

EMBEDDING ISLAMIC VALUES IN EDUCATION: STRATEGIES FOR CHARACTER BUILDING AT MADRASAH KULLIYATUL MU'ALLIMIN AL-ISLAMIYAH GONTOR

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to identify the strategies employed by Madrasah Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyah Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo in the pursuit of enhanced character education and to analyse the impact of these strategies on students' attitudes, behaviours and achievements. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological research design was employed to gather data through observation, interviews, and documentation. Triangulation was conducted to ensure the validity of the data. The data were subjected to an integrated analysis using the Miles-Huberman model and Mintzberg's 5P theory. The findings demonstrate that the madrasah effectively

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employs a range of strategies, including the integration of Islamic values into daily life, character-based learning models, the development of positive habits, leadership training, and the active involvement of parents and the community. The reinforcement of character education has had a beneficial impact on students, facilitating improvements in discipline, responsibility, social conduct, and both academic and non-academic achievements. Additionally, it has led to notable enhancements in leadership and collaboration abilities. This study emphasises the importance of integrating character education into all aspects of madrasah activities and highlights the value of collaboration between madrasahs, parents, and the community in fostering students with robust and autonomous character traits.

Keywords: Achievements, Attitudes, Character, Education.

Introduction

Education is an intentional and structured endeavour to cultivate a conducive learning environment and process, enabling students to actively actualise their potential for religious and spiritual strength, personality, intelligence, virtuous character, self-control, and physical development in alignment with societal, national, and state needs. In Indonesia, the principles of Pancasila serve as the foundation for character education. The fundamental principles of this nation hold great significance in the formation of its character.¹

Character education represents a crucial component of the educational system, with the objective of fostering the development of individuals who demonstrate noble moral standards and conduct in alignment with moral values. In the field of character education, Thomas Lickona, a leading expert, posits that the process of developing moral character entails learning and internalizing a set of values, including honesty, responsibility, discipline, and empathy.² The objective of character education is to establish a robust moral framework within students, equipping them with the capacity to engage actively in social life and assume responsibility for themselves and for society. In Indonesia, the National Education System Law

¹ Chatia Hastasari, Benni Setiawan, and Suranto Aw, "Students' Communication Patterns of Islamic Boarding Schools: The Case of Students in Muallimin Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta," *Heliyon* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2022): e08824, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e08824>.

² Mark Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education," *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (November 1, 2004): 517–29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305006042000284510>.

No. 20 of 2003 regulates character education. This legislation emphasises the importance of implementing character education at various levels of education as part of the broader effort to shape the nation's character. Consequently, character education must be implemented holistically, with the involvement of educational institutions, familial units, and the broader community.³

Character education can be defined as a systematic effort to instill and foster moral values in students. Lickona (2015) posits that the implementation of character education must be carried out through the integration of moral values in all learning activities in schools, both formal and non-formal. The strategies that may be employed include a value-based approach, teaching by example, and the reinforcement of the role of parents and society in supporting the formation of student character.⁴ The success of character education is contingent upon a number of factors, including the quality of teaching provided, the active role of parents, a supportive social environment, and the existence of relevant educational policies. Furthermore, internal student factors, such as motivation, discipline, and self-awareness, are also crucial for the efficacy of character education implementation.⁵

Nevertheless, despite the growing emphasis on character education in the Indonesian education system, numerous challenges remain to be addressed. One of the primary challenges is the inconsistency in the implementation of character values, both within educational institutions and in everyday life. The majority of educational institutions have been unsuccessful in integrating character education into the core curriculum, with character education

³ Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character. How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* (New York: Bantam Books, 1991).

⁴ Huwaida Tengku-Armia, "A Study of Philosophical Foundations of 2013 Islamic Education Curriculum in Indonesia," *Philosophical Readings - Online Journal of Philosophy* 15, no. 1 (August 29, 2023), <https://open.unive.it/ojs/index.php/pr/article/view/189>.

⁵ Muhammad Riaz and Muhammad Uzair ul Hassan, "Examining the Development of Professional Dispositions of Prospective Teachers in Higher Education: Broadening the Horizon of Teacher Training," *International Journal of Innovation in Teaching and Learning (IJITL)* 6, no. 2 (2020): 170–85, <https://doi.org/10.35993/ijitl.v6i2.1233>.

frequently regarded as an ancillary subject.⁶ Conversely, the role of parents and the wider community in providing support for the enhancement of students' character remains constrained. Furthermore, the accelerated development of technology and social media presents a unique set of challenges. These developments often influence students' attitudes and behaviors in ways that are incongruent with the desired character values.⁷

Pondok Modern Daarussalam Gontor Ponorogo, a prominent educational institution renowned for its robust tradition of teaching and character development, also encounters obstacles in the implementation of character education. Despite the implementation of various programmes aimed at strengthening character education, the relevance of the strategies employed in addressing the dynamics of the contemporary era remains a challenge. The primary challenge is to ensure the continued relevance and efficacy of character education at Madrasah Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyyah ((in the following text, referred to as KMI) in the context of rapid social and technological change. Additionally, it is essential to determine how all components of the institution can be engaged in the holistic strengthening of student character.⁸

The necessity for this research is heightened by the significance of reinforcing character education as a means of influencing the development of a younger generation that is not only intellectually capable but also possesses commendable moral standards. The rationale behind the choice of this title is the necessity to gain a profound understanding of the strategies employed at Madrasah KMI in the field of student character education, with a view to optimising them. The Daarussalam Gontor Ponorogo Modern Boarding School was selected as the site of this study due to its longstanding reputation for excellence in character and moral education. It is anticipated that

⁶ Nana Herdiana Abdurrahman, "Character Education in Islamic Boarding School-Based SMA Amanah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 2 (June 21, 2016): 287–305, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v2i2.791>.

⁷ Nur Rizqi Febriandika and Chori Miftahul Kosidatul Natus, "Islamic Character Development through Boarding-Based Public Schools: Internalization Islamic Methods," *TADIBUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 4, no. 1 (May 25, 2021): 12–28, <https://doi.org/10.30659/jpai.4.1.12-28>.

⁸ Delipiter Lase et al., "Peran Inovasi dalam Pembangunan Ekonomi dan Pendidikan Menuju Visi Indonesia Maju 2045," *Tubenori: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 2, no. 2 (June 29, 2024): 114–29, <https://doi.org/10.62138/tubenori.v2i2.18>.

the findings will make a substantial contribution to the advancement of character education strategies in Islamic boarding schools.

This research is distinct from previous studies in that it employs a more comprehensive approach to examining the strategy of strengthening character education at Madrasah KMI, while also utilising Mintzberg's theory to analyse existing challenges. This research is distinctive in its strategic approach, which links management theory with the implementation of character education in the context of Islamic educational institutions. This approach can provide new insights into the development of character education strategies in Islamic boarding schools.

The principal objective of this study is to identify and analyse the strategies employed by Madrasah KMI in the enhancement of student character education, and to evaluate the impact of such education on the development of attitudes, behaviours and student achievements within the madrasah. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will prove valuable to madrasah managers in enhancing the quality of character education in the future.

It is anticipated that this research will make a significant contribution to the development of character education theories, particularly within the context of Islamic education. In practice, this research can make a significant contribution to the formulation of a more effective strategy for strengthening character education at Madrasah KMI Pondok Modern Daarussalam Gontor Ponorogo. Furthermore, it can serve as a reference for other educational institutions seeking to implement more effective character education in accordance with the demands of the times.

This study employs a qualitative research methodology with a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach was selected to facilitate an in-depth exploration and understanding of the experiences, perspectives, and meanings ascribed by the research subjects with regard to the strategy of strengthening character education at Madrasah KMI Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo.⁹ This approach permits researchers to discern the subjective perceptions and realities confronted by those responsible for implementing education in the madrasah, as well as to identify the

⁹ Ab. Halim Tamuri, "Islamic Education Teachers' Perceptions of the Teaching of Akhlāq in Malaysian Secondary Schools," *Journal of Moral Education* 36, no. 3 (September 1, 2007): 371–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240701553347>.

ways in which they design and implement character education strategies within a broader context.¹⁰

The subject of this research is the Director of Madrasah KMI, Masyhudi Sobari, and several other *Asatidz* (teachers) who are directly involved in the learning process and the strengthening of character education in the madrasah. The subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique, whereby the researcher identifies individuals who possess information and experience that is pertinent to the research topic. The objective of this subject selection is to gain a deeper understanding of the policies, implementation, and challenges faced in strengthening character education in Madrasah KMI.

The data collection method in this study was carried out with three main techniques, namely observation, interview, and documentation. Observations were made to see firsthand the implementation of character education strategies implemented in madrasahs. Interviews were conducted with selected subjects, such as the Director and the Asaatidz board, to explore their views on the strategies implemented, the challenges faced, and the resulting impact. In addition, documentation is also collected to obtain more objective data about the character education programs that have been carried out, including materials, activities, and policies in the madrasah.

The veracity of the data presented in this study is assured through the utilisation of triangulation techniques, encompassing both source triangulation and triangulation techniques. The process of source triangulation involves a comparison of data obtained from disparate sources, including interviews with directors and teachers, as well as data gathered through observation and documentation.¹¹ This is intended to guarantee the consistency and trustworthiness of the data obtained. Meanwhile, triangulation techniques are employed by combining various data collection techniques (observation, interviews,

¹⁰ John P. Miller, "Holistic Education: A Brief History," in *International Handbook of Holistic Education* (Routledge, 2018).

¹¹ Mohammad Rindu Fajar Islamy, "Islamic Education During the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Dynamic of Online Learning on Character Education," *Nadwa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 15, no. 1 (September 12, 2021): 87–108, <https://doi.org/10.21580/nw.2021.15.1.8761>.

and documentation) to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth information.¹²

The data analysis method employed in this study utilises the data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which encompasses the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and the drawing of conclusions. This process is integrated with Mintzberg's theory of the 5Ps, which includes the following elements: Plan (strategic plan), Ploy (tactics used), Pattern (developing habit patterns), Position (position of madrasahs in the context of character education), and Perspective (holistic view of character education).¹³ This theory is employed to analyse the implementation of character education strategies in Madrasah KMI and to evaluate their impact on student character development. The combination of these two analytical methods is intended to facilitate a more profound and comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the strategy to reinforce character education in the madrasah.

This study employs a qualitative approach utilising phenomenological methods to gain insight into the experience and implementation of character education enhancement at Madrasah KMI Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo. The study's subject was the Director of KMI, Masyhudi Sobari, and several Asaatidz councils who were involved in the character education process. The data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, which will be subjected to analysis in order to gain insight into the character strengthening strategies that were implemented and their impact on student attitudes, behaviours, and achievements.

The veracity of the data is assured through the triangulation of sources and techniques. The process of source triangulation involves the involvement of multiple parties to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information being collected. In contrast, the technique of triangulation combines data from a variety of sources

¹² Yuli Marlina et al., "Expanding Avenues in Building Students' Character Through Religious And Spiritual Development In Digital Era," *EDUTECH: Journal of Education And Technology* 7, no. 1 (September 25, 2023): 278–89, <https://doi.org/10.29062/edu.v7i1.639>.

¹³ Henry Mintzberg, "The Strategy Concept I: Five Ps for Strategy," *California Management Review* 30, no. 1 (October 1, 1987): 11–24, <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165263>.

and methods to enhance the validity and robustness of the findings.¹⁴ The data was analysed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, integrated with Mintzberg's 5P theory (Plan, Ploy, Pattern, Position, and Perspective). This was done in order to gain insight into the application of character strengthening strategies in madrasas.¹⁵

The objective of this research is to make a contribution to the development of character education in madrasas. It is hoped that effective strategies will be identified that can improve students' attitudes, behaviours and achievements. It is anticipated that the findings of this study will provide recommendations for educational managers with a view to the implementation of more effective character education strategies.

Strategies for Strengthening Student Character Education in Madrasah Kulliyatul Muallimin al-Islamiyah

The implementation of Islamic values in the daily lives of students at Madrasah KMI is evident in the institution's multifaceted approach to character education. One of the principal activities is congregational prayer, which is conducted each morning. This activity has twofold objectives: firstly, to fulfil religious obligations and secondly, to instill discipline, togetherness and a sense of responsibility among students.¹⁶ Furthermore, the regular recitation of Islamic teachings in classrooms and dormitories provides students with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the religion, which in turn fosters the development of positive character traits such as honesty, simplicity, and perseverance in learning. It is evident from this observation that all activities integrated into the madrasah curriculum serve to reinforce the spiritual dimension of the students' development. This, in turn, fosters the growth of independent and

¹⁴ Harimawan Harimawan, Arif Budi Raharjo, and Eko Harianto, "Islamic Religious Education Learning Innovations in Strengthening Character Education in the Industrial Revolution Era 4.0," *DWIJA CENDEKIA: Jurnal Riset Pedagogik* 8, no. 1 (May 11, 2024): 131–48, <https://doi.org/10.20961/jdc.v8i1.85858>.

¹⁵ Fella Lahmar, "Islamic Education: An Islamic 'Wisdom-Based Cultural Environment' in a Western Context," *Religions* 11, no. 8 (August 2020): 409, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11080409>.

¹⁶ Nadri Taja et al., "Character Education in the Pandemic Era: A Religious Ethical Learning Model through Islamic Education," *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 20, no. 11 (November 26, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.11.8>.

responsible individuals, equipped with the capacity to make sound judgments and take well-considered action in all aspects of their lives.

Interviews with a number of key figures at Madrasah KMI indicate a robust commitment to the implementation of Islamic-based character education. Masyhudi Sobari, the Director, highlighted that the educational programme at this madrasah places a strong emphasis on the development of students' character through the application of Islamic teachings in daily life. For instance, Ustadz Nurhadi Ehsan elucidated that Islamic-based character education is not merely conveyed through theoretical discourse; rather, it is demonstrated through the practical application of these values in students' actual lives, encompassing both social interactions and personal conduct. Furthermore, Farid Sulistyو posited that the daily recitation served not only to deepen religious knowledge but also to educate students about the importance of sharing, justice, and maintaining noble morals. This evidence demonstrates that Madrasah KMI is committed to fostering the development of a robust and autonomous character in its students, in alignment with religious guidance.

The available documentation demonstrates that the various programs implemented at Madrasah KMI are strongly supportive of the advancement of student character education. The "Student Mentoring" programme provides a case in point of the integration of academic learning and character development. The programme provides students with instruction in science, as well as guidance on the application of Islamic manners and morals in daily life. The documentation of the weekly recitation held in each dormitory also demonstrates the active participation of students in activities designed to reinforce their comprehension of Islamic values. This activity represents an efficacious method of moulding students' character, instilling discipline, and cultivating a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others, which collectively contributes to the formation of an autonomous individual.

A review of the literature on this topic reveals that the implementation of Islamic-based character education has a notable influence on the formation of students' character traits. For instance, Solikhah and Fatimah's research indicates that religious activities, such as congregational prayers and routine recitation, are associated

with increased student discipline and sense of responsibility.¹⁷ This finding is consistent with the activities conducted at Madrasah KMI, which underscores the significance of worship activities in the process of character development. Similarly, Aprilliana and colleagues emphasise the significant role of religious education integrated into daily life in fostering positive attitudes in students, including discipline, empathy and care for others. This is evidenced by the implementation of Islamic values within this madrasah, which has been successful in fostering an environment conducive to the growth and development of students' character.¹⁸

Moreover, the research conducted by Datuimam and Tantiado indicates that integrating Islamic principles into daily life can enhance students' academic performance. This is because character education not only concentrates on fostering social attitudes but also facilitates cognitive development. This finding can also be observed at Madrasah KMI, where, in addition to character development, there has been a notable increase in students' academic achievement. It can therefore be concluded that the implementation of character education based on Islamic values in this madrasah has a comprehensive and positive impact on the development of students' attitudes, behaviours and academic achievements.¹⁹

The findings of this analysis indicate that the reinforcement of character education within Madrasah KMI has been an efficacious strategy for the cultivation of students who not only possess spiritual depth but also demonstrate robust and autonomous character traits. The implementation of structured religious activities, including congregational prayers, regular recitations, and mentoring

¹⁷ Solikhah Solikhah and Meti Fatimah, "The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Student Discipline in Congregational Prayers at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 5 Boyolali," *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan* 13, no. 2 (2024): 1985–92.

¹⁸ Marissa Aprilliana, Amanda Robiah Syadiah, and Shintya Rizky Wulandari, "The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers and Parents in Shaping the Character of Students at Mika Bakti Ciparay Junior High School," *International Journal of Research and Review* 11, no. 8 (September 10, 2024): 436–49, <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20240847>.

¹⁹ Jehan A. Datuimam, Rosalinda C. Tantiado, and Department of Education, Misamis Oriental, Philippines, Southern de Oro Philippines College, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines, "Islamic Practices and Muslim Students' Academic Performance," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis* 07, no. 06 (June 28, 2024): 3005–10, <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v7-i06-74>.

programmes, facilitates the internalisation of Islamic values by students in their daily lives. Interviews with madrasah leaders and an examination of existing documentation corroborate these findings, confirming that Islamic-based character education has a significant impact on shaping students' attitudes and behaviours. Furthermore, research findings corroborate the conclusion that character education based on Islamic values plays an important role in improving student discipline, responsibility, and academic achievement.

Meanwhile, the formation of a strong and independent personality at Madrasah KMI is achieved through the implementation of a character-based learning model that is conducted in a structured and holistic manner. The observations made indicate that the learning model in this madrasah prioritises the formation of a strong character in each student, in addition to academic achievement. The learning process is integrated with character values that are of great importance in everyday life, including discipline, honesty, responsibility, and hard work. Teachers and ustadz play an active role in the inculcation of these values in every learning activity, both within the classroom and in non-academic pursuits. This illustrates that the education provided at Madrasah KMI is not solely focused on the acquisition of scientific knowledge, but also on the development of an individual with a robust moral compass.

The findings of interviews with key figures in the madrasah serve to reinforce the significance of character education in the development of students' personal identities. Masyhudi Sobari (Director) underscored the pervasive role of character education across all facets of madrasah life, including the classroom, extracurricular activities, and the daily life of students in dormitories. Furthermore, he highlighted that the development of robust character traits is an essential component of the madrasah's objective to nurture a superior generation, not merely in academic excellence but also in moral rectitude and ethical conduct. In his interview, Ustadz Nurhadi Ehsan further elaborated on the integration of Islamic values within the character-based learning approach. This is expected to foster the development of responsible individuals who demonstrate empathy for others. This reflects the primary objective of Madrasah KMI, which is to cultivate a generation that is not only intellectually gifted but also possesses noble moral standards.

Furthermore, Farid Sulisty, in an interview, stated that this madrasah has a well-developed strategy for integrating character learning into both the formal and non-formal curricula. A variety of programmes are in place to facilitate the strengthening of students' character, including mentoring, moral development and extracurricular activities such as leadership and entrepreneurship. Such activities afford students the chance to cultivate leadership proclivities and autonomy in tangible scenarios, equipping them with the capacity to more effectively navigate the vicissitudes of life. Furthermore, Sutrisno Ahmad (deputy director) posited that the objective of character-based learning in this madrasah is not merely to produce academically proficient students, but also to foster their autonomy and capacity to integrate the positive values imparted in their daily lives.

The documentation obtained from Madrasah KMI indicates that a range of activities, designed to foster the development of students' character, are conducted in a highly structured manner. The curriculum document makes it evident that each subject not only places an emphasis on the mastery of knowledge, but also on the shaping of students' character through the application of religious values reflected in each teaching material. The mentoring programme represents a further important element in this character-strengthening effort. Students are provided with intensive guidance by ustadz and teachers with a view to developing attitudes and behaviours in accordance with Islamic teachings. Furthermore, social and religious activities that are regularly held by madrasahs provide students with direct experience of implementing the character values that have been taught. This enables students to appreciate and practise strong and independent character in their lives.

The findings of the study conducted by Eka, which employed a character-based learning model, indicate that the model may be an effective means of fostering positive attitudes in students, including attitudes such as discipline, responsibility, and empathy.²⁰ These findings are consistent with those of the Madrasah KMI, where the implementation of a character-based learning model has been effective in instilling these values in students' daily lives. Furthermore,

²⁰ Eka Eka, "Revisiting Character Education from Islamic Perspective: A Quest for Character-Based Education in Indonesia," *Ulumuna* 21, no. 1 (October 27, 2017): 1–33, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v21i1.1156>.

Rahdiyanta et al. corroborate these findings, which demonstrate that students who engage in character-based learning exhibit enhancements in attitude and achievements.²¹ At Madrasah KMI, students who are involved in various character-focused activities have been demonstrated to be able to develop a more positive and productive attitude, both inside and outside the madrasah environment.

Furthermore, the findings of Singh's research are also pertinent to those observed at Madrasah KMI. The findings of this study indicate that students who are educated with a character-based approach tend to demonstrate superior academic performance and are more adept at integrating positive values into their daily lives.²² This is evidenced by the students of Madrasah KMI, who not only excel academically but also demonstrate the capacity to apply the values they learn in their lives. The implementation of the character-based learning model in this madrasah has been demonstrated to be an effective approach in fostering the development of students who are resilient, self-reliant, and exemplars of moral excellence.

The implementation of the character-based learning model at Madrasah KMI has had a notable impact on the formation of students' personalities. The objective of this learning model is not merely to produce individuals with high academic intelligence; it is also to foster the development of personal qualities such as character, independence, and responsibility. The results of observations, interviews and documentation that support these findings are in alignment with the results of relevant research, which demonstrate that character education plays a pivotal role in the formation of students' personalities. These personalities are not only superior in science but also exhibit positive attitudes and behaviours. It can therefore be concluded that Madrasah KMI has been successful in producing a generation of individuals who possess a robust and autonomous character, equipped to confront the vicissitudes of life with complete accountability.

²¹ Dwi Rahdiyanta, Putut Hargiyarto, and Asnawi Asnawi, "Characters-Based Collaborative Learning Model: Its Impacts on Students' Attitude and Achievement," *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Dan Kejuruan* 23, no. 3 (April 30, 2017): 227–34, <https://doi.org/10.21831/jptk.v23i3.13416>.

²² Balraj Singh, "Character Education in the 21st Century," *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)* 15, no. 1 (May 29, 2019): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.21831/jss.v15i1.25226>.

Furthermore, the development of a robust and autonomous personality at Madrasah KMI is underscored by the reinforcement of character education that is woven into the fabric of students' daily activities. The observations revealed that positive habits, such as time management, maintaining personal hygiene, and participating in collective worship, had become routine aspects of the students' daily lives. This activity is conducted outside of class hours, including activities such as congregational prayer, greeting others politely, and self-management in academic and social activities. The formation of these habits, when carried out consistently, has the dual objective of teaching students good behaviour and fostering a sense of responsibility towards the environment and others. Furthermore, this positive habit has a direct impact on the development of students' character, fostering greater independence and responsibility.

An interview with the manager and caretaker of Madrasah KMI provides a more detailed insight into the implementation of positive habits within the madrasah. Masyhudi Sobari, Director of the madrasah, posited that the exemplar provided by teachers and supervisors plays a pivotal role in the formation of positive habits. It is expected that each teacher will exemplify the values of discipline, ethics, and daily conduct. This is in accordance with the views expressed by Nurhadi Ehsan, who placed great emphasis on the importance of simple yet meaningful activities, such as rising early in the morning and maintaining cleanliness, in shaping students' character from an early age. The focus on these activities demonstrates that character education at Madrasah KMI is not limited to the classroom setting, but rather encompasses the entire madrasah community in their daily lives.

Furthermore, Farid Sulisty, Deputy Director, elucidated that the cultivation of positive habits is also facilitated through extracurricular activities. The objective of this activity is to foster an attitude of cooperation, mutual respect, and tolerance among students. This process encourages students to develop a more positive attitude in social interactions, which in turn strengthens their character. This is consistent with the view of Sutrisno Ahmad, another Deputy Director, who has stated that, in addition to direct instruction, a supportive social environment plays a significant role in the formation of students' character. Therefore, the process of

character formation is not solely confined to formal activities; it is also reinforced by the social interactions that occur in daily life.

Documentation obtained from Madrasah KMI indicates that the formation of positive habits constitutes an integral component of the curriculum. The aforementioned programmes, namely “Moral Education”, “Cleanliness and Neatness”, and “Congregational Prayer”, are integrated into the daily activity schedule of students. Furthermore, the documentation indicates that an evaluation is conducted periodically to assess the students’ proficiency in applying the taught positive habits. The evaluation notes indicate a notable enhancement in students’ conduct and accountability, which substantiates the assertion that the inculcated positive habits exert a tangible influence on their character formation. It is anticipated that these activities will result in the formation of students who are independent, responsible, and demonstrate high levels of discipline.

The results of the study conducted by Alhamlan and colleagues corroborate these findings, which demonstrate that the formation of positive habits can markedly enhance student conduct. The study revealed that students who engaged in positive habit-forming activities, such as time management and maintaining cleanliness, exhibited notable improvements in terms of discipline and responsibility. These findings are pertinent to the context of Madrasah KMI, where the consistent application of positive habits has been observed to bring about notable changes in students’ attitudes and behaviours. The findings of this study corroborate the hypothesis that the formation of well-organised positive habits can strengthen students’ character, both in social and academic contexts.²³

Furthermore, Kasyoka’s research assesses self-esteem, study habits, and academic performance among university students. The findings of the study indicated that students who engaged in the positive habits programme demonstrated superior outcomes, both in academic and social domains.²⁴ This finding is also consistent with the observations made at Madrasah KMI, where the cultivation of positive habits has been shown to facilitate the advancement of

²³ Suad Alhamlan et al., “A Systematic Review: Using Habits of Mind to Improve Student’s Thinking in Class,” *Higher Education Studies* 8, no. 1 (February 6, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v8n1p25>.

²⁴ Antony Kasyoka, “Self-Esteem, Study Habits and Academic Performance among University Students,” *African Journal of Education and Practice* 9, no. 2 (2023): 43–53, <https://doi.org/10.47604/ajep.1995>.

student achievement across a range of domains. By integrating positive habits into daily routines, this madrasah not only prioritises character education, but also facilitates enhanced academic achievement. This illustrates the significance of fostering character through positive habits in ensuring student success, both within and beyond the classroom.

Moreover, research conducted by Ramadhani and colleagues demonstrated that the formation of positive habits can foster the development of students with strong character, good morals, and exemplary responsibility. This is particularly pertinent to the Madrasah KMI, where the formation of positive habits through continuous practice shapes the character of students who are well-equipped to navigate social interactions. Students who engage in these positive habits tend to exhibit greater wisdom in decision-making and a heightened sense of responsibility for their actions. Consequently, the formation of positive habits is not solely concerned with the aspect of discipline; it is also oriented towards the development of a robust moral character.²⁵

The formation of positive habits in Madrasah KMI has a profound impact on the development of robust and self-reliant student character. A synthesis of observations, interviews, and documentation indicates that this madrasah has achieved the integration of positive habits into the daily lives of its students. The formation of this habit is influenced not only by direct instruction from teachers but also by the example set by teachers and the support provided by the social environment in which students are situated. These findings are consistent with the results of previous research, which indicate that the formation of positive habits can enhance students' character and academic performance, while also preparing them to become independent and responsible individuals.

The Impact of Strengthening Character Education at Madrasah KMI

The strengthening of character education at Madrasah KMI is predicated on the formation of students' attitudes of discipline and responsibility. These attitudes have been demonstrated to exert a

²⁵ Tiara Ramadhani et al., "The Role Of Character Education In Forming Ethical And Responsible Students," *IJGIE (International Journal of Graduate of Islamic Education)* 5, no. 2 (2024): 110–24, <https://doi.org/10.37567/ijgie.v5i2.3064>.

beneficial influence on the development of students' characters. The implementation of disciplinary measures that encompass routine activities such as congregational prayers, strict timing, and active participation in classroom and extracurricular activities has been observed to significantly influence students' disciplinary attitudes, both in academic and social contexts. Furthermore, the practice of maintaining cleanliness and punctuality in all activities, whether in the classroom or in the dormitory, also facilitates the formation of a responsible attitude. Consequently, students are not only familiarised with the regulations, but also become more accountable for their actions in their daily lives, both in social and academic contexts.

Furthermore, the implementation of character strengthening in this madrasah is reinforced by the actions of the teaching staff and supervisors. Masyhudi Sobari (Director) posited that student discipline commences with the exemplar set by the teacher, who is expected to exemplify time management and disciplinary conduct. Furthermore, Ustadz Nurhadi Ehsan (*Asatidz* Council) posited that discipline is not merely compliance with regulations; rather, it encompasses students' individual consciousness of their responsibility for each role they undertake. Consequently, students are assigned a variety of routine responsibilities, including leading activities, maintaining cleanliness, and acting as event organisers. These tasks are designed to foster a sense of responsibility among the students. Consequently, students are instructed to become more autonomous and capable of effectively managing their academic responsibilities.

Furthermore, Farid Sulistyono (Deputy Director) underscored the significance of fostering character development as a strategy to equip students with enhanced responsibility for their roles, not only within the academic setting but also in their social interactions. Furthermore, the reinforcement of character education is facilitated by an evaluation system that assesses not only academic achievements, but also achievements in discipline and responsibility. Furthermore, Sutrisno Ahmad (Deputy Director) stated that the award was bestowed upon students who demonstrated an improvement in their conduct and sense of responsibility. It is anticipated that the award will serve as a motivating factor for students to persist in the development of their character, which ultimately contributes to the attainment of more optimal outcomes.

Documentation obtained from Madrasah KMI indicates that comprehensive records of students' disciplinary and responsibility behaviours are instrumental in character development monitoring. Such records encompass punctuality in congregational prayers, attendance at activities, and the completion of specific tasks, both academic and non-academic. This documentation serves not only to monitor student development, but also to provide parents with useful feedback on how they can support their child's character formation. Furthermore, the monthly report submitted to parents includes an evaluation of student discipline, which underscores the necessity of reinforcing character education as an intrinsic component of the educational programme at this madrasah.

The research conducted by Maulidiawati and colleagues demonstrated that the implementation of character education discipline and responsibility at school can enhance students' sense of responsibility in carrying out their duties. The findings of the study indicate that students who are accustomed to disciplinary routines tend to demonstrate enhanced capabilities in time management and achieve higher levels of academic success. These findings are consistent with those of the Madrasah KMI study, which demonstrated that enhanced disciplinary practices are directly associated with elevated levels of student responsibility across various domains, including academic and non-academic pursuits.²⁶

A further study conducted by Innocent and Andala concerning the relationship between students' discipline and academic performance indicated that regular class attendance, respect for school rules and regulations, and the imposition of disciplinary measures among students result in a positive change in students' academic performance. These findings lend support to the practice applied at Madrasah KMI, whereby the implementation of disciplinary measures in the context of daily activities has been identified as a key factor in enhancing student performance. Consequently, the reinforcement of disciplinary measures within this

²⁶ Bella Maulidiawati et al., "Implementation of Character Education Discipline and Responsibility of 6th Grade Students at SDN Banyuajuh 6: Array," *Maktab: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Teknologi* 1, no. 3 (December 19, 2022): 819–31.

madrasah has been demonstrated to exert a considerable positive influence on student performance.²⁷

Furthermore, the research conducted by Aryadiningrat et al. revealed that the implementation of discipline and responsibility character education for students is influenced by both internal and external factors, which contribute to the decline in discipline and loss of student responsibility. One potential solution to these challenges is habituation, which has the capacity to alter the character of student discipline and responsibility. The implementation of consistent disciplinary measures can positively influence students' behaviour, while the instillation of responsibility through structured activities and transparent evaluations has a favourable impact on their personality. These findings are consistent with those reported at Madrasah KMI, where students who are accustomed to discipline and responsibility demonstrate notable character development.²⁸

The reinforcement of character education at Madrasah KMI has a markedly beneficial impact on the enhancement of student conduct and accountability. The implementation of disciplinary activities, such as congregational prayers, timing, and participation in extracurricular activities, facilitates the formation of students into more responsible individuals. These findings are corroborated by observations, interviews and documentation which demonstrate that the reinforcement of character education has resulted in the creation of an environment conducive to the holistic development of students' characters. Furthermore, a number of pertinent studies indicate that discipline and responsibility are significant factors in the development of students with strong character and in achieving optimal outcomes.

The reinforcement of character education at Madrasah KMI is of paramount importance in the moulding of robust and self-reliant personalities among the student body. The findings indicate that the character education programme implemented at this madrasah places an emphasis on the development of values such as discipline, responsibility and learning motivation. Students who are actively

²⁷ Sibomana Innocent and Hesbon Opiyo Andala, "Relationship between Students' Discipline and Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Rwanda," *Journal of Education* 4, no. 7 (2021): 20–37, <https://doi.org/10.53819/810181025021>.

²⁸ Intan Nabila Lestari Hakiem Aryadiningrat, Dadang Sundawa, and Karim Suryadi, "Forming the Character of Discipline and Responsibility Through Character Education," *Indonesian Values and Character Education Journal* 6, no. 1 (2023): 82–92, <https://doi.org/10.23887/ivcej.v6i1.62618>.

engaged in character-based learning activities demonstrate positive growth in both academic and non-academic domains. With regard to academic achievement, students demonstrate superior performance in examinations and assignments, which is attributable to the establishment of effective study routines, including punctuality and perseverance. Furthermore, in non-academic domains, students demonstrate noteworthy advancement in areas such as sports, arts, and leadership. Their involvement in competitive and extracurricular activities has a significant impact on the development of positive character traits, fostering a balance between intellectual abilities and social skills that are essential for daily life.

The results of interviews conducted with a number of key informants at the madrasah corroborate existing observations. In an interview, KH Masyhudi Sobari, MA, Director of Madrasah, stated that one of the primary objectives of Madrasah KMI is to foster the development of students who excel not only in academic pursuits but also in various aspects of life. He posits that the cultivation of character through the inculcation of daily habits such as discipline, responsibility, and hard work has a profound and positive impact on students' abilities, both within the classroom and beyond. Additionally, Nurhadi Ehsan of the *Asatidz* Council posited that character-based learning affords students the opportunity to develop in a comprehensive manner. The formation of character instills in students a sense of confidence and courage, enabling them to engage more actively in non-academic pursuits and ultimately leading to enhanced performance in these areas. Furthermore, Farid Sulisty, Deputy Director, highlighted that students with strong character and disciplinary habits often demonstrate superior performance in both academic and non-academic competitions. This evidence demonstrates that student achievement is not solely determined by intellectual intelligence, but also by the character qualities that are developed through the implementation of character-strengthening initiatives within madrasahs.

In addition to interviews with the relevant parties, the available documentation also demonstrates the existence of a detailed and comprehensive evaluation system of students' academic and non-academic achievements. The documentation also includes reports of examination results, certificates of participation in competitions, and student achievements in various extracurricular activities, such as

sports and the arts. These are well recorded and used to monitor students' overall development. The aforementioned documentation is of significant value in evaluating the efficacy of character education in madrasas, as it offers a comprehensive insight into the impact of such education on student development. The utilisation of this documentation enables the madrasah to evaluate not only academic achievements, but also character development as reflected in students' non-academic achievements. This is an integral aspect of the educational process at Madrasah KMI.

The findings from relevant research also corroborate the results found at Madrasah KMI with regard to the enhancement of character education and its impact on student achievement. The findings of Elkadi and Syaraf's research indicate that the cultivation of character through the formation of disciplinary and responsible habits exerts a beneficial influence on the enhancement of students' academic achievements. These findings are consistent with those of Madrasah KMI, which indicate that students who engage in character-based learning and exhibit disciplinary habits demonstrate superior academic achievement. The research conducted by Putri et al. also examined the relationship between character strengthening and academic achievement. The findings indicated that students who were involved in character education programmes exhibited higher levels of learning motivation, better discipline, and more developed critical thinking skills. These findings are also reflected in the results found at Madrasah KMI, where students who developed in character also demonstrated increased achievement.²⁹

Moreover, research conducted by Samuel J. demonstrated that students who participate in extracurricular activities that emphasise character development, such as sports and the arts, tend to demonstrate superior academic performance. Students who demonstrate a high level of responsibility with regard to extracurricular activities tend to exhibit a higher level of discipline, which in turn has a positive impact on their academic performance. These findings are consistent with the practice observed at Madrasah KMI, where students who are active in non-academic activities also demonstrate notable progress in the academic domain. This lends

²⁹ Raudya Setya et al., "The Influence of Character Education on Students' Learning Achievement at SMP Negeri 1 Seyegan," *Jurnal Harmoni Nusa Bangsa* 1, no. 2 (May 31, 2024): 225–34, <https://doi.org/10.47256/jhnb.v1i2.441>.

further support to the view that the development of character strengthens not only non-academic achievements but also has a positive impact on students' academic achievements.³⁰

The reinforcement of character education at Madrasah KMI has been demonstrated to exert a considerable influence on the evolution of student attitudes, behaviours and achievements. Through observation, interviews, and documentation, it was determined that the habits of discipline, responsibility, and active involvement in various extracurricular activities have a significant impact on student achievement. These findings are corroborated by the results of pertinent research, which demonstrate that character strengthening plays a pivotal role in enhancing academic and non-academic achievement. It is therefore imperative that efforts to create a generation that is not only academically superior but also possesses a robust and autonomous character continue to prioritise the strengthening of character education.

The formation of a robust and autonomous personality represents the primary objective of character education in Madrasah KMI. The educational process is not confined to the classroom; it also encompasses activities outside the classroom that underscore the significance of discipline, responsibility, and diligence. Students are engaged in a range of activities that necessitate the effective management of time, the exercise of initiative, and the assumption of responsibility for the decisions and actions they undertake. This experiential learning provides an opportunity for students to develop a more mature and independent personality, as evidenced by their increased confidence and readiness to face the challenges of daily life.

In interviews with relevant parties at Madrasah KMI, it was established that the educational vision of this madrasah is characterised by a strong emphasis on the development of a resilient and autonomous personality. Masyhudi Sobari (Director) highlighted that the development of an independent student character is a fundamental objective of the educational programme at this madrasah. Students are afforded the opportunity to develop their abilities through a variety of programmes that require them to demonstrate initiative, diligence, and responsibility in their tasks. This

³⁰ Kakungulu Samuel, "The Role of Extracurricular Activities in Student Development," *Eurasian Experiment Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (EEJHSS)* 5, no. 2 (August 2024): 26–30.

illustrates that the educational programme at this madrasah is not solely focused on academic achievement; it also encompasses the development of a robust and autonomous character.

Furthermore, Ustadz Nurhadi Ehsan (Asatidz Council) elucidated that the madrasah's diverse activities, including debate, leadership, and organisational management, equip students with the capacity to engage in critical and independent thinking. Such activities facilitate the development of structured and insightful problem-solving skills. By engaging students in decision-making processes that require the application of critical thinking, they are equipped with the skills to navigate challenges effectively, both within the madrasah and beyond.

Additionally, Farid Sulisty (Deputy Director) posited that the development of a robust personality in this madrasah commences with the inculcation of salutary habits that are embraced on a daily basis. These include encouraging students to work independently, to complete tasks in a responsible manner, and to foster confidence in all activities. Such practices assist students in identifying their potential and assuming responsibility for their actions. Additionally, Sutrisno Ahmad (Deputy Director) disclosed that the capacity for independence is evident in students' ability to manage their time effectively and complete tasks without direct supervision.

The documentation obtained from Madrasah KMI corroborates these findings, indicating that students who are active in extracurricular activities exhibit a more independent attitude. Student progress reports indicate that they excel not only in academic pursuits but also in competitive events that assess their capacity for independent action and leadership. The success of students in activities such as entrepreneurship competitions, debates and organisational management demonstrates that the character education applied in this madrasah has been effective in fostering a strong and independent personality.

These findings are consistent with the findings of Mulyaningsih et al., which demonstrate that character education that prioritises the formation of an independent personality can enhance students' capacity to make decisions and assume responsibility for their actions. This is evidenced by the practice carried out at Madrasah KMI, where students trained in self-reliance demonstrate notable enhancements in

their academic and non-academic accomplishments.³¹ Furthermore, research conducted by Uswah et al. indicated that activities necessitating critical and independent thinking can foster the development of stronger characters. At Madrasah KMI, students are instructed to confront the vicissitudes of life in a more mature and responsible manner.³²

Furthermore, Ahyar's research underscores the pivotal role of extracurricular activities in fostering independent character. Students who are actively engaged in extracurricular activities tend to exhibit heightened levels of self-confidence and enhanced capabilities in completing tasks. This is also evidenced in Madrasah KMI, where students who are active in various extracurricular activities demonstrate positive character development, including independence in various aspects of their lives.³³

The reinforcement of character education at Madrasah KMI has been demonstrated to exert a considerable influence on the development of a robust and autonomous personality. The cultivation of positive habits, independent activities and learning that demands responsibility enables students to develop a more confident attitude, thereby equipping them to meet the challenges of life. The results of pertinent research corroborate these findings, indicating that character education that emphasises independence can engender students who not only excel academically but also possess robust and autonomous personalities.

Conclusion

Madrasah Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyyah has enhanced the character education of its students through the implementation of a number of efficacious approaches. The madrasah has fostered the

³¹ Indrya Mulyaningsih et al., "Developing Student Characters to Have Independent, Responsible, Creative, Innovative and Adaptive Competencies towards the Dynamics of the Internal and External World," *International Journal of Health Sciences* 6, no. S2 SE-Peer Review Articles (May 17, 2022): 9332–45, <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS2.7438>.

³² Atiq Yufitriyah Uswah et al., "Teachers' Efforts in Shaping Students' Critical Thinking Skills in Learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Level," *Jurnal At-Tarbiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (March 12, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.37758/jat.v7i1.847>.

³³ Ahyar Ahyar, "Strengthening Madrasah Students' Creativity of Non-Academic Achievement in Lombok Indonesia," *Jurnal Tatsqif* 21, no. 2 (2023): 142–68, <https://doi.org/10.20414/jtq.v21i2.7173>.

development of robust and autonomous character traits among its students through the integration of Islamic values into their daily lives, the implementation of character-based learning methodologies, the cultivation of constructive habits, the provision of leadership and collaboration training, and the active involvement of parents and the wider community. The inculcation of values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect is a pervasive aspect of the madrasah's pedagogical approach, occurring within and beyond the classroom setting. These values foster positive attitudes and actions among students.

As evidenced by their increased willingness to fulfil their responsibilities in both their daily lives and their studies, students demonstrated an improvement in both their discipline and their sense of responsibility. Furthermore, students' social behaviour has also been enhanced. The students now demonstrate greater respect for others, refrain from engaging in inappropriate behavior, and take greater care of the environment. The increase in both academic and extracurricular achievement is further evidence that character education enhances student motivation and performance. The involvement of students in group and organisational activities serves to demonstrate the development of their leadership and cooperative abilities. In conclusion, the character education programme at this madrasah has the potential to produce students who are self-reliant, possess a robust personality and are equipped to overcome challenges in life with a constructive outlook.

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