



Habitation and Internalization of Islamic Education Values in Character Building: A Phenomenological Study at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep

Habituasi dan Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam dalam Pengembangan Karakter: Studi Fenomenologi di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep

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Abstract

Madrasah as an Islamic educational institution faces challenges in implementing Islamic values for student character building. Although religious activities have been carried out routinely, they have not effectively touched the core of students' spirituality as reflected in their daily behavior. The gap between the ideality of madrasah as a producer of noble character and the reality of value shifts highlights the urgency of structured and sustainable Islamic value implementation studies. This study employs a qualitative approach with ethnographic-phenomenological methods at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi, Sumenep, Madura. Research subjects include the madrasah principal, vice principals, teachers, school committees, parents/guardians, and surrounding community. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification stages. Data validity was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The findings reveal that Islamic values implementation is based on three main foundations: faith, sharia, and ihsan, manifested through habituation of greeting-smiling-salutation values, honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility. Implementation strategies include teacher exemplary behavior, madrasah culture, project-based learning, and cross-curricular integration, reinforced with specific practices such as teachers welcoming students, reciting Asmaul Husna, congregational dhuha prayer, and intensive parental cooperation. This study concludes that Islamic character building requires continuous habituation through real behavioral examples from teachers and parents. Recommendations are directed to madrasah education practitioners to develop structured, organized, and dynamic value implementation concepts according to each institution's factual context, and to future researchers to explore the long-term impacts of habituation strategies on madrasah students' character.

Kata Kunci:

Nilai-nilai;
Pendidikan
Islam;
Pembentukan
karakter;
Madrasah
Ibtidaiyah;
Etnografi-
Fenomenologi;
Habitulasi.

Abstrak

Madrasah sebagai lembaga pendidikan Islam menghadapi tantangan dalam implementasi nilai-nilai Islam untuk pembentukan karakter siswa. Meskipun aktivitas keagamaan telah dilaksanakan secara rutin, namun belum efektif menyentuh inti spiritualitas siswa sehingga tercermin dalam perilaku sehari-hari. Kesenjangan antara idealitas madrasah sebagai pencetak generasi berakhlak mulia dengan realitas pergeseran nilai yang terjadi menunjukkan urgensi kajian implementasi nilai Islam yang terstruktur dan berkelanjutan. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode etnografi-fenomenologi di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi, Sumenep, Madura. Subjek kajian meliputi kepala madrasah, wakil kepala, guru, komite sekolah, orang tua/wali siswa, dan masyarakat sekitar. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, penarikan kesimpulan, dan verifikasi. Validitas data dijamin melalui kredibilitas, transferabilitas, dependabilitas, dan konfirmabilitas. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi nilai-nilai Islam berbasis pada tiga fondasi utama: iman, syariah, dan ihsan, yang diwujudkan melalui pembiasaan nilai-nilai salam-senyum-sapa, kejujuran, amanah, dan tanggung jawab. Strategi implementasi meliputi keteladanan guru, budaya madrasah, pembelajaran berbasis proyek, dan integrasi lintas kurikulum, yang diperkuat dengan praktik spesifik seperti guru menyambut siswa, membaca Asmaul Husna, shalat dhuha berjamaah, dan kerjasama intensif dengan orang tua. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pembentukan karakter Islami memerlukan habituasi berkelanjutan melalui contoh perilaku nyata dari guru dan orang tua. Rekomendasi ditujukan kepada praktisi pendidikan madrasah untuk mengembangkan konsep implementasi nilai yang terstruktur, terorganisir, dan dinamis sesuai konteks faktual masing-masing lembaga, serta kepada peneliti selanjutnya untuk mengeksplorasi dampak jangka panjang strategi habituasi terhadap karakter siswa madrasah.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Since its inception, Madrasah has been a prestigious Islamic educational institution that has produced influential Islamic figures for the Indonesian nation, such as KH. A. Wahid Hasyim, KH. A. Wahab Chasbullah, KH. Munawwir Sadzali, and a series of other religious leaders who graduated from Madrasah (Thaha, 2003, 5). Madrasah students, as subjects of Islamic education, offer the promise of becoming whole human beings, obedient to goodness, and non-violent. In the Prophet's concise yet profound teachings, it is conveyed that morality is the foundation of Islamic education, as recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari*: "I was sent to perfect noble character". These words resonate across time, space, and hearts.

However, over time, madrasah students, who historically served as main pillars in the development of religious knowledge in Indonesia, have gradually experienced a shift in values. Phenomena that do not reflect the image of madrasah students frequently occur, such as students rebelling against teachers, being disobedient to parents or elders, and mocking one another, commonly known today as verbal bullying. This value shift aligns with Lickona's (1991) findings, which state that character crisis in education is marked by increasing disrespectful behavior and irresponsibility among students.

This shift in values has not occurred due to the absence of religious activities in madrasahs. Many religious activities are conducted, yet they have not been effective in touching the deepest core of students' spirituality, and thus are not reflected in their daily behavior. Religious activities in several madrasahs in Indonesia specifically aimed at instilling moral and mental values are also frequently carried out, such as students shaking hands with teachers upon arrival, performing congregational Dhuha prayers, and reciting Surah Yasin together every morning in the madrasah courtyard. Additionally, on important Islamic days, PHBI (Commemoration of Islamic Holy Days) activities are held with the hope of instilling Islamic values in madrasah students. This certainly deserves appreciation as a form of attention, desire, hope, and aspiration accompanied by madrasah programs.

The gap between the ideality of madrasah as an institution that should produce a generation with noble character (*das sollen*) and the reality of value shifts and student behavior (*das sein*) indicates that the process of implementing Islamic values has not been running optimally. Daradjat (1992) emphasizes that values are a set of beliefs and feelings believed to be an identity that gives a distinctive pattern to thought, feeling, attachment, and behavior. The aggregation of Islamic values as intended requires appropriate strategies, especially if the object being reoriented is madrasah students, who are human beings that according to Plato possess two entities: physical and spiritual.

The government has given special attention to madrasah education by allocating significant budgets for the development of madrasahs and Islamic boarding schools (*Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia 2003*). However, this appreciation shown by the government has not been balanced with a structured and sustainable system for implementing Islamic values in shaping student character. Madrasahs, as Islamic educational institutions, are expected to provide solutions to national problems from a religious perspective. Nevertheless, madrasahs often fail to seize this opportunity because the mental preparedness of their students and graduates does not meet expected standards (Efianingrum, 2007).

Several studies have been conducted on character education, but most focus on character-based school culture change models (Efianingrum, 2007; Lickona, 1991) or learning models integrated with specific subjects (Setiawan, 2013). Nurhadi (2020) analyzes children's character through a Ghazalian perspective, emphasizing three basic concepts: moral education in obedience to Allah, character education in carrying out Allah's commands, and moral education in maintaining relationships with Allah and His creatures. However, studies specifically exploring the process of implementing Islamic values through habituation and internalization in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, particularly in the Madura region, remain limited.

Problem Identification

Based on the background of the problem above, several issues can be identified as follows:

1. There is a gap between the ideality of madrasah as a producer of noble character and the reality of value shifts and student behavior occurring in the field.
2. Religious activities conducted in madrasahs have not effectively touched the core of students' spirituality, so Islamic values are not optimally reflected in their daily behavior.
3. There is no structured, organized, and sustainable strategy for implementing Islamic values in shaping the character of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students.
4. There is minimal understanding of effective habituation and internalization methods for Islamic values in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah education.
5. The roles of teachers, parents, and the madrasah environment in the process of forming students' Islamic character have not been comprehensively identified.

Research Questions

Based on the problem identification, this research focuses on the following issues:

1. What is the construction of Islamic values that serves as the foundation for character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep?
2. What Islamic values are implemented in shaping the character of students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep?
3. How can the implementation of Islamic values be effective and produce visible results in the daily behavior of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students?
4. What strategies and methods of habituation and internalization of Islamic values in the curriculum are used to shape student character?
5. What are the roles of teachers, parents, and the madrasah environment in the process of implementing Islamic values for student character formation?

Research Objectives and Benefits

Research Objectives

Based on the problem formulation above, this research aims to:

1. To analyze the construction of Islamic values that serve as the foundation for character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep, including the dimensions of faith (*iman*), Islamic law (*syariah*), and spiritual excellence (*ihsan*).
2. To identify the Islamic values implemented in shaping the character of students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Sumenep, specifically greeting-smiling-salutation (*salam-senyum-sapa*), honesty (*kejujuran*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and responsibility (*tanggung jawab*).
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of Islamic values implementation and examine the visible results manifested in the daily behavior of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students both within and outside the school environment.
4. To describe the strategies and methods of habituation and internalization of Islamic values in the madrasah curriculum, including teacher exemplary behavior (*uswatun*

hasanah), school culture development, project-based learning, and cross-curricular integration.

5. To evaluate the roles of teachers, parents, and the madrasah environment in the process of implementing Islamic values for student character formation, including collaboration patterns and their respective contributions.

Research Benefits

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits:

- a. Contribution to Islamic education theory: This research enriches the theoretical framework of character education based on Islamic values by integrating the dimensions of iman, syariah, and ihsan as the foundational construction for character formation in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah contexts.
- b. Advancement of ethnographic-phenomenological studies: This research contributes to the development of qualitative research methodology, specifically ethnographic-phenomenological approaches in Islamic educational research, by demonstrating how this method can reveal the deeper meanings and lived experiences of value implementation processes.
- c. Framework for habituation theory: This research provides empirical evidence for habituation theory (*habitus*) as proposed by Bourdieu (1990) within the context of Islamic education, demonstrating how continuous practice and cultural environment shape students' dispositions and character.
- d. Foundation for future research: This research serves as a reference point for subsequent researchers interested in exploring character education in Islamic educational institutions, particularly in examining the effectiveness of value internalization strategies in diverse cultural contexts.

2. Practical Benefits:

- a. For madrasah education practitioners and administrators: This research provides a comprehensive blueprint for designing, implementing, and evaluating structured and sustainable character formation programs based on Islamic values. The findings offer concrete strategies that can be adapted to various madrasah contexts, including specific programs such as morning greetings, *Asma al Husna* recitation, congregational Dhuha prayers, and honest canteens.
- b. For teachers and educators: This research offers practical insights into effective pedagogical approaches for instilling Islamic values through exemplary behavior (*uswatun hasanah*), habituation practices, and curriculum integration. Teachers can utilize the strategies identified in this research to transform from mere knowledge transmitters to character role models who embody Islamic values in their daily interactions with students.
- c. For parents and guardians: This research enhances parents' understanding of their critical role in character formation by demonstrating the necessity of synergy between home and school education. The findings provide guidance for parents on how to reinforce Islamic values at home, support madrasah programs, and collaborate effectively with teachers to ensure consistency in character development.

- d. For education policymakers: This research provides evidence-based recommendations for formulating policies on character education development in madrasahs at district, provincial, and national levels. Policymakers can use these findings to design supportive frameworks, allocate appropriate resources, and establish standards for Islamic character education that balance academic achievement with moral development.
- e. For the madrasah community and society: This research demonstrates the strategic role of madrasahs in producing a generation with strong Islamic character who are intellectually competent, spiritually grounded, and socially responsible. The findings help the broader community understand the distinctive contributions of madrasah education in addressing contemporary challenges such as moral degradation, bullying, and character crisis among youth.
- f. For curriculum developers: This research offers practical models for integrating Islamic values across various subjects, including non-religious subjects such as mathematics, science, and languages, thereby ensuring that character education permeates the entire educational experience rather than being confined to religious instruction alone.
- g. For students: Ultimately, this research benefits students themselves by providing them with a supportive educational environment that nurtures their holistic development—cognitively, affectively, and psychomotorically—preparing them to become individuals who embody Islamic values (*yufaqqihhu fiddin*) and contribute positively to society.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in several interconnected theoretical perspectives that provide the analytical lens for understanding the implementation of Islamic values in character building at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. These theories serve as the conceptual foundation for examining how values are transmitted, internalized, and manifested in educational contexts.

Islamic values theory forms the primary theoretical foundation. Halstead (2007) argues that Islamic values encompass a comprehensive worldview integrating spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual dimensions derived from the Qur'an and Hadith as normative sources. This holistic conception distinguishes Islamic values from secular frameworks by grounding moral principles in theological foundations. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that effective Islamic values education must integrate cognitive understanding with affective internalization and behavioral manifestation (Kistoro et al., 2023).

Character education theory provides the pedagogical framework for understanding how values translate into character traits. Lickona (1991) proposes a comprehensive approach emphasizing three interrelated components: moral knowing (cognitive dimension), moral feeling (affective dimension), and moral action (behavioral dimension). Berkowitz and Bier (2005) identified key principles of effective character education including skill development through practice, direct teaching, clear behavioral expectations, curriculum integration, and positive adult-student relationships.

Social learning theory, developed by Bandura (1977), explains how individuals acquire behaviors through observation and modeling of significant others. This theory is particularly relevant for understanding the role of teachers and parents as models whose behaviors are continuously observed and potentially emulated by students. Bandura's framework identifies four key processes: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, providing theoretical justification for the importance of modeling in character formation.

Habitus theory, articulated by Bourdieu (1990), offers a sociological lens for understanding how values become embodied dispositions. Through repeated participation in specific practices and environments, individuals develop habituated ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that operate below conscious awareness. This theory illuminates how values education involves not merely cognitive instruction but environmental immersion and repeated practice that transforms conscious behavior into unconscious disposition (Berglund, 2015).

Socialization theory explains how students acquire values through interaction with multiple socializing agents. Grusec and Hastings (2014) identify multiple domains of socialization including protection, reciprocity, control, guided learning, and group participation. Wenger's (1998) concept of "communities of practice" is particularly relevant for understanding how educational institutions function as learning communities where values are embedded in everyday practices and collective identity.

Conceptual Framework

Building upon these theoretical foundations, this research develops a conceptual framework for analyzing the implementation of Islamic values in madrasah character education. The framework conceptualizes character formation as a dynamic, multidimensional process involving multiple actors, strategies, and contexts that interact to produce cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes (Ahwadzi & Chusniatun, 2025).

The framework is structured around four key analytical dimensions: the foundational dimension examines theological and pedagogical foundations of Islamic values; the strategic dimension analyzes pedagogical approaches employed to transmit and internalize values; the relational dimension explores the roles of key socializing agents—teachers, parents, and institutional environment; and the developmental dimension traces the process through which student progress from initial exposure to behavioral manifestation (Corrigan et al., 2007; Jeynes, 2019).

The conceptual framework posits that effective implementation occurs through a cyclical process: exposure to values through multiple channels, cognitive comprehension of meanings and applications, internalization where values become personal convictions, habituation through sustained practice, and consistent behavioral manifestation across diverse contexts. This process is mediated by critical factors including continuity between home and school, coherence between espoused and enacted values, support from significant adults, reflection opportunities, and accountability structures (Lickona, 1991).

The framework acknowledges that implementation effectiveness is influenced by contextual factors including student characteristics, teacher competencies, parental involvement, institutional resources, and sociocultural environment. These factors shape both implementation processes and outcomes, requiring adaptation of strategies to specific circumstances. This conceptual framework serves as the analytical lens for

examining Islamic values implementation, guiding data collection and analysis while providing theoretical constructs for systematic interpretation of findings.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

This research employs a qualitative approach with an ethnographic-phenomenological method to examine the implementation of Islamic values in character building at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. According to Sujarweni (2014, 23), this methodological approach is particularly suitable for in-depth studies of behavior occurring within social or cultural groups when viewed from the perspective of cultural behavior or members of that cultural group. Kasiram (2008, 90) further explains that this research procedure produces detailed descriptions of speech, behavior, writing, and habits of particular community groups, whether individuals, groups, or specific social organizations.

The ethnographic-phenomenological approach was selected because madrasah students constitute a social group with diverse cultural, educational, social, and economic backgrounds that shape their habits, understanding, and behavior reflected in daily life. Exploring the characteristics of madrasah students compared to non-madrasah students requires a distinctive perspective, as choosing to attend madrasah involves specific reasons focusing on instilling Islamic values in both behavior and thought. This research model follows a similar approach used by Geertz (1976, 87) in his study of Javanese Islam, where he approached Javanese society by examining Java as an arena for cultural continuity, thought patterns, behavior, and traditions developing within it.

Research Setting and Time

This research was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi, located in Dungkek District, Sumenep Regency, Madura, East Java, Indonesia. The madrasah was selected purposively as the research site due to its established reputation in implementing Islamic values-based character education programs and its willingness to provide comprehensive access to researchers. Data collection was carried out from March to July 2024, allowing sufficient time for in-depth observation and multiple interviews with key informants.

Research Subjects and Informants

As a phenomenological study, this research focuses on the values of character education and the implementation of character education values within the madrasah context. The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique to ensure that informants possessed relevant knowledge and experience regarding Islamic values implementation. The subjects included school principals who provide strategic leadership and policy direction, vice principals who coordinate program implementation, teachers who serve as frontline implementers and role models, school committee members who represent community perspectives, parents or guardians of students who provide home-based support, and community members surrounding the school who constitute the broader social environment.

Key informants included Ruswan, serving as the head of MTs Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Dungkek Sumenep Madura, who provided comprehensive insights into

institutional policies and programs. H. Ashim contributed perspectives on religious foundations and community engagement. Ms. Zulfa, as a homeroom teacher, offered detailed accounts of classroom-level implementation strategies. Parent informants including Kornaidi (guardian of Lailatul Sa'adah) and Hosniyah provided perspectives on home-school collaboration and observed behavioral changes in students.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants using semi-structured interview guides that allowed flexibility to explore emerging themes while maintaining focus on research objectives. Interviews were recorded with informants' permission and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Participatory observation involved the researcher spending extended time at the madrasah to observe daily activities, rituals, teacher-student interactions, and institutional culture. Observation focused on how Islamic values were enacted in practice rather than merely espoused in policy. Documentation included collection of written materials such as curriculum documents, school regulations, activity reports, and photographic evidence of programs and facilities.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out systematically following the interactive model proposed by Mulyana (2003, 136), consisting of four interconnected stages conducted iteratively throughout the research process. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data from field notes and transcriptions, identifying relevant information aligned with research objectives while discarding irrelevant material. Data presentation organized reduced data into structured formats including matrices, charts, networks, and narrative descriptions that facilitated pattern recognition and conclusion drawing. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting patterns, explanations, causal flows, and propositions emerging from presented data. Verification entailed revisiting field notes, cross-checking with informants, and seeking disconfirming evidence to ensure conclusions were grounded in data rather than researcher preconceptions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research identified a comprehensive framework of Islamic values implementation at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi. The findings are organized into four main components: foundational Islamic values, core character values, curriculum integration strategies, and practical implementation mechanisms. To provide an overview of the research findings, Table 1 below presents the systematic framework of Islamic values implementation and its key elements.

Table 1. Implementation Framework of Islamic Values in Character Building at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi

Component	Elements	Implementation Forms	Expected Outcomes
Islamic Values Foundation	1. Faith (<i>Iman</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Congregational prayers - Qur'an reading - Study of <i>Bidayatu āl Hidayah</i> - Three dimensions: <i>Īlmu āl yaqin, Āinu āl yaqin, Haqqu āl yaqin</i> 	Students develop strong spiritual conviction and Islamic knowledge foundation
	2. Islamic Law (<i>Syariah</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching using <i>Āqidatu āl Āwan, Şullamu āl Taufiq</i> - <i>Fiqh</i> using <i>Faṭḥu āl Qārib, Şafinaṭu āl Nāja</i> - Morning greetings and handshakes - Congregational Dhuha prayer and <i>Yasin</i> recitation 	Students understand and practice Islamic rituals and ethical principles
	3. Spiritual Excellence (<i>Ihsan</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consciousness of divine presence - Internal monitoring mechanism - Rejection of negative impulses 	Students maintain behavior within Islamic values due to God-consciousness
Core Islamic Values	1. Greeting-Smiling-Salutation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Morning greetings - Smiling as charity (<i>tabassamuka shadaqatun</i>) - Polite body language 	Reduced bullying, comfortable learning environment, social awareness
	2. Honesty (<i>Kejujuran</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honest canteen without guards - Self-payment system - Honest self-assessment in exams 	Courage to behave authentically, integrity development
	3. Trustworthiness (<i>Amanah</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keeping friends' secrets - Managing responsibilities - Maintaining physical and mental health 	Reliable character, disciplined behavior
	4. Responsibility (<i>Tanggung Jawab</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social service activities - Community education projects - Self-accountability practices 	Active contribution to common good, accountability awareness
Curriculum Integration Strategies	1. Teacher Exemplary Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers model Islamic values in daily conduct 	Students observe and emulate positive behavior
	2. School Culture Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper trash disposal - Queuing habits - Sanctions for inappropriate behavior 	Positive institutional norms become second nature

Practical Implementation	3. Project-Based Learning	- Hajj practice simulation with group coordinators	Experiential learning of Islamic rituals and values
	4. Cross-Curricular Integration	- Islamic values embedded in mathematics, physics, English, biology	Holistic character education across all subjects
	1. Teachers as Second Parents	- Patient management of students - Investigation of student backgrounds - Special attention list	Personalized character guidance, effective problem-solving
	2. Teachers Welcome Students	- Teachers wait at classroom/gate to greet students	Students feel appreciated, personal approach strengthened
	3. <i>Āṣma āl Ḥuṣṇa</i> Recitation	- Daily recitation before entering class	Familiarity with divine attributes, monotheism foundation, behavioral guidance
	4. Congregational Dhuha Prayer	- Mandatory daily practice for all students	Spiritual discipline, continuation of practice at home
	5. Parental Cooperation	- Regular communication - Shared educational values - Mutual support for discipline	Home-school synergy, consistent value reinforcement

Source: Primary Data, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi (March-July 2024)

Construction of Islamic Values as Educational Foundation

The research findings reveal that Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi has established a comprehensive framework of Islamic values serving as the foundation for character education. Interview conducted with the head of MTs Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi Dungkek Sumenep Madura, revealed that madrasahs must have their own basis for teaching Islamic values. The informant stated:

“Madrasahs must have their own basis for teaching Islamic values, which are, at least; *First*, as moral legitimacy in everyday life. *Second*, as a means of instilling Islamic values that will later become ingrained in the character of Madrasah students. This is what distinguishes Madrasah students from non-Madrasah students” (Ruswan).

The research identified three foundational pillars that serve as general references for all madrasah activities. *First*, the foundation of faith (*iman*) is implemented through activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'an reading, and regular recitation of classical Islamic texts. Interview with H. Asim, confirmed that one book studied during Ramadan cottage activities was *Bidayatu āl Ḥidayah* by Imam Ghazali, which outlines the division of faith into three dimensions: basic knowledges (*Īlmu āl yaqin*), observation (*Āinu āl yaqin*), and deep conviction (*Ḥaqqu āl yaqin*).

Second, strengthening the foundations of Islamic values ensures that every aspect of madrasah education aligns with Islamic principles. The smallest implemented practice includes teachers welcoming students every morning and shaking hands with them. In some locations, congregational Dhuha prayer and congregational recitation of *Ṣurah Yaṣin* are also conducted. The informant explained:

“The application of *āqidah* and sharia in the teaching and learning process at Madrasah Nasy’atul Muta’allimin Candi takes the form of teaching based on Islamic scientific references. The *ṭauhid* lesson material uses the books *Āqidatu āl Āwam* and *Ṣullamu āl Taufiq* while the applied *fiqh* book uses the books *Fathu āl Qarib* and *Ṣafīnatu āl Naja*” (Ruswan).

Third, the foundation of *ihsan* in character building shapes students’ vertical and horizontal relationships. Feeling monitored by God is an important aspect that helps students maintain their behavior within Islamic values. If there is an urge to commit negative actions such as bullying, students have been equipped with the foundation of *Īḥṣan* to reject these negative impulses because they feel “watched” by God.

Islamic Values Implemented in Character Formation

The research identified four primary Islamic values consistently implemented in shaping madrasah student character. These values include greeting-smiling-salutation (*salam-senyum-sapa*), honesty (*kejujuran*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and responsibility (*tanggung jawab*).

The value of greeting-smiling-salutation represents a good attitude rolled out as a habit so that students develop awareness as social beings. The habit of greeting others at school, at home, and wherever students are constitutes a form of attention, awareness, attitude, and concern illustrated in verbal language. Moreover, students translate this through polite and civilized body language. A hadith written on school walls reads: *tabassamuka fi wajhi akhiika shadaqatun*, meaning “your smile in front of your brother is charity.” The impact of smiling on madrasah students includes reducing negative behaviors in friendships, reducing bullying, and creating a comfortable learning environment without hatred and hostility.

Honesty is implemented through various methods, including an honest canteen. Interview with H. Ashim, revealed:

“At Madrasah Nasy’atul Muta’allimin, there is an honest canteen that provides snacks for students without a guard. Students can take what they need and put the money in the designated place. If there is extra money, they can take the change themselves” (H. Ashim).

Teachers are aware that honesty has many aspects requiring implementation in educational practices. The most fundamental aspect is honesty with oneself, which requires continuous and sustained practice. Affirming honesty with oneself builds courage for madrasah students to behave according to their circumstances.

Trustworthiness (*amanah*) is emphasized as a fundamental dimension in interpersonal interactions. Students need special education in trustworthiness to become Islamic individuals as exemplified by the Prophet. The most obvious example is when a friend tells a secret that must be kept confidential. In the madrasah context, students have roles in safeguarding the trust of civilization to become a civilized, advanced, intelligent, and moral generation.

Responsibility (*tanggung jawab*) is instilled through the understanding that every individual has responsibilities and will be questioned about them. The informant stated that students have important roles in civility projects, community development, and maintaining “social piety.” Activities include social service encompassing community education, training, and religious lectures. Students are given responsibility for managing these activities from planning to completion under homeroom teacher guidance, based on the prophetic saying: *kullūkum ra’īn Wa kullūkum maṣ’ulu ‘an ra’itihi* (every individual has a responsibility and will be asked to report on that responsibility).

Curriculum Integration Strategies

The research identified four primary methods used to transfer Islamic values in the curriculum. *First*, teacher exemplary behavior (*Uswatun Hasanah*) is considered the most important method. Teachers who are disciplined, honest, and have noble character find it easier to instill Islamic values than those who only use lectures. *Second*, habits and culture in madrasahs create daily routines such as disposing of trash properly, cultivating Islamic smiles and greetings, shaking hands with teachers upon arrival, reading *Suratu āl Yasin* and performing Dhuha prayer in congregation before classes, and imposing strict sanctions for inappropriate behavior.

Third, project-based learning allows students to practice Islamic values. For example, schools facilitate Hajj practice in fields with student group coordinators, where students explore the idealization of Hajj from Islamic references. *Fourth*, cross-curricular integration ensures religious education is not only taught in religious subjects but also incorporated into non-religious subjects such as mathematics, physics, and English. Values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility can be taught in mathematics during exams, while faith can be taught in physics and biology through Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives.

Practical Implementation at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi

The research documented five key practical strategies successfully implemented at the madrasah. *First*, teachers serve as second parents at school, requiring patience in managing students, especially at lower grades. Interview with Ms. Zulfa revealed a case where a student stole money from a friend's bag. The homeroom teacher conducted investigations, called students individually, and advised the student without pressure. Ms. Zulfa added the child to a list requiring special attention and investigated family background, economic conditions, education, culture, and home environment to handle the student properly.

Second, teachers wait for students' arrival in front of classrooms or at school gates. Interview with Thowil, He explained that this program is implemented with the motivation of appreciating students who are enthusiastic about pursuing education and remaining disciplined as indicated by timely arrival. The informant stated: "This program is meant to appreciate students' enthusiasm for education and their discipline in arriving on time" (Thowil). The positive psychological impact includes students feeling appreciated by teachers, creating personal approaches that allow teaching and learning processes to touch emotional culture.

Third, before entering class, students line up to recite *Asma āl Ḥusna*. Interview with Ruswan, explained:

"The motivation behind this program is none other than to instill words of monotheism in the subconscious so that they can be realized in everyday life. In the process, students become more familiar with the names of Allah SWT in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah as the foundation of monotheism for living their future lives" (Ruswan).

Students recognize words like "*āl Raḥman*" as "the most merciful," instilling values of always being kind to everyone: teachers, parents, friends, animals, and plants. Parent Kornaidi, guardian of Lailatul Sa'adah, stated that reciting *Asma āl Ḥusna* before entering classrooms reflects Islamic students and distinguishes MI students from State Elementary School students, with visible impacts on children at home.

Fourth, all Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students are required to perform congregational Dhuha prayer. Teachers strive to instill the meaning that whoever practices Dhuha prayer will receive abundant sustenance including beneficial knowledge, opportunities, health, and achievements. Parent Hosniyah reported that her child still performs Dhuha prayer at home during holidays, demonstrating the habit's internalization beyond school hours.

Fifth, parental cooperation is essential in overcoming problems. Interview with H. Ashim, revealed a case where a parent arrived at school angry and carrying a knife after their child was disciplined. The madrasah explained that actions taken were measured and educational because the student violated rules and ethics. When parents remained upset, the school asked them to transfer their child to another madrasah, stating: "Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi was not the right place for parents who did not support their children being educated in Islamic morals and manners." (H. Ashim) This incident underscores the necessity of cooperation between parents and teachers to demonstrate seriousness about madrasah students' futures.

Discussion

Islamic Values Construction and Its Theological Foundations

The research findings reveal that Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi has developed a tripartite framework of Islamic values consisting of faith (*iman*), Islamic law (*syariah*), and spiritual excellence (*ihsan*). This finding aligns closely with classical Islamic educational philosophy, particularly Al-Ghazali's framework in *Bidayatu al-Hidayah*, which emphasizes the integration of belief, practice, and spiritual consciousness (Al-Ghazali, 1985). The madrasah's deliberate structuring of character education around these three dimensions demonstrates a sophisticated understanding that effective Islamic values implementation requires addressing cognitive, behavioral, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously.

This tripartite foundation addresses a critical gap identified in the problem formulation regarding the lack of structured strategies for Islamic values implementation. The theological grounding provides what Halstead (2007) describes as a "distinctive framework for moral education" that differentiates Islamic character education from secular approaches. By anchoring character formation in theological foundations rather than purely humanistic or pragmatic considerations, the madrasah creates a coherent value system where behavioral expectations are rooted in religious conviction rather than arbitrary social norms. This approach is consistent with contemporary scholarship emphasizing that effective Islamic values education must integrate cognitive understanding with affective internalization and behavioral manifestation (Kistoro et al., 2023).

The emphasis on *ihsan* as the consciousness of divine presence is particularly noteworthy as an internal monitoring mechanism. This finding suggests that the madrasah has operationalized what moral psychology research identifies as the development of moral identity and self-regulation. By cultivating students' awareness of being "watched" by God, the madrasah leverages intrinsic motivation rather than relying exclusively on external rewards and punishments. This aligns with Rest et al.'s (1999) Four Component Model, which identifies moral motivation as a critical psychological process distinct from moral reasoning. The *ihsan* dimension addresses the motivational component by providing students with compelling reasons—rooted in spiritual conviction—to prioritize moral values over competing interests.

Character Values Implementation and Social Learning

The identification of four core character values—greeting-smiling-salutation, honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility—reflects the madrasah's practical translation of abstract Islamic principles into concrete behavioral expectations. This specificity addresses the research question regarding which Islamic values are prioritized for implementation and how they support effective teaching and learning activities. The selection of these particular values is strategic, as they encompass both interpersonal dimensions (greeting-smiling-salutation) and intrapersonal moral integrity (honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility), creating a comprehensive character framework.

The implementation of these values through daily practices such as morning greetings, honest canteens, and *Asma āl Husna* recitation demonstrates the application of what Bandura (1977) identifies as observational learning and modeling. Students are not merely instructed about these values abstractly but observe teachers enacting them and practice them repeatedly in structured contexts. Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits that learning occurs through attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation—all of which are operationalized in the madrasah's approach. Teachers modeling greeting behavior, the honest canteen providing practice opportunities, and positive reinforcement for value-consistent behavior collectively create a robust social learning environment.

The honest canteen practice is particularly innovative as it creates what might be termed "authentic moral practice"—situations where students must make ethical decisions without direct adult supervision. This approach addresses a common limitation in character education where students comply with moral expectations only under surveillance. By creating opportunities for unsupervised ethical decision-making in low-stakes contexts, the madrasah facilitates what Buzzelli (1993) describes as internalization, where external moral standards become internal convictions. The reported continuation of Dhuha prayer at home during holidays, as mentioned by parent Hosniyah, provides empirical evidence of this internalization—students maintain practices beyond contexts of external monitoring.

Habituation and Cultural Reproduction

The research findings strongly support Bourdieu's (1990) theory of habitus as a mechanism for values internalization. The daily rituals observed at the madrasah—morning greetings, *Asma āl Husna* recitation, congregational prayers, and structured interactions—function as habituating practices that gradually transform conscious behavioral choices into unconscious dispositions. Bourdieu argues that habitus develops through "durable inculcation" in particular social fields, which precisely describes the madrasah environment where Islamic values pervade daily routines, physical spaces, and social interactions.

The finding that parents observe behavioral changes in children at home demonstrates that habituation at the madrasah has succeeded in creating what Bourdieu terms "transposable dispositions"—habitus that operates across different contexts rather than being limited to the specific setting where it was acquired. Parent Kornaidi's observation that *Asmaul Husna* recitation distinguishes MI students from State Elementary School students indicates that the madrasah has created a distinctive habitus that becomes part of students' identity and is recognizable to external observers. This supports Berglund's (2015) argument that Islamic educational institutions create distinctive habitus through daily rituals and embodied practices.

The curriculum integration strategies identified, teacher exemplary behavior, school culture development, project-based learning, and cross-curricular integration—collectively create what Wenger (1998) describes as a “community of practice” where learning occurs through legitimate peripheral participation. Students are not positioned as passive recipients of instruction but as participants in a community where Islamic values are embedded in everyday practices. The project-based Hajj simulation, for instance, allows students to engage authentically with religious rituals while developing both competence and understanding, exemplifying Wenger’s principle that learning involves doing, belonging, and becoming.

Teacher Role and Exemplary Behavior

The finding that teachers serve as “second parents” and that their exemplary behavior (*Uswatun Hasanah*) is central to values implementation strongly validates Lickona’s (1991) emphasis on adult modeling as a critical element of effective character education. Lickona argues that character education requires adults who exemplify desired values rather than merely teaching about them. The case of Ms. Zulfa’s handling of the student theft incident illustrates sophisticated pedagogical practice that balances correction with compassion, investigation with non-judgmental support, and immediate response with long-term attention to underlying causes.

This approach reflects what Berkowitz and Bier (2005) identify as a key principle of effective character education: positive adult-student relationships characterized by warmth, respect, and high expectations. Ms. Zulfa’s response—advising the student without pressure, adding him to a special attention list, investigating family background—demonstrates relationship-based pedagogy rather than punitive discipline. This aligns with contemporary understanding that character formation occurs within relationships, not merely through rules and consequences.

The practice of teachers waiting at classroom doors or school gates to greet students may appear superficial but has profound psychological significance. It communicates respect, care, and recognition of students’ inherent dignity, creating what Lickona (1991) describes as a “moral atmosphere” where students feel valued and safe. This emotional foundation is essential for character development, as students are more receptive to moral guidance from adults whom they perceive as caring about them personally.

Home-School Partnership and Parental Cooperation

The finding regarding the critical importance of parental cooperation, illustrated by both positive examples (parents reporting continuation of practices at home) and challenging examples (the angry parent with a knife), underscores what Grusec and Hastings (2014) identify as the necessity of consistency across socialization contexts. Character formation is undermined when values taught at school are contradicted by attitudes and practices at home. The madrasah’s firm stance with the non-supportive parent, suggesting transfer to another school, demonstrates institutional clarity about the need for value alignment between home and school.

This finding addresses the research question about the roles of teachers, parents, and the madrasah environment in values implementation. The data suggest that these agents must work synergistically rather than in isolation. The madrasah provides structured programming and modeling, teachers serve as exemplars and facilitators, parents reinforce values at home and support madrasah initiatives, and the broader environment

creates a “community of practice” that normalizes Islamic values. Halstead and Taylor (2000) argue that effective values education requires coherence between espoused and enacted values—this coherence must extend beyond the school walls to include family and community contexts.

Curriculum Integration and the Values

The finding that Islamic values are integrated across all subjects, including non-religious subjects such as mathematics and science, operationalizes what Lovat et al. (2011) describe as the “values/learning nexus.” Lovat’s research demonstrates that schools with strong values education programs experience improvements not only in character outcomes but also in academic performance, student engagement, and school climate. The madrasah’s approach ensures that character education is not treated as separate from or subordinate to academic learning but as an integral dimension of all learning.

The cross-curricular integration strategy addresses a common critique of character education as an “add-on” that competes with academic priorities. By embedding honesty in mathematics (through exam practices), faith in science (through Qur’anic perspectives on natural phenomena), and ethical reasoning across disciplines, the madrasah creates coherence between academic and moral education. This approach is consistent with Berkowitz and Bier’s (2005) principle of integration, which they identify as a characteristic of effective character education programs.

Effectiveness and Visible Outcomes

The research question regarding how Islamic values implementation can be effective and produce visible results in daily behavior is addressed through multiple converging lines of evidence. Parent reports of behavioral changes at home, continuation of religious practices during holidays, observable reductions in bullying and disruptive behavior, and the development of distinctive habitus all suggest that the implementation strategies are producing intended outcomes. These visible results validate the madrasah’s comprehensive approach integrating foundational theological grounding, specific character values, multiple implementation strategies, and strong home-school partnerships.

The effectiveness appears to derive from several synergistic factors. *First*, the theological foundation provides compelling intrinsic motivation beyond mere compliance. *Second*, the habituating practices create automatic dispositions that operate without constant conscious effort. *Third*, the modeling by teachers and parents provides vivid, concrete examples of values in action. *Fourth*, the community of practice creates peer culture that reinforces rather than undermines character development. *Fifth*, the integration across contexts—classroom, playground, home, community—promotes generalization beyond specific settings. This multi-pronged approach aligns with contemporary understanding that effective character education requires comprehensive, systemic interventions rather than isolated programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

Research Limitations

This research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. *First*, as a single-case ethnographic study of one madrasah, findings may not be generalizable to other madrasah contexts with different resources, leadership, teacher competencies, or community characteristics. The distinctive success of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy’atul

Muta'allimin Candi may reflect particular organizational factors or historical circumstances not easily replicable elsewhere.

Second, the research relied primarily on interviews and observations during a limited timeframe (March-July 2024), which may not capture long-term developmental trajectories or seasonal variations in program implementation. Longitudinal research following students over multiple years would provide stronger evidence about sustained impacts of values education.

Third, the research lacked systematic quantitative measures of character outcomes. While parent reports and teacher observations provide valuable qualitative evidence, standardized assessments of character development would strengthen claims about program effectiveness. Future research might incorporate validated measures of moral reasoning, prosocial behavior, or character strengths alongside qualitative data.

Fourth, the research did not systematically examine potential negative or unintended consequences of the intensive focus on Islamic values. Questions about how the approach affects students from less religious families, whether it may inadvertently promote rigidity or intolerance, or how it prepares students for engagement with religious and cultural diversity were not explored.

Novelty/Contribution

This research offers significant theoretical contributions by integrating classical Islamic educational frameworks with contemporary educational theories. While previous studies examined character education either from purely Islamic theological perspectives (Nurhadi, 2020) or secular educational frameworks (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Lickona, 1991), this study bridges both domains by demonstrating how Al-Ghazali's tripartite model of iman, syariah, and ihsan can be effectively combined with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, Bourdieu's habitus theory, and Wenger's communities of practice. This integration shows how Islamic theological foundations provide intrinsic motivation while contemporary theories illuminate mechanisms of learning and habituation. Methodologically, the ethnographic-phenomenological approach applied in the understudied Madura region enriches empirical evidence about Islamic education in Indonesia beyond the predominantly urban or Javanese-focused existing research.

Practically, this research addresses a critical gap by documenting a comprehensive, replicable framework for Islamic values implementation in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The identification of specific, actionable strategies such as honest canteens, morning greeting rituals, *Uswatun Hasanaḥ* recitation, and teachers as "second parents" provides madrasah practitioners with concrete practices grounded in both Islamic principles and educational research. Unlike previous studies focusing on theoretical models, this research provides empirical evidence of effectiveness through documented behavioral outcomes including parent-reported continuation of practices at home and reduced bullying incidents. The detailed documentation of implementation challenges, including parental resistance cases, contributes practical wisdom often absent from idealized program descriptions. These contributions position the research as a valuable resource for policy development, teacher professional development, and institutional improvement efforts across madrasah systems in Indonesia and beyond.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This research concludes that effective implementation of Islamic values in character building at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nasy'atul Muta'allimin Candi is grounded in a comprehensive framework integrating theological foundations with systematic pedagogical strategies. The construction of Islamic values is based on three interconnected pillars: faith (*iman*) encompassing knowledge, observation, and conviction; Islamic law (*syariah*) manifested through ritual worship and ethical conduct; and spiritual excellence (*Īḥṣān*) cultivating consciousness of divine presence as an internal monitoring mechanism. Four core character values are prioritized for implementation: greeting-smiling-salutation fostering positive social interactions, honesty developing moral integrity, trustworthiness ensuring reliability in relationships, and responsibility cultivating accountability. The effectiveness of this framework is demonstrated through visible behavioral outcomes including parent-reported continuation of practices at home, reduced bullying incidents, and development of distinctive Islamic habitus recognizable across contexts.

Implementation strategies that ensure effectiveness include teacher exemplary behavior (*Uswatun Ḥasanah*) where educators model Islamic values in daily conduct, school culture development through daily rituals such as morning greetings and congregational prayers, project-based experiential learning including Hajj simulations, and cross-curricular integration embedding values across all subjects including non-religious disciplines. Successful implementation requires synergistic collaboration among teachers serving as role models and facilitators, parents providing reinforcement and continuity between home and school, and the madrasah environment creating a supportive community of practice. The research demonstrates that character formation occurs through a cyclical process of exposure, comprehension, internalization, habituation, and behavioral manifestation, mediated by critical factors including continuity between contexts, coherence between espoused and enacted values, support from significant adults, reflection opportunities, and accountability structures that gradually transform external regulation into self-regulation.

Recommendations

For madrasah practitioners: Madrasah administrators and teachers should adopt comprehensive approaches to Islamic values implementation by establishing clear theological foundations, identifying specific character values aligned with institutional vision, creating daily habituating practices such as honest canteens and morning greeting rituals, ensuring teachers embody Islamic values in their conduct, and developing strong home-school partnerships through regular communication and shared expectations. Professional development programs should emphasize not only religious knowledge but also pedagogical skills for character education and relationship-based teaching approaches.

For parents and guardians: Parents should actively collaborate with madrasah by reinforcing Islamic values at home through consistent practices, supporting madrasah programs and initiatives, maintaining open communication with teachers regarding children's character development, and ensuring coherence between home and school expectations. Parents must recognize their critical role as primary character educators

whose modeling and reinforcement significantly influence children's internalization of values.

For educational policymakers: Government agencies responsible for madrasah education should allocate resources not only for physical infrastructure but also for teacher professional development focused on character education, parent education programs promoting home-school alignment, and community engagement initiatives creating supportive environments. Policies should recognize character education as integral to academic achievement rather than competing priorities, and evaluation frameworks should assess both cognitive and character outcomes.

For future research: Researchers should conduct longitudinal studies tracking character development trajectories over multiple years to assess long-term sustainability of outcomes, comparative studies examining implementation across diverse madrasah contexts to identify transferable principles and context-specific adaptations, quantitative assessments using validated character measures to complement qualitative evidence, investigations of student perspectives and experiences to understand values education from learner viewpoints, and studies examining how madrasah character education prepares students for engagement with religious and cultural diversity in pluralistic societies. Additionally, research exploring challenges and barriers to implementation, cost-effectiveness analyses of different strategies, and examination of unintended consequences would strengthen the evidence base for evidence-based practice in Islamic character education.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Ach. Syaiful: Conceptualization, research design, data collection through interviews and observations, data analysis and interpretation, writing original draft, revision based on reviewer feedback, and final approval for publication.

Amiruddin: Methodology development, theoretical framework construction, literature review, data validation and verification, manuscript review and editing, and final approval for publication.

Hafid and Faizatul Fitriyah: Data organization and coding, technical assistance in data analysis, reference management, manuscript formatting, proofreading, and final approval for publication.

All authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final manuscript for publication. All authors declare no conflict of interest in this research.

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