

REVITALIZATION OF STUDENT CHARACTER VALUES AT MA DARUL FALLAH UNISMUH BISSOLORO, BUNGAYA DISTRICT, GOWA REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

Character education has become an increasingly important issue in response to moral degradation, digital disruption, and changing social values among adolescents. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are recognized as strategic institutions for cultivating students' character through the integration of religious teachings, moral habituation, and communal life. However, limited studies have examined how pesantren revitalize character values in response to the challenges of the digital era. This study aims to analyze the implementation and revitalization strategies of students' character values at MA Darul Fallah Unismuh Bissoloro, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi. The research employed a qualitative case study approach involving participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Fifteen key informants consisting of school leaders, teachers, dormitory supervisors, and students participated in the study. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that character revitalization is implemented through the internalization of five core values: honesty (shiddiq), responsibility (amanah), discipline (intizham), social concern (ukhuwah), and independence (i'timad 'ala nafs). These values are strengthened through trust-based education, collective habituation, personal mentoring, and spiritual reflection. Furthermore, the study identifies three major revitalization strategies: the integration of Islamic values into daily activities, leadership development through student organizations, and the implementation of a tawazun (balance) approach in managing digital technology. The findings indicate that character formation becomes more effective when supported by a comprehensive educational ecosystem that integrates religious values, institutional culture, and adaptive digital literacy practices. This study contributes to the development of sustainable character education models in Islamic boarding schools facing contemporary digital challenges.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Character education has become one of the strategic priorities in the Indonesian education system due to increasing concerns regarding moral degradation, cyberbullying, intolerance, juvenile delinquency, and the negative impacts of uncontrolled digital technology use among adolescents. In the context of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and

Society 5.0, educational institutions are required not only to develop students' cognitive competencies but also to strengthen their moral and character foundations to ensure balanced personal development (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2023; Nirmala & Wijaya, 2024). Character education refers to a systematic process of cultivating moral values, ethical behavior, responsibility, honesty, discipline, and social awareness through educational experiences and habituation. Recent studies indicate that character education significantly contributes to students' social competence, academic achievement, emotional intelligence, and resilience in facing contemporary challenges (Fahham, 2023; Shiddiq & Fauzi, 2024). Consequently, strengthening character education has become an essential component of educational reform in Indonesia.

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) have historically played a significant role in character formation through the integration of religious teachings, moral cultivation, and daily life practices. Unlike conventional educational institutions, *pesantren* provide a holistic educational environment where students continuously interact with religious values, role models, and community-based learning systems. Recent literature demonstrates that *pesantren* remain effective institutions for developing honesty, responsibility, leadership, discipline, and social concern among students through both formal and informal educational activities (Huda & Susanto, 2024; Abdullah & Siregar, 2023). The rapid expansion of digital technology presents both opportunities and challenges for character development in *pesantren*. While digital platforms facilitate access to educational resources and communication, they also expose students to misinformation, excessive social media consumption, online addiction, and moral challenges that may weaken traditional values. Therefore, *pesantren* are required to adapt their educational strategies to ensure that technological advancement supports rather than undermines character development (Afifah & Prasetyo, 2024; Siregar & Abdullah, 2025).

Recent studies have explored character education in *pesantren*; however, most focus on general implementation models, curriculum development, or conceptual discussions. Limited research has specifically examined how *pesantren* revitalize character values in response to contemporary digital challenges while maintaining Islamic educational traditions. This gap is particularly important because the sustainability of *pesantren* character education depends on their ability to balance traditional religious values with technological transformation (Ahmad & Hasan, 2022; Mutohar, 2022). MA Darul Fallaah Unismuh Bissoloro represents a unique case of Muhammadiyah-based Islamic boarding school education that emphasizes character formation alongside academic excellence. The institution integrates Islamic values, organizational activities, leadership training, entrepreneurship programs, and controlled technology utilization into its educational system. This integrated approach provides an important context for understanding how character revitalization is implemented in contemporary *pesantren* settings. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation and revitalization strategies of students' character values at MA Darul Fallaah Unismuh Bissoloro, particularly in responding to the challenges posed by digitalization and changing social environments. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of sustainable character education models in Islamic boarding schools and provide practical recommendations for educational institutions seeking to strengthen character formation in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to explore the revitalization of character values among students at MA Darul Fallaah Unismuh Bissoloro. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, educational practices, and character development processes within the natural setting of an Islamic boarding school (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The research was conducted at MA Darul Fallaah Unismuh Bissoloro, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, from January to May 2025. The research participants consisted of 15 key informants, including the principal, vice

principal, dormitory supervisors, teachers, student organization leaders, and students from grades X, XI, and XII. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in character education programs. Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Participatory observation was conducted to understand the daily implementation of character education practices. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and evaluations regarding character revitalization. Documentation analysis included school regulations, student activity reports, character development programs, and institutional policies. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data credibility, triangulation of sources, methods, and documentation was applied throughout the research process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

1 Implementation of Character Values in the Lives of Students

a. The Character of Honesty (Shiddiq)

The findings indicate that honesty is developed through a trust-based educational system emphasizing self-awareness and moral accountability before Allah. This finding supports previous studies that identified honesty as one of the core values of pesantren character education, cultivated through continuous habituation, religious supervision, and internal moral control rather than external punishment mechanisms (Fahham, 2023; Shiddiq & Fauzi, 2024). The high percentage of voluntary error reporting among students demonstrates that character internalization has progressed from compliance with institutional rules toward intrinsic moral consciousness. Similar findings were reported by Abdullah and Siregar (2023), who found that effective character education in pesantren is characterized by the transformation of external values into students' personal ethical commitments.

b. The Character of Responsibility (Amanah)

The implementation of amanah through collective duties and organizational responsibilities reflects experiential character learning. This result is consistent with Mutohar (2022), who emphasized that prophetic-based education in Islamic boarding schools promotes responsibility through direct participation in communal activities and shared accountability.

Furthermore, the finding that students perceive responsibility as a collective obligation aligns with the study of Rahman and Azis (2022), which highlighted that pesantren-based education develops social responsibility through collaborative learning environments and organizational engagement.

c. Disciplined Character (Intizham)

The disciplined culture observed at MA Darul Fallaah demonstrates that consistency and habituation are more effective than punitive approaches in fostering self-discipline. This finding supports Huda and Susanto (2024), who argued that discipline in Islamic boarding schools is primarily developed through structured daily routines and continuous value reinforcement. The low level of tardiness among students also indicates the successful integration of discipline into everyday behavior, which is recognized as a critical indicator of effective character education implementation in pesantren settings (Maulidin, 2025).

d. Character of Social Concern (Ukhuwah)

The strong solidarity among students reflects the successful cultivation of ukhuwah values within the boarding school environment. This finding corroborates previous studies showing that communal living systems in pesantren encourage empathy, cooperation, tolerance, and mutual assistance among students (Putro & Prasetyo, 2023; Huda & Susanto, 2024).

The spontaneous fundraising initiatives and collective support mechanisms observed in this study further demonstrate how Islamic values can be translated into practical social behaviors and civic responsibility (Rahman & Azis, 2022).

e. Character of Independence (I'timad 'Ala al-Nafs)

The entrepreneurship and financial management programs implemented by the institution contribute significantly to the development of student independence. Similar findings were reported by Nurhayati and Pratama (2025), who found that character-based curriculum management in pesantren effectively promotes self-reliance and entrepreneurial competencies among students. The emphasis on economic independence also reflects Muhammadiyah's educational philosophy, which seeks to develop individuals who are intellectually capable, socially responsible, and economically productive (Muhammadiyah, 2023).

2 Character Revitalization Strategies in the Digital Era

The findings reveal that MA Darul Fallaah adopts a balanced (*tawazun*) approach in responding to digital transformation. Rather than completely restricting students' access to technology, the institution seeks to cultivate digital responsibility through guided access and character-based supervision. This strategy is consistent with Afifah and Prasetyo (2024), who found that digital literacy programs integrated with character education are more effective than restrictive policies in shaping ethical technology use among students. The gradual digital detox system also reflects the principle of adaptive character education, where students are trained to develop self-control and critical thinking skills when interacting with digital environments. Similar conclusions were reached by Nirmala and Wijaya (2024), who emphasized that character education in the digital era should focus on developing students' capacity for responsible decision-making rather than merely enforcing technological restrictions. Furthermore, the *tawazun* approach demonstrates the ability of pesantren institutions to maintain traditional Islamic values while adapting to contemporary social changes. This finding supports the work of Siregar and Abdullah (2025), who argued that the sustainability of character education in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools depends on their capacity to harmonize religious traditions with technological advancement. The revitalization strategy implemented at MA Darul Fallaah also strengthens previous findings by Azka and Rahman (2025), who concluded that character revitalization programs become more effective when they integrate moral education, digital literacy, and community participation within a comprehensive educational ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

The revitalization of character values at MA Darul Fallaah Unismuh Bissoloro demonstrates that character formation can be effectively strengthened through a holistic and integrative educational approach that combines religious values, daily habituation, leadership development, entrepreneurship activities, and responsible technology utilization. The findings reveal that honesty, responsibility, discipline, social concern, and independence are internalized through continuous practice rather than merely through formal instruction. The study also highlights the importance of adapting character education strategies to contemporary digital challenges. The implementation of the *tawazun* (balance) approach enables students to develop digital literacy while maintaining adherence to Islamic moral values. Rather than completely restricting technology, the institution promotes self-control, responsibility, and ethical digital behavior.

Furthermore, the success of character revitalization is supported by the integration of character values into all aspects of students' daily lives, including academic, social, spiritual, and organizational activities. This integrated character ecosystem contributes significantly to the development of morally responsible and socially engaged students. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools are encouraged to strengthen collaboration with parents, develop measurable character assessment instruments, and integrate digital character education into their institutional programs to ensure the sustainability of character development in the digital era. These findings reinforce previous studies emphasizing that sustainable character education in Islamic boarding schools requires the integration of religious values, habituation processes, institutional culture, and adaptive responses to technological developments (Abdullah & Siregar, 2023; Siregar & Abdullah, 2025; Ubaidillah & Hidayat, 2025).

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