CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL MADRASAH STUDENTS IN MA AL-WASHLIYAH, NAGUR VILLAGE, TANJUNG BERINGIN DISTRICT, SERDANG BEDAGAI REGENCY

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the management of student character development in a coastal madrasah at MA Al-Washliyah, Nagur Village, Serdang Bedagai Regency. The urgency of this research lies in the unique context of coastal areas, which face distinct social, economic, and environmental challenges compared to madrasahs in general, thus requiring a contextualized approach to character development. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving the principal, teachers, and students. The findings indicate that character development is systematically managed through four stages: introduction of moral values, habituation, reflection, and integration of moral actions. Character values are instilled through learning processes, role modeling, and consistent daily routines. Reflection is carried out through dialogical approaches to strengthen students' moral understanding, while the integration of values is reflected in independent and consistent behavior. This study concludes that character development management in coastal madrasahs requires an adaptive, environment-based approach. However, its effectiveness is still influenced by external factors, thus requiring synergy among schools, families, and communities to ensure the sustainability of character education.

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INTRODUCTION

Character education serves as a fundamental foundation in shaping a generation that is not only academically competent but also morally, socially, and spiritually strong. In the context of national education, character is an integral

component of educational goals as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which emphasizes that education aims to develop students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, pious, morally upright, and equipped with responsible life skills. Therefore, character education cannot be separated from the educational process; rather, it constitutes the core of holistic human resource development.

Empirically, numerous studies have shown that character education significantly contributes to students' academic success. Students who possess discipline, responsibility, and integrity tend to demonstrate better academic performance, as they are capable of self-regulation, consistency in learning, and maintaining strong intrinsic motivation (Narvaez & Bock, 2014). In addition, religious character functions as an internal driving force in enhancing students' interest in learning, as they perceive learning activities as part of worship and moral responsibility (Samani & Hariyanto, 2017). This indicates that educational success is determined not only by cognitive abilities but also by the quality of students' character.

However, the implementation of character education in educational institutions still faces various challenges, particularly in terms of management and program sustainability. Many institutions have incorporated character education into their curricula; however, its implementation often remains normative, ceremonial, and lacks systematic structure. Character education programs are not fully integrated into school culture, are not supported by clear evaluation mechanisms, and have not adequately addressed students' contextual needs. This condition reflects weaknesses in the managerial aspects of character education, including planning, implementation, and evaluation.

These challenges become more complex within the context of madrasahs located in coastal areas. Coastal environments possess distinct social, economic, and cultural characteristics, where most students come from fishermen's families with fluctuating economic conditions, permissive parenting patterns, and less supportive social environments for character formation. Such challenges cannot be addressed through general approaches to character education but require adaptive and contextual strategies aligned with the realities of coastal communities.

Based on preliminary observations at MA Al-Washliyah in Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, several phenomena indicate weak internalization of character values among students. These include frequent tardiness, resistance toward teachers, leaving classrooms without permission, and bullying behaviors, both verbal and physical. These issues not only reflect low levels of discipline and responsibility but also directly impact students' learning interest and the overall quality of classroom interaction.

A deeper analysis reveals that these problems indicate the inability of previously implemented character education approaches to significantly influence student behavior. The primary research gap lies in the failure of prior approaches, which tend to be normative, fragmented, and not contextualized to the socio-cultural conditions of coastal communities. Character education programs are often implemented as administrative formalities, lack integration within school management systems, and involve minimal continuous evaluation. Furthermore, external factors such as economic pressure, social environment, and local culture have not been adequately considered in designing character development programs.

Thus, the problem does not merely lie in the absence of character education programs, but rather in the ضعف of their management. Character education management plays a crucial role in ensuring that moral values are not only taught but also internalized and manifested in students' actual behavior. Through a systematic managerial approach, character education can be properly planned, consistently implemented, and continuously evaluated.

From a theoretical perspective, character development cannot be separated from meaningful learning experiences. John Dewey (1916) argued that character formation is the result of reflective experiences, in which students learn through direct interaction with their social environment. Meanwhile, Santrock (2007) emphasized the importance of modeling, reinforcement, and moral discussion in effectively shaping students' character. In addition, Kevin Ryan highlighted that character is formed through stages of value introduction, habituation, reflection, and integration, which occur continuously. These perspectives indicate that character education requires comprehensive and systematic management.

In the context of coastal madrasahs, the management of character development becomes increasingly important as it must accommodate complex social and cultural dynamics. Character education management should not only

focus on classroom instruction but also include the development of school culture, family involvement, and community engagement. Without integrated management, character education programs risk being ineffective and unsustainable.

Based on the above discussion, it can be asserted that there is an urgent need to develop an adaptive, contextual, and sustainable model of character development management in coastal madrasahs. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the management of student character development at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur through four main stages: introduction, habituation, reflection, and integration of moral values. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of character education management and practically to the formulation of more effective strategies tailored to the needs of coastal communities.

METHOD

This study was conducted at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, located on Pejuang Street, Dusun III, Nagur Village. The research was carried out from August 2025 to December 2025. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, in which the data were presented in the form of words, narratives, and documents rather than numerical data.

The informants in this study were determined using purposive sampling, consisting of a total of 16 participants: 1 principal, 5 teachers, and 10 students. The selection of informants was based on their direct involvement in character development activities within the madrasah.

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from informants through interviews and observations, while secondary data were collected from official school documents, such as activity programs, school regulations, and other supporting archives.

The data collection techniques used in this study included observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine students' behavior and character development activities within the school environment. Semi-structured interviews were carried out to obtain in-depth information from the informants. Documentation was used to complement the data in the form of records, photographs, and official documents.

In analyzing the data, this study employed the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018), which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

More specifically, the data analysis process involved systematic coding and categorization through the following stages: (1) open coding, in which raw data from interviews and observations were identified and assigned initial codes such as "DS" (discipline), "BL" (bullying), "TB" (teacher behavior), and "CD" (character development); (2) axial coding, in which related codes were grouped into broader categories such as "character problems," "development strategies," and "inhibiting factors"; and (3) selective coding, in which the main categories were integrated to identify the core theme, namely the management of character development based on the coastal context.

This process was conducted iteratively throughout data collection and analysis to ensure depth, consistency, and validity of interpretation.

To ensure data validity, this study applied triangulation techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing data from multiple sources, methods, and time frames.

The triangulation process included: (1) source triangulation, by comparing data obtained from the principal, teachers, and students; (2) technique triangulation, by comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation; and (3) time triangulation, by verifying data at different times to ensure consistency.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Management of Introducing Moral Concepts and Character Education Reinforcement Values for Students at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency

The research findings indicate that MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village places character development as the "spirit" of the madrasah, manifested through its vision and mission, the determination of priority values, and strategies for strengthening moral values in daily school life. This direction aligns with the national policy on the Strengthening Character Education Program (PPK), which emphasizes that character education is an educational movement under the responsibility of educational institutions to strengthen students' character through the harmonization of moral awareness, emotional development, intellectual development, and physical development with the involvement of families and communities. Therefore, the madrasah's emphasis on values such as religiosity, discipline, honesty, politeness, responsibility, and environmental awareness reflects the alignment between the institutional orientation of the madrasah and the normative framework of the national character education policy.

Conceptually, these findings demonstrate that the introduction of moral concepts in the madrasah does not merely involve the delivery of moral advice but is implemented through learning activities, exemplary behavior, habituation, and the cultivation of school culture. This approach is consistent with the perspective that effective character education must integrate the domains of knowledge, attitudes, and actions. In the context of Islamic education, Rahmah and Fadhli (2021) emphasize that character education in Islamic educational institutions is strongly influenced by the competence of educators in shaping students' behavior, values, and moral orientation. Thus, the findings at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village reinforce the notion that moral development requires teachers who not only teach academic content but also serve as figures who shape students' character.

The affirmation of the vision and mission as well as priority values displayed in classrooms and the school environment can be interpreted as a form of systematic value communication. Values that are consistently displayed enable students not only to hear moral messages but also to live within an environment rich in moral meaning. In the framework of educational quality management, Fadhli (2017) emphasizes the importance of well-directed, planned, and consistent educational management so that institutional goals can be effectively achieved. In this context, the presentation of visions, slogans, and core values within the madrasah environment can be understood as part of managing school culture so that all members of the madrasah share the same moral direction.

The findings regarding the strong emphasis on religiosity, etiquette (adab), and morality (akhlaq) are also highly relevant to the identity of the madrasah as an Islamic educational institution. This is consistent with the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 2 of 2020, which states that strengthening character education in madrasahs is implemented through learning activities, habituation, exemplary conduct, the development of madrasah culture, and community involvement. From a more practical perspective, Candra Wijaya et al. (2023) in the book *Character Education Management* emphasize that character education must be integrated with institutional culture, the role of teachers, and a sustainable development system. Therefore, the use of the Qur'an, hadith, exemplary stories, and teachers as role models as media for introducing moral values at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village shows that character development in this madrasah is rooted in Islamic normative sources while also being managed institutionally.

The introduction of moral values through integration within the learning process also indicates that the madrasah has implemented character education as part of the intracurricular process, rather than as an additional standalone program. This is in line with Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 20 of 2018, which emphasizes that character education in formal educational institutions should be implemented through intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities. Thus, the directive of the madrasah principal encouraging teachers not only to focus on academic achievement but also to instill moral values in the learning process represents a concrete implementation of the character education policy in classroom practice.

From a managerial perspective, the findings regarding teacher guidance, regular meetings, supervision, and evaluation of moral development activities indicate that character education is managed through concrete management functions. Fadhli (2017) asserts that educational quality cannot be improved without effective management, starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation. Similarly, the work of Prasetyo and Fadhli (2023) in *The New*

Professionalism Character in Education highlights that educational professionalism must be framed within institutional character and effective management. The findings in the field show that moral development at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village does not occur spontaneously but is guided by organized institutional mechanisms.

The madrasah principal appears to play a central role as both a director and guardian of the value culture within the school. This finding can be understood within the framework of madrasah leadership that is not merely administrative but also moral and instructional. Amiruddin Siahaan and colleagues, in several publications, emphasize the importance of madrasah leadership in building institutional quality, teacher professionalism, and the culture of Islamic education. Siahaan et al. (2024) highlight that leadership functions as a driving force for institutional value systems, while Winanda, Siahaan, and Nasution (2024) emphasize the role of the madrasah principal in improving teacher professionalism. Therefore, the principal's directives through meetings, supervision, and emphasis on moral values can be understood as a form of leadership that structurally supports character development within the madrasah.

The findings regarding religious habituation and madrasah culture become even stronger when interpreted alongside the research of Lubis, Siahaan, and Salminawati (2023), which shows that a religious culture in madrasahs can be developed through the continuous habituation of worship practices and religious routines. Their study emphasizes that a religious culture does not emerge solely from instructional materials but from consistent practices embedded in daily school life. In the context of MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, activities such as reciting prayers, delivering moral advice, using exemplary stories, and cultivating proper etiquette (adab) indicate that moral values are introduced through a living culture that is repeated every day. This means that moral development in the madrasah is closer to a process of internalization rather than merely the transmission of normative knowledge.

From the perspective of the organizational environment, these findings also show that the madrasah attempts to make the school a space rich in moral messages. Candra Wijaya et al. (2023) emphasize that effective character education requires environmental support, exemplary behavior, systematic planning, and evaluation that are interconnected. In this regard, the use of value posters, slogans, school rules, teachers' moral advice, and religious symbols at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village can be understood as part of the educational environment design for character development. Such an environment helps students realize that moral values are not merely theoretical discourse but standards of behavior that are lived out in everyday school life.

The evaluation aspect conducted through observations of daily behavior, attitude records, homeroom teacher reports, and coordination with the guidance and counseling unit (BK) indicates that the madrasah measures the success of moral development based on students' actual behavior. This approach aligns with the spirit of the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) policy, which positions character development as part of the culture of educational institutions rather than merely the result of cognitive assessments. In this context, character evaluation is carried out authentically, as the focus is not only on how well students understand moral concepts but also on how they demonstrate them through discipline, honesty, politeness, and responsibility in daily life.

The findings concerning the socio-cultural context of the coastal community as the basis for determining the focus of character development are also noteworthy. Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 emphasizes the involvement of families and communities as integral components of the PPK program. This means that character education must be contextual and consider the social ecosystem of students. In the context of MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, the emphasis on etiquette, self-control, discipline, and responsibility indicates that the madrasah does not design programs in a generic manner but instead adapts them to the real challenges of the surrounding environment. This approach makes moral development more relevant to the students' daily lives.

Overall, the results of this study show that the management of introducing moral concepts at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village has developed in alignment with national policy frameworks and scholarly developments supported by the works of Muhammad Fadhli, Amiruddin Siahaan, and Candra Wijaya. Values are formulated in the vision and mission as well as the school culture, instilled through learning activities and exemplary conduct, and monitored through supervision and attitude evaluation systems. The challenges arising from family backgrounds and external environmental factors highlight the importance of strengthening collaboration with parents and the broader

community. Therefore, the sustainability of moral development in this madrasah largely depends on the synergy between the internal management of the madrasah and the support of a broader educational ecosystem.

Management of Habituation Development through Repeated Practices in Strengthening Character Education for Students at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency

The research findings indicate that habituation through repeated practices at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village serves as the main strategy for strengthening students' character values after the stage of introducing moral concepts. Habituation is positioned as a process of internalizing values that occurs continuously through daily routines such as greeting (salam), time discipline, congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation (tadarus), maintaining cleanliness, and practicing polite behavior. This finding is consistent with the view that character is not formed instantly but develops through the consistent repetition of positive behavior until it becomes a habit and part of an individual's personality. In the framework of national policy, this approach also aligns with the concept of the Strengthening Character Education Program (PPK), which emphasizes character formation through sustainable collaboration among schools, families, and communities.

Conceptually, habituation constitutes the core of character education, because values that are cognitively understood only become meaningful when manifested in real actions. Therefore, habituation is not merely a routine activity but a means of shaping students' social and moral habits. This idea is consistent with the perspective of character education scholars who emphasize that character education must move from knowledge to action and eventually to habitual behavior. According to Thomas Lickona, character education involves three interconnected components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, which together lead individuals to understand, value, and practice good behavior in everyday life.

Furthermore, character education aims to cultivate good habits so that students not only know what is right but are also willing and able to practice it consistently in their lives.

From a policy perspective, the character habituation practices implemented in the madrasah are also consistent with Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education, which states that character development should be carried out through the harmonization of emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical development with the involvement of families and communities. This policy is further reinforced by Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 20 of 2018, which integrates character strengthening within intracurricular, cocurricular, extracurricular activities, and school culture. Therefore, activities such as congregational prayers, discipline in time management, social etiquette, and environmental cleanliness observed in this research can be understood as concrete implementations of national character education policies within the madrasah environment.

The management of habituation practices at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village also reflects clear planning and organizational structure. The division of roles among the madrasah principal, vice principal, duty teachers, homeroom teachers, and guidance and counseling teachers demonstrates that habituation activities are not left to occur spontaneously but are systematically managed. This finding supports the view that the success of educational programs is strongly influenced by effective management, particularly in terms of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. Within this framework, character habituation in the madrasah can be interpreted not only as a pedagogical process but also as a result of structured institutional governance.

The findings related to daily supervision and periodic evaluation of character habituation also indicate the functioning of the control aspect within educational management. In character education, control does not merely refer to punishment but rather to ensuring the consistency of value-based practices so that students understand the moral reasons behind rules and regulations. This approach aligns with the concept of educative discipline, where discipline is intended to build moral awareness rather than merely enforce compliance. Continuous monitoring of students' behavior helps ensure that character development remains a sustained educational process rather than a formal program limited to policy documents.

Character habituation at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village also appears to be integrated with the overall school culture. Practices such as greeting others, maintaining cleanliness, demonstrating discipline, and showing respect for teachers are not limited to formal activities but have become social habits within the madrasah environment. This

indicates that habituation has developed into a shared cultural practice within the school. Research on religious culture in madrasahs also shows that consistent religious routines, such as reciting the Qur'an and performing prayers together, can gradually shape students' character by embedding religious values into daily practices. Through such repeated activities, religious and moral values are not only taught theoretically but are also experienced and lived by students in their everyday school life.

From a leadership perspective, the success of character habituation in the madrasah is closely related to the role of the madrasah principal as a cultural leader. Effective leadership contributes to the establishment of institutional culture, reinforcement of school rules, teacher development, and the creation of a religious and disciplined school climate. The findings of this study show that the coordination and direction provided by the madrasah principal play an important role in maintaining the consistency of character habituation programs. In this sense, madrasah leadership functions as a driving force that supports the internalization of moral values within the educational environment.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the management of character habituation at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village has been implemented through systematic managerial processes and integrated school culture. Character values introduced during the initial stage are strengthened through consistent daily practices, supported by structured management, supervision, and leadership. Through this approach, character education in the madrasah is not only conceptual but becomes a lived experience that shapes students' attitudes and behavior in their daily lives.

However, this study also found several obstacles, particularly the influence of the external environment and the limited involvement of families in guiding students. These challenges emphasize that character habituation requires a long-term process and cross-sector support. Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 itself places families and communities as integral parts of the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) ecosystem, indicating that schools cannot work independently in developing students' character. Therefore, the limited support from families and the less conducive social environment can reduce the effectiveness of the character habituation programs that have been systematically developed within the madrasah.

From a managerial perspective, the habituation programs implemented at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village have fulfilled the principle of sustainability. The habituation programs are not incidental activities but are designed as long-term routines supported by institutional policies, documentation, and supervisory structures. This finding is consistent with the idea proposed by Candra Wijaya et al., who argue that character education must be developed as an institutional system rather than relying solely on certain individuals. In other words, the strength of habituation programs lies in their ability to become institutional culture that continues to operate even when there are changes in personnel within the madrasah (Wijaya et al., 2023).

Thus, this discussion confirms that the management of character development through repeated practices at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village has been implemented in alignment with both character education theory and national education policies. Habituation has proven to be an effective bridge between the introduction of moral values and the formation of students' real character. In this context, the work of Muhammad Fadhli reinforces the importance of proper educational program governance, the work of Amiruddin Siahaan highlights the role of religious culture and madrasah leadership, while the work of Candra Wijaya clarifies that character education must be managed systematically in order to be sustainable. The remaining challenges require stronger synergy among schools, families, and communities so that character habituation can be more deeply internalized and more stable in the daily lives of students.

Management of Reflective Development: Encouraging Students to Reflect on Why Actions Are Important in Strengthening Character Education for Students at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency

The research findings show that reflective development at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village represents a crucial stage following the introduction of moral values and the habituation of behavior. Reflection is positioned as a process of value internalization, helping students understand the moral reasons behind certain actions and their consequences for themselves and others. Within the framework of character education, reflection is understood as a bridge between outward behavior and the internal moral awareness that develops within individuals. Therefore, the presence of

reflective practices in this madrasah indicates that character development does not stop at behavioral compliance but moves toward the formation of students' ethical awareness. This idea aligns with Thomas Lickona's concept emphasizing the importance of the dimensions of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action in character education.

Theoretically, reflection is at the core of transformative moral education. John Dewey describes reflection as an active, persistent, and careful process of thinking about experiences or beliefs so that individuals can gain deeper meaning and guide their actions more consciously. In the context of character education, reflection provides space for students to evaluate their moral experiences, connect values with real-life situations, and derive lessons to improve their future behavior. Therefore, the findings regarding the presence of dialogue, moral advice, and students' self-evaluation at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village closely align with the reflective framework developed by Dewey.

From a policy perspective, reflective development is an integral part of the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program, which emphasizes the harmonization of moral awareness (olah hati), emotional development (olah rasa), intellectual development (olah pikir), and physical development (olah raga). In this framework, reflection mainly operates within the dimensions of olah hati and olah rasa, as it helps students develop moral sensitivity, empathy, and self-awareness. Therefore, reflective practices implemented at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village can be understood as a form of PPK policy implementation that not only emphasizes behavioral routines but also the deep internalization of values within students.

The findings also reveal that reflection in this madrasah is not always conducted in rigid formal formats but is integrated into classroom learning, homeroom teacher guidance, counseling sessions with guidance and counseling teachers (BK), and moral advice following religious activities. This pattern aligns with Zubaedi's perspective, which emphasizes that character education should be contextual, integrated with educational processes, and closely related to students' life experiences. Through such a flexible and contextual approach, reflection becomes more meaningful because students do not feel as though they are being judged, but rather guided to understand themselves and improve their attitudes.

The management of reflective development at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village also demonstrates a clear division of roles among the madrasah principal, vice principals, homeroom teachers, and guidance and counseling teachers. The principal functions as the policy director and the architect of the institutional culture of character development, while homeroom teachers and counseling teachers directly conduct reflective guidance due to their closer interpersonal relationships with students. These findings are consistent with Muhammad Fadhli's perspective that the success of educational programs largely depends on effective management, particularly in aspects of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. In this context, reflective character development in the madrasah is not an incidental activity but part of a consciously designed educational governance system.

Furthermore, the finding that reflection is integrated into learning activities through evaluative lesson closures and reflective questioning indicates that teachers do not merely teach academic content but also facilitate the growth of students' attitudes and moral awareness. This approach aligns with Donald Schön's concept of reflective practice, which suggests that effective learning processes provide opportunities for both students and educators to evaluate experiences, understand actions, and improve future decisions. Thus, the learning process at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village appears to operate not only within the cognitive domain but also within the affective and moral domains, supporting the holistic development of students' character.

The existence of behavioral records and student counseling reports as follow-ups to the reflection process indicates that the madrasah has attempted to document character development efforts. This documentation is important because it helps ensure the continuity of character guidance and enables the school to monitor changes in students' attitudes over time. The work of Candra Wijaya et al. on character education management emphasizes that effective character development must be supported by systems, culture, evaluation mechanisms, and institutional sustainability. Therefore, the documentation practices at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village can be understood as a step toward the institutionalization of character development, although they still require more standardized procedures.

The obstacles identified, such as students who are reserved and not yet willing to express their feelings or admit their mistakes, represent common challenges in reflective guidance. This finding indicates that reflection cannot merely be provided as a forum, but also requires psychological safety and warm interpersonal relationships. In the context of the madrasah, the gradual and persuasive approaches employed by teachers and homeroom teachers represent appropriate strategies because humanistic character development requires trust, role modeling, and emotional closeness. This finding is also consistent with the research of Rahmah and Fadhli, which shows that educators' competencies influence the formation of students' character in Islamic educational institutions.

From an evaluation perspective, the success of reflection is not measured by how frequently students speak during the process, but rather by the changes in attitudes and behaviors that occur afterward. Therefore, the emphasis of this study on observing students' daily behavior as an indicator of reflective success aligns with the principles of authentic assessment in character education. Zubaedi emphasizes that character education must produce real changes in habits and behavior, not merely verbal understanding of what is right and wrong. Thus, reflection can be considered successful when students demonstrate improvements in responsibility, self-control, moral awareness, and discipline in school life.

Reflection also functions as a bridge between habituation and character integration. Without reflection, habituation may turn into a mechanical routine performed merely out of fear of rules. Through reflection, students are helped to understand the meaning behind these habits and are encouraged to practice these values consciously. In this regard, the findings from MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village reinforce the view that a strong character development cycle includes the introduction of values, habituation of values, reflection on values, and the integration of values into personality. This framework closely aligns with the systemic approach to character education management developed by Candra Wijaya and colleagues.

From a managerial perspective, reflective guidance at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village demonstrates efforts toward institutionalization, although it is still implemented in a flexible manner. In the future, strengthening reflection can be directed toward developing student reflection guidelines, improving attitude evaluation instruments, and enhancing teachers' capacity in reflective guidance techniques. In this context, the work of Amiruddin Siahaan on religious culture and madrasah leadership reinforces the idea that student development will be more effective when supported by institutional culture, consistent leadership, and coordinated teacher roles. Therefore, strengthening reflection is not merely a matter of methods, but also of the school system that supports it.

Thus, this discussion confirms that the management of reflective guidance at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village has been implemented in alignment with character education theory and the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) policy. Reflection functions as a space for deep moral learning, helping students understand, evaluate, and consciously improve their behavior. In this discussion, the work of Muhammad Fadhli strengthens the aspect of program management, Amiruddin Siahaan emphasizes the importance of religious culture and madrasah leadership, while Candra Wijaya clarifies the importance of an integrated character education management system. The remaining challenges indicate the need to strengthen teachers' capacities and supporting systems so that reflection can develop into a more structured and sustainable culture of character development.

Management of Integration in Character Development so that Moral Actions are Performed Naturally and Consistently in Character Education Strengthening Activities at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village, Tanjung Beringin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency

The results of the study indicate that the integration of moral actions at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village represents the culmination stage of the entire character development process. At this stage, moral values that were previously introduced, habituated, and reflected upon are no longer present merely as formal rules but have begun to appear in students' behavior in a more natural and consistent manner in their daily school life. From the perspective of character education, this condition shows that values have moved from the cognitive level toward becoming part of the students' living personality as reflected in their actions. Therefore, the integration of moral actions can be understood as an important indicator of the success of character development, since students begin to do good not merely because of supervision, but because of the growing awareness within themselves. This framework is consistent

with the view of Thomas Lickona regarding the ultimate goal of character education, which emphasizes the integration of *moral knowing, moral feeling,* and *moral action*.

Theoretically, the integration of moral actions is closely related to the development of internal moral control, namely the ability of individuals to act according to values without constant external supervision. In this context, the finding that students help their peers, behave politely, maintain cleanliness, and comply with school norms without being instructed indicates that some students have begun to move toward internally guided moral control. This finding is consistent with Lickona's idea that character education aims to develop individuals who do good because they understand and believe in the value of goodness itself. Meanwhile, the book *Character Education Management* by Candra Wijaya and colleagues emphasizes that the integration of values into real actions indicates that character education has moved beyond the stage of merely conveying norms and has entered the stage of personality formation.

In the context of national policy, the integration of moral actions aligns with the objectives of the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) program, which emphasizes the development of a character-based school culture through the integration of intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities, as well as the involvement of families and communities. Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 places educational institutions as the center of character development through the harmonization of *olah hati* (spiritual development), *olah rasa* (emotional and social development), *olah pikir* (intellectual development), and *olah raga* (physical development), while the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 20 of 2018 emphasizes the implementation of character strengthening in both learning activities and school culture. Within this framework, the research findings showing that moral values at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village do not stand as a separate program but are embedded in daily habits, interactions, and the culture of school life indicate an implementation that aligns with these national policies.

From the perspective of educational management, the integration of moral actions reflects the functioning of the entire cycle of character development. The head of the madrasah establishes the direction of institutional values and culture, teachers implement and model these values in the learning process, while homeroom teachers and guidance and counseling teachers strengthen the consistency of students' behavior in daily life. This pattern closely aligns with the emphasis of Muhammad Fadhli, who argues that the quality of education largely depends on effective management, including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs. Fadhli's work on the management of educational quality improvement emphasizes that successful programs in educational institutions do not emerge spontaneously but are the result of systematic and consistent management. Therefore, the integration of moral actions in this madrasah can be interpreted as the outcome of structured character development management.

The integration of character values into academic activities found in this study, such as connecting moral values with lesson materials and classroom interactions, indicates the implementation of character-based learning. In this approach, each subject not only functions to deliver knowledge but also becomes a space for instilling values. This idea aligns with the view of Zubaedi, who argues that integrating character values into learning is essential to prevent the dichotomy between cognitive education and moral education. Similarly, Candra Wijaya and colleagues emphasize that character education will be more effective when values are not taught merely as additional discourse but are directly connected to students' learning experiences. Therefore, the findings at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village indicate that moral values are increasingly positioned as an inherent part of the educational process rather than as a supplementary element.

The research findings also reveal efforts to integrate moral values with the coastal community environment surrounding the madrasah. Students' involvement in social and religious activities within the local community expands the space for practicing moral values from the school environment to the wider society. This direction aligns with the concept of the character education ecosystem in Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017, which positions society as a strategic partner in the character development of students. In the context of Islamic education, the article by Amiruddin Siahaan together with Dwi Muthia Ridha Lubis and Salminawati shows that religious culture in madrasahs is built through consistent habituation supported by the institutional environment. This finding strengthens the understanding that the integration of moral actions will become more solid when schools do not work independently but are connected with the socio-religious practices that exist in students' surrounding communities.

The consistent integration of moral actions is also reflected in the culture of discipline and school regulations that are implemented fairly and sustainably. Consistent discipline helps students understand moral and social boundaries, while fair implementation fosters a sense of responsibility and trust in rules. From the perspective of character education, discipline is not merely a tool of control but also a means of developing moral awareness. The book *Character Education Management* by Candra Wijaya and colleagues emphasizes that school culture, role modeling, and the consistent enforcement of rules constitute important foundations for the formation of stable positive behavior. Therefore, discipline at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village can be understood not merely as an instrument of order, but also as a medium for integrating moral actions.

From an evaluation perspective, the success of character integration in this madrasah is more visible through observations of students' behavior in their daily lives rather than through written instruments alone. This approach is consistent with the principles of authentic assessment in character education, which emphasize that real behavior is the most important indicator of successful value internalization. Within the framework of character education management, Candra Wijaya and colleagues also stress the importance of evaluation that does not stop at documentation but examines changes in attitudes, consistency of habits, and the quality of students' interactions. Therefore, the emphasis of this study on daily behavior as a measure of moral integration demonstrates alignment with the substantive principles of character evaluation.

However, the study also found that maintaining the consistency of moral integration faces several challenges, particularly from the influence of external environments outside the school that do not always align with the values taught by the madrasah. This challenge confirms that character integration requires continuous reinforcement and cross-environment collaboration. The findings of Amiruddin Siahaan and colleagues regarding religious culture in madrasahs show that value development becomes more effective when supported by continuous habituation and strong institutional culture. Meanwhile, the Strengthening Character Education (PPK) policy itself emphasizes the importance of the involvement of families and communities. Thus, the external challenges identified in this study further reinforce the need for synergy among schools, families, and communities in maintaining the sustainability of students' moral action integration.

From the perspective of moral development, the integration of moral actions that has begun to appear among students can be understood as an ongoing process that continues to grow and is not yet final. In other words, the achievements observed at school must continue to be maintained through repeated social experiences, teacher role modeling, and the consistency of school culture. In this regard, the article *The Role of Boarding School Leaders in Character Building of Santri* written by Wahida Raihan Nasution, Candra Wijaya, and Muhammad Fadhli emphasizes that educational leadership, role modeling, and a religious institutional climate have a significant influence on the formation of students' character. Although the context of the study is Islamic boarding schools, its fundamental argument remains relevant to madrasahs, namely that character develops more strongly when the values taught are supported by consistent leadership and a living institutional culture.

Thus, this discussion confirms that the management of moral action integration at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village has been implemented in alignment with character education theory and national policy. The integration of moral values can be seen in students' behavior that increasingly appears natural and consistent, supported by teachers' role modeling, school culture, structured management of character development, and connections with the surrounding community. In this discussion, the work of Muhammad Fadhli strengthens the aspects of program management and quality improvement, the work of Amiruddin Siahaan reinforces the importance of religious culture and habituation, while the work of Candra Wijaya clarifies the importance of an integrated character education management system. Although external challenges remain, the integration of moral actions demonstrates that the madrasah has begun to position character education as an integral part of school life rather than merely a formal program.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the management of student character development at MA Al-Washliyah Nagur Village is implemented systematically and sustainably through four main stages: value introduction, habituation,

reflection, and integration of moral actions. This process is not partial but fully integrated into the entire madrasah education system through learning activities, teacher role modeling, daily routines, and the strengthening of school culture. Value introduction is carried out contextually in accordance with the characteristics of the coastal community, while habituation is reinforced through consistent routines and continuous supervision. Reflection is developed through dialogical approaches and counseling to build students' internal moral awareness, and the integration of values is reflected in students' increasingly independent and consistent behavior in daily life. However, the effectiveness of character development still faces major challenges from external factors, particularly family and coastal community environments, such as unsupportive parenting patterns, economic pressures of fishermen's families, and less conducive social environments, which hinder the optimal internalization of values instilled at school. Therefore, more concrete and integrated policy interventions from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and local Education Offices are required, including strengthening madrasah-based parenting programs, developing systematic school–family partnerships, providing socio-economic support for coastal students' families, designing context-based character education models, and implementing measurable monitoring and evaluation systems. Thus, the success of character development depends not only on internal school programs but also on sustained synergy among schools, families, and the broader social environment.

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