validity procedures collectively ensure that the findings meet the standards of scientific rigor and transparency required for credible qualitative research and international academic publication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study examines the actualization of character values through akhlaq learning at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren, Rajun Pasongsongan, Madura, organized around three interconnected dimensions: the implementation of the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah (TTI) framework through classroom-based akhlaq instruction, the actualization of character values through extracurricular activities, and the institutionalization of character formation through structured daily habituation practices. The findings presented here are drawn from in-depth interviews with pesantren leaders, ustaz, ustazah, and students, complemented by systematic field observation and documentation of instructional materials and program schedules.

Akhlaq Learning through the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah Framework

The primary finding of this study is that akhlaq learning at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren is implemented through a comprehensive and integrated framework known

as Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah (TTI), which encompasses both formal classroom instruction and structured extracurricular activities. This framework reflects the pesantren's distinctive convergence of salaf and modern educational orientations, integrating classical text-based moral instruction with contemporary pedagogical approaches within a single coherent institutional design.

Within the classroom, akhlaq instruction is delivered through five principal classical texts, each of which addresses distinct dimensions of Islamic moral conduct and embeds specific character values within its instructional content. The *Bidayatul Hidayah* of Imam Al-Ghazali provides the foundational framework for Sufi-oriented moral instruction, cultivating values of religious devotion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, and environmental awareness. The *At-Tafsir* text engages students in Quranic exegesis as a vehicle for moral formation, transmitting the exemplary character of the Prophet Muhammad — encompassing the values of *siddiq* (honesty), *tabligh* (communicating truth), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *fathonah* (wisdom) — as the primary moral model for student emulation.

The *Bulughul Maram* introduces hadith-based moral guidance covering akhlaq toward Allah, fellow human beings, parents, and oneself, reinforcing values of social care, discipline, and responsibility. The *Addinul Islam* text extends this framework to encompass Islamic religious studies and comparative religion, cultivating values of nationalism, tolerance, and social harmony. The *Bidayatul Mujtahid* introduces students to scholarly disagreement among Islamic jurists, teaching the practical moral value of respecting difference of opinion and resisting intellectual egoism.

The pesantren leader, Nyi Masniyeh, articulated the pedagogical philosophy underlying this classroom-based akhlaq instruction in the following terms during interview:

"Pembelajaran akhlak di sini tidak cukup hanya dengan teori. Santri harus melihat bagaimana ustaz dan ustazah mengamalkan apa yang diajarkan. Karena akhlak itu bukan hafalan, tapi pembiasaan." (Nyi Masniyeh, pesantren leader, interview, 2023)

This testimony encapsulates the three-stage value internalization process that structures akhlaq instruction throughout the TTI framework: value transformation (*transformasi nilai*), in which ustaz and ustazah transmit moral knowledge to students; value transaction (*transaksi nilai*), in which two-way communicative exchange between teachers and students facilitates active moral engagement; and value trans-internalization (*transinternalisasi nilai*), in which the exemplary conduct of teachers provides behavioral models that students can observe and internalize through sustained daily exposure.

The pedagogical methods employed in classroom akhlaq instruction combine traditional pesantren approaches — including sorogan, wetonan, and bandongan — with classical instructional methods centered on direct teacher-student interaction. The deliberate retention of traditional methods is understood within the pesantren as a principled commitment to the relational and exemplary dimensions of moral instruction that these methods foreground, rather than as a resistance to pedagogical innovation. As one ustaz explained:

"Metode sorogan dan bandongan itu bukan kuno. Itu cara terbaik untuk memastikan santri benar-benar memahami, bukan sekedar mendengar. Hubungan langsung antara guru dan santri itu yang membentuk akhlak." (Ustaz informant, interview, 2023)

Character Values Actualized through Extracurricular Activities

Beyond the classroom, character values are actualized through a structured program of extracurricular activities that extends the moral formation process into the full range of students' daily communal experiences. Field observations confirm that these activities are not peripheral additions to the pesantren's educational program but constitute integral components of the TTI framework, designed to translate the moral knowledge acquired in classroom instruction into practiced behavioral dispositions.

Khutbatul Tholib — the pesantren's equivalent of a student orientation program — introduces newly enrolled students to the history, founding narrative, and institutional values of Al-Amin Al-Khidary, cultivating values of love of country, curiosity, social sensitivity, discipline, independence, and tolerance from the earliest moments of students' pesantren experience. Pilgrimage visits (ziarah) to the graves of Islamic scholars connect students to the historical tradition of Islamic moral exemplarity, cultivating religious devotion and reverence for scholarly heritage. The Muhadloroh public speaking program develops students' communicative confidence and linguistic competence within an Islamic moral framework, cultivating values of creativity, discipline, tolerance, independence, hard work, and democratic participation. Quranic recitation sessions ground daily moral formation in direct engagement with the primary source of Islamic ethical teaching, reinforcing values of honesty, discipline, and religious commitment. Sholawat Nabi gatherings cultivate devotion to the Prophet as the supreme moral exemplar, reinforcing values of friendship and responsibility through collective spiritual practice. Community service and devotion activities (pengabdian) cultivate the values of sincerity (ikhlas) and the practical application of religious knowledge in service to others.

One senior student reflected on the transformative significance of these extracurricular experiences during interview:

"Yang paling berpengaruh buat saya bukan pelajaran di kelas, tapi kegiatan di luar kelas. Ziarah, muhadloroh, pengabdian — itu yang benar-benar mengubah cara saya bersikap dan berpikir." (Senior student informant, interview, 2023)

Habituation Practices as Vehicles of Character Formation

The third dimension of the findings concerns the role of structured daily habituation practices (pembiasaan) in consolidating and deepening the character formation initiated through classroom instruction and extracurricular activities. Field observations confirm that these habituation practices permeate every dimension of students' daily lives at the pesantren, creating a total moral formation environment in which character values are continuously reinforced through repeated behavioral practice.

Congregational prayer (sholat jama'ah), performed five times daily, functions as the foundational habituation practice through which values of religious devotion, discipline, tolerance, and social responsibility are continuously cultivated. The tobur (queuing) practice — in which students are required to maintain orderly queues for all communal activities including meals, bathing, washing, and ironing — institutionalizes the values of discipline, social consideration, and peaceful coexistence as non-negotiable behavioral norms of daily pesantren life. Voluntary devotional practices (ibadah sunnah), including the Dhuha prayer, qiyamul lail, and voluntary fasting, extend the scope of character formation beyond obligatory religious duties into the domain of supererogatory spiritual practice, cultivating values of discipline, independence, hard work, and religious sincerity.

As Nyi Masniyeh observed during a follow-up interview:

"Pembiasaan itu kuncinya. Santri yang awalnya susah bangun subuh, lama-lama jadi malu kalau tidak ikut jama'ah. Itu bukan karena takut dihukum, tapi karena sudah menjadi bagian dari dirinya." (Nyi Masniyeh, pesantren leader, interview, 2023)

This observation captures the essential mechanism of habituation-based character formation — the progressive internalization of moral behavioral dispositions to the point at which they become intrinsic to students' self-understanding rather than merely externally imposed behavioral requirements.

Table 1.
Character Values Actualized through TTI
Framework at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren

Learning Channel	Activities/Materials	Principal Character Values
Classroom (In-Class)	Bidayatul Hidayah, At-Tafsir, Bulughul Maram, Addinul Islam, Bidayatul Mujtahid	Religious devotion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, responsibility, nationalism
Extracurricular (Out-Class)	Khutbatul Tholib, Ziarah, Muhadloroh, Quranic recitation, Sholawat Nabi, Community service	Curiosity, creativity, social care, independence, democratic participation, sincerity
Habituation (Pembiasaan)	Congregational prayer, Tobur, Voluntary devotion	Discipline, social responsibility, hard work, religious sincerity, peaceful coexistence

The dominant character values identified across all three channels of the TTI framework are religious devotion (religius) and tolerance (toleransi), followed by responsibility (tanggung jawab) and discipline (disiplin). These four values constitute the foundational character profile that Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren seeks to cultivate in its students through the integrated implementation of the TTI framework, aligning with the eighteen character values identified in Indonesia's National Education Goals.

Discussion

The findings of this study offer significant contributions to the scholarly understanding of character education in pesantren institutions, the relationship between akhlaq learning and moral formation, and the distinctive pedagogical model through which Islamic boarding schools actualize character values in the lives of their students. This discussion interprets the three principal findings in light of established theoretical frameworks and recent empirical literature, identifies points of convergence and divergence with existing scholarship, and proposes conceptual contributions that emerge from the distinctive case of Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren.

The TTI Framework as an Integrated Model of Character Education

The first and most significant finding of this study is that akhlaq learning at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren is implemented through the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah (TTI) framework — a comprehensive and integrated instructional system that encompasses classroom-based classical text instruction, structured extracurricular activities, and daily habituation practices. This finding contributes to the theoretical literature on character education by demonstrating how a pesantren-based instructional framework can

operationalize the principles of integrated moral formation more comprehensively and coherently than most formal schooling environments are able to achieve.

The theoretical foundation for understanding the TTI framework's effectiveness lies in Lickona's (1991) tripartite model of character education, which argues that genuine character formation requires the simultaneous cultivation of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Lickona's model insists that character education fails when it addresses only the cognitive dimension of moral development — transmitting knowledge of right and wrong — without attending equally to the affective and behavioral dimensions through which moral knowledge is translated into moral habit and disposition. The TTI framework addresses all three dimensions with unusual comprehensiveness: classroom instruction in classical ethical texts cultivates moral knowing; the value transaction and trans-internalization stages of the instructional process cultivate moral feeling through affective engagement with exemplary moral models; and the extracurricular and habituation components of the framework cultivate moral action through structured behavioral practice and communal reinforcement.

This finding resonates strongly with Berkowitz and Bier's (2014) systematic review of effective character education programs, which identified the integration of explicit moral instruction with implicit moral formation through school culture and daily practice as the single most consistent predictor of program effectiveness. The TTI framework exemplifies this integration with particular clarity, combining explicit akhlaq instruction through classical texts with the implicit moral formation that occurs through the pesantren's total communal environment.

Zubaedi (2011) made a related argument in his foundational study of character education in Indonesian Islamic institutions, contending that pesantren represent the most institutionally coherent model of integrated character education available in the Indonesian context precisely because their total educational environments enable the kind of comprehensive moral formation that Lickona's model prescribes. The findings of this study provide detailed empirical support for Zubaedi's argument at the level of concrete institutional practice, demonstrating the specific mechanisms — classroom instruction, extracurricular programming, and habituation practices — through which this integration is achieved.

The three-stage value internalization process — transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization — that structures akhlaq instruction throughout the TTI framework connects to a broader body of literature on the process of moral value internalization in educational contexts. Muhaimin (2012) argued that effective moral education in Islamic institutions must progress through precisely these stages, moving from the transmission of moral knowledge through teacher authority, to the active negotiation of moral

meaning through teacher-student dialogue, to the embodied demonstration of moral conduct through exemplary teacher behavior. The findings of this study confirm that this three-stage process is not merely a theoretical prescription but a lived pedagogical reality at Al-Amin Al-Khidary, observable in the structured interaction patterns of akhlaq instruction across all three channels of the TTI framework.

Classical Texts as Vehicles of Character Formation

The second dimension of the findings concerns the role of classical Islamic texts — Bidayatul Hidayah, At-Tafsir, Bulughul Maram, Addinul Islam, and Bidayatul Mujtahid — as the primary vehicles of classroom-based character formation within the TTI framework. This finding contributes to the literature on curriculum and character education in pesantren by demonstrating how classical textual traditions can serve as rich and multidimensional resources for character formation that extends well beyond the transmission of doctrinal knowledge.

The use of classical texts as character education resources connects to a long tradition of Islamic pedagogical thought that understands the acquisition of religious knowledge as inseparable from the formation of moral character. Al-Ghazali's Bidayatul Hidayah — one of the primary texts used in Al-Amin Al-Khidary's akhlaq curriculum — is itself a foundational articulation of this understanding, arguing that religious knowledge divorced from moral practice is not only incomplete but spiritually dangerous (Al-Ghazali, 1993). The pesantren's use of this text as a vehicle for character formation thus reflects a deep alignment between its pedagogical practice and the classical Islamic intellectual tradition from which its curriculum draws.

More recent scholarship has extended this argument into the contemporary context of Indonesian Islamic education. Marzuki (2015) demonstrated that classical text-based moral instruction in pesantren generates stronger and more durable character outcomes than the competency-based moral education approaches typical of formal schooling, precisely because classical texts embed moral instruction within rich narratives of exemplary conduct that engage students' moral imagination and emotional identification rather than merely presenting moral rules for cognitive assimilation.

Nata (2018) made a related argument regarding the pedagogical superiority of the classical Islamic text tradition for character education, noting that texts such as Bidayatul Hidayah and Bulughul Maram present moral conduct not as a set of abstract principles but as a lived practice modeled by figures — the Prophet, the Companions, and the great scholars — whose lives provide concrete and emotionally compelling examples of the moral ideals being transmitted.

The finding that the At-Tafsir text cultivates eighteen of the character values identified in Indonesia's National Education Goals is particularly significant for its implications regarding the compatibility of classical Islamic moral pedagogy with the national character education framework. Gunawan (2014) has argued that the most effective character education programs in the Indonesian context are those that ground character formation in the specific cultural and religious traditions of learners' communities rather than in universalized frameworks that lack cultural resonance. The TTI framework of Al-Amin Al-Khidary exemplifies this culturally grounded approach with particular clarity.

Habituation as the Foundation of Moral Character Formation

The third and perhaps most theoretically significant dimension of the findings concerns the role of structured daily habituation practices in consolidating and deepening the character formation initiated through classroom instruction and extracurricular activities. The finding that congregational prayer, queuing discipline (tobur), and voluntary devotional practices function as primary vehicles of character formation — producing internalized behavioral dispositions rather than merely compliant behavioral performance — has important theoretical implications for the understanding of moral habituation as a pedagogical process.

This finding connects directly to Aristotle's foundational account of moral habituation, which argued that virtuous character is not acquired through knowledge alone but through the repeated practice of virtuous actions until those actions become second nature — constitutive of the agent's character rather than merely externally imposed behavioral requirements (Aristotle, trans. 2009).

The progressive internalization of moral behavioral dispositions observed at Al-Amin Al-Khidary — captured with particular vividness in Nyi Masniyeh's observation that students who initially struggled to wake for the dawn prayer eventually felt shame rather than compulsion as their motivation for attendance — exemplifies precisely the process of moral habituation that Aristotle described. The student is no longer merely complying with an external rule but has internalized the value of congregational prayer as a constitutive element of their moral identity.

Contemporary character education scholarship has increasingly recognized the importance of habituation-based approaches to moral formation. Narvaez and Lapsley (2009) argued that the development of moral expertise — the capacity to perceive, judge, and act morally across diverse and complex situations — requires not only moral knowledge and motivation but the formation of automatic moral behavioral dispositions through sustained practice in morally structured environments.

The pesantren, as a total educational environment in which moral behavioral expectations are consistently enforced across all dimensions of daily life, provides precisely the kind of sustained and comprehensive moral practice environment that Narvaez and Lapsley's model identifies as necessary for the development of genuine moral expertise. Hasan (2019) corroborated this argument empirically, demonstrating that pesantren graduates demonstrate significantly stronger indicators of moral behavioral consistency than graduates of comparable formal educational institutions, attributing this difference to the comprehensive habituation-based character formation that the pesantren environment enables.

The tobur queuing practice deserves particular theoretical attention as an example of how everyday behavioral habituation can cultivate deeper civic and social character values. By requiring students to maintain orderly queues for all communal activities — meals, bathing, washing, ironing — the pesantren systematically cultivates the values of social consideration, patience, and the subordination of personal convenience to communal order. These are not merely organizational behaviors but civic virtues with direct implications for students' capacity for democratic social participation beyond the pesantren.

Benninga et al. (2006) argued in their influential study of character education and academic performance that schools which successfully integrate character formation into the behavioral fabric of institutional life — rather than confining it to discrete instructional periods — produce students with demonstrably stronger civic character outcomes. The tobur practice at Al-Amin Al-Khidary exemplifies this integration with particular clarity, embedding civic virtue formation into the most mundane dimensions of daily communal life.

Toward a Pesantren-Based Model of Integrated Character Education

Taken together, the findings of this study support the conceptualization of the TTI framework at Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren as a distinctive and theoretically significant model of integrated character education that merits recognition and analysis on its own terms. This model is characterized by three features that distinguish it from both conventional formal schooling approaches to character education and from more narrowly conceived religious moral instruction programs.

The TTI framework is distinguished by its comprehensiveness — the systematic integration of explicit moral instruction, structured extracurricular character formation, and daily habituation practices within a single coherent institutional design that ensures character formation occurs continuously across all dimensions of students' lives. It is distinguished by its cultural groundedness — the consistent grounding of character

formation in the specific moral resources of the classical Islamic scholarly tradition, ensuring that character values are transmitted not as abstract universal principles but as living dimensions of a rich and historically deep moral culture that students can identify with and draw upon.

This conceptualization of the TTI framework as a model of integrated character education contributes to the theoretical literature in three ways. It demonstrates that the conditions for genuinely comprehensive character formation identified in the international character education literature — integration of moral knowing, feeling, and action; alignment of explicit instruction with institutional culture; sustained habituation in morally structured environments — are achievable within the specific institutional context of Indonesian Islamic pesantren education.

It proposes that classical Islamic textual traditions constitute underappreciated resources for character education that deserve greater recognition in both policy and scholarly discourse on moral formation in Muslim-majority societies. It identifies the total educational environment of the pesantren — in which religious instruction, communal living, ritual practice, and structured daily routines combine to create a comprehensive moral formation ecology — as a distinctive institutional model whose pedagogical principles may have broader applicability beyond the pesantren context itself.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Al-Amin Al-Khidary Pesantren has developed a distinctive and coherent model of character education through the Tarbiyatul Ta'lim Al-Islamiyah (TTI) framework — one that successfully actualizes character values across all dimensions of students' moral formation through the systematic integration of classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, and daily habituation practices. The evidence gathered through qualitative phenomenological fieldwork confirms that this integrated approach produces genuine moral internalization rather than merely behavioral compliance, cultivating character dispositions that become constitutive of students' moral identities rather than remaining externally imposed behavioral requirements.

Three conclusions of broader theoretical and practical significance emerge from this study. The pesantren's total educational environment — in which moral formation occurs continuously across twenty-four hours of daily communal life rather than being confined to discrete instructional periods — constitutes the foundational enabling condition for the TTI framework's effectiveness. This total environment ensures that character values encountered in classical text instruction are immediately and

continuously reinforced through extracurricular practice and daily habituation, creating a comprehensive moral formation ecology that formal schooling environments, constrained by temporal and spatial boundaries, are structurally unable to replicate. The implications of this finding extend beyond the pesantren context, suggesting that the effectiveness of any character education program is fundamentally conditioned by the degree of alignment between its explicit instructional content and the implicit moral culture of the institutional environment within which it operates.

The classical Islamic textual tradition — represented in the TTI curriculum by *Bidayatul Hidayah*, *At-Tafsir*, *Bulughul Maram*, *Addinul Islam*, and *Bidayatul Mujtahid* — constitutes a rich, culturally grounded, and pedagogically effective resource for character formation that deserves greater recognition in scholarly and policy discourse on moral education in Muslim-majority societies. The finding that these texts collectively cultivate character values aligned with Indonesia's eighteen national character education goals demonstrates that classical Islamic moral pedagogy and contemporary national educational objectives are not in tension but mutually reinforcing — a finding with significant implications for curriculum policy in Indonesian Islamic education.

The three-stage value internalization process — transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization — that structures akhlaq instruction throughout the TTI framework provides a conceptually precise account of the pedagogical mechanism through which moral knowledge is translated into moral character. This process is not unique to Al-Amin Al-Khidary but reflects a broader principle of effective moral pedagogy applicable across diverse educational contexts: that character formation requires not only the transmission of moral knowledge but the affective engagement of students with moral exemplars and the sustained behavioral practice of moral dispositions in communally structured environments.

This study is not without limitations. Its focus on a single pesantren institution, while enabling the depth of analysis appropriate to qualitative phenomenological research, necessarily constrains the generalizability of its findings. Future research should examine whether the TTI framework or comparable integrated akhlaq learning models produce measurable and durable character outcomes through longitudinal assessment, and whether the model's core principles can be adapted for implementation in formal Islamic schooling environments that lack the total educational environment of the pesantren. Comparative studies examining the character formation outcomes of pesantren graduates across diverse institutional contexts would further enrich the theoretical understanding of pesantren-based character education as a distinctive model of integrated moral formation in Indonesian Islamic education.

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