The Approach of Ma'had al-Jami'ah in Character Building for Students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan memiliki potensi besar dalam memperbaiki moralitas melalui pendidikan karakter yang holistik. Pendidikan karakter bukan hanya persoalan pencerdasan pikiran pada anak didik, tetapi juga berkaitan dengan bagaimana peserta didik itu memiliki kepribadian dan karakter yang luhur. Pendidikan ini tidak hanya memberikan pengetahuan moral di kelas, tetapi juga bimbingan praktik dalam hidup keseharian. Penelitian ini hendak mengetahui model-model pendekatan Ma'had al-Jami'ah dalam membentuk karakter baik mahasiswa, hasil dari model tersebut serta hambatan yang selalu dihadapi oleh ma'had ini. Metode penelian yang digunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif analitis. yaitu peneliti melakukan deskripsi terhadap temuan-temuan di lapangan, sekaligus menganalisis bagaimana data itu menggambarkan hipotesis yang sesuai dengan masalah diangkat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: (1) model-model yang ditawarkan ma'had dalam membangun karakter baik mahasantri dengan melakukan pembiasaan yang baik terhadap mahasantri, keteladanan, pembinaan disiplin, pembelajaran partisipatif. (2) karakter-karakter yang dihasilkan adalah kebiasaan ibadah dan belajar, disiplin dan menghargai perbedaan. (3) ditemukan beberapa hambatan, antara lain kesadaran individu mahasantri yang belum maksimal; Sarana dan prasarana yang belum cukup memadai di Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah ; Adanya latar belakang mahasantri yang berbeda-beda. Namun seiring berjalannya waktu, semua dapat berjalan dengan baik melalui adaptasi diri.

ABSTRACT

Education holds significant potential in improving morality through holistic character education. Character education is not merely about enhancing students' intellect but also about shaping their personality and fostering noble character. This form of education goes beyond imparting moral knowledge in the classroom; it also includes practical guidance for daily life. This study aims to examine the models of approach employed by Ma'had al-Jami'ah in shaping students' character, the outcomes of these models, and the challenges faced by the Ma'had.The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive-analytical approach. In this approach, the researcher describes the findings in the field while analyzing how the data supports the hypothesis in relation to the issues raised. The findings of the study indicate: (1) The models employed by the Ma'had in developing the good character of the students include fostering positive habits, providing exemplary role models, instilling discipline, and offering participatory learning. (2) The resulting character traits are a commitment to worship and study, discipline, and respect for differences. (3) Several challenges were identified, including the lack of optimal awareness among students, inadequate facilities and infrastructure at Ma'had al-Jami'ah, and the diverse backgrounds of the students. However, over time, these challenges have been addressed through adaptation.

A. Introduction

Moral issues have become a dominant challenge that permeates various aspects of life, including the educational sphere, from primary schools to higher education. The increasing prevalence of academic dishonesty reflects that integrity is often overlooked, especially among students. This widespread practice of dishonesty not only tarnishes the values of education but also impedes the development of ethics and character, which should serve as the foundation for the teaching and learning process. This highlights the urgent need for serious attention in instilling moral values from an early age to cultivate a generation of integrity.

This moral and ethical crisis undoubtedly has a negative impact on the progress of the nation. Dishonesty erodes the motivation for sincere learning. Cheating can also manifest in other areas. Cooperation and mutual assistance become difficult to achieve in the presence of widespread dishonesty. In the economic realm, dishonesty takes the form of corruption, which has the potential to lead to violence, unrest, and insecurity, thereby hindering progress and development activities.

To address this issue, serious efforts from various parties are required. Law enforcement must enhance supervision and strictly enforce laws against violations. Traditional and religious leaders should actively engage in imparting moral understanding and values to the community to prevent transgressions. Families also play a crucial role in educating their members about societal norms. Furthermore, educational administrators should integrate moral and ethical values into the curriculum to foster good character in the younger generation. Through collaboration from all sectors, it is hoped that a safer and more civilized environment can be established for all. These efforts must be carried out simultaneously and continuously so that Indonesia can overcome its moral and ethical crisis.

Education holds significant potential in improving morality through holistic character education. Such education not only provides moral knowledge in the classroom but also offers practical guidance for everyday life. This approach encompasses the cultivation of moral understanding, the development of moral feelings, and the formation of moral actions. By integrating ethical values and moral awareness into the curriculum, character education provides a solid foundation for individuals to understand, feel, and act in alignment with moral principles.

Muchlas Samani, in his book Konsep dan Model Pendidikan Karakter, defines character education as the process of developing good character in students. This is achieved by instilling and teaching moral values, as well as making civilized decisions in interactions with others and with God.[1]

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[1] Samani Muchlas, *Konsep Dan Model Pendidikan Karakter* (Bandung: Pt. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011).

Mulyasa, in his book Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter, explains that character education is an effort to assist in the development of both the mind and body of students, guiding them towards becoming more humane and better individuals, as well as responsible members of society.[2]

Thus, it can be concluded that character education combines the enhancement of students' intellect with the development of noble personality and character, enabling them to face moral challenges in everyday life.

Character education is not merely about enhancing students' intellect, but also about shaping their personality and fostering noble character. An educator (teacher/lecturer) must not only strive to make students intellectually capable but also cultivate and model noble character in front of them. In Islam, the essence of character or ethics is generally reflected in the qualities of the Prophet, namely Shidiq (honesty), Tabligh (conveying the truth), Amanah (trustworthiness), and Fathonah (intelligence). These values are fundamental principles that underpin the personal and social life practices of Muslims.[3]

To ensure that character education is widespread and effective in Indonesia, it is crucial to conduct in-depth theoretical and empirical research on various models, applications, and outcomes of character education. Through this research, we can gain a better understanding of how character education can be designed, implemented, and evaluated to achieve the desired outcomes. Theoretical research provides a strong conceptual foundation for understanding the basic principles of character education, while empirical research offers concrete evidence on the effectiveness of different approaches in real-world contexts. Therefore, this research can serve as a basis for the development of more effective and sustainable character education policies and practices within Indonesia's educational institutions, both formal and informal.

There have been several studies on character education in Indonesia, one of which focuses on pesantren education. Pesantren education is one model of character education. Recently, this educational institution has gained significant attention as a medium for developing character education.[4] Pesantren, as a traditional educational institution in Indonesia, offers a holistic education that encompasses spiritual, moral, and intellectual aspects comprehensively. Through the integration of religious learning, practical skills, and communal life within the pesantren environment, students (santri) are given the opportunity to develop strong personalities and character. In the context of pesantren, character education is not confined to formal classroom learning but also takes place in daily interactions between teachers and students, as well as in religious and social activities. Thus, the pesantren model

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[2] M.P. Prof. Dr. H. E. Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter* (Bumi Aksara Group, 2022), Https://Books.Google.Co.Id/Books?Id=Gt6aeaaaqbaj.

[3] Sakdiah Sakdiah, "Karakteristik Kepemimpinan Dalam Islam (Kajian Historis Filosofis) Sifat-Sifat Rasulullah," *Jurnal Al-Bayan: Media Kajian Dan Pengembangan Ilmu Dakwah* 22, No. 1 (2016).

[4] Nandang Sutrisno, *Pola Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Karalter Bangsa Pada Pendidikan Tinggi Melalui Pola Pendidikan Pesantren* (Bogor: Badan Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Kependidikan Nasional, 2010).

represents a form of holistic character education, as it encompasses various aspects of life that strengthen the moral and spiritual foundation of its students.

Heni Zuhriyah conducted a comparative study on the concepts of character education by Doni Koesoema and Ibn Miskawaih. According to Doni Koesoema, character education is an anthropological structure aimed at a continuous developmental process within humans, to perfect their existence as individuals who internalize virtues such as resilience, responsibility, and generosity. Koesoema emphasizes that this process is an active effort to actualize the inherent goodness within human beings. On the other hand, Ibn Miskawaih describes character education as a theological structure, viewing virtues as actions that can be performed without prior consideration. For him, the importance of habituation and training in the character education process is central to achieving virtue without the need for a cost-benefit consideration.

M. Mahbubi conducted a study on character education through Aswaja learning at SMP Khadijah Surabaya. The findings revealed that the teachings of Aswaja play a dominant role and significantly influence the teaching and learning process at SMP Khadijah Surabaya. Similarly, Fikri also examined character education at the same school, focusing on religious education. The results of this study showed that the planning of character education within the learning process conducted by teachers includes the development of syllabi and RPP (Lesson Plans) that incorporate character-building values. These character-building values are instilled through activities such as communal work, class president elections, study preparation, handling lost items, donations, and other similar activities.

Hakim As Shidqi conducted a study on moral education according to KH. Imam Zarkasyi and its relevance to the character education of the nation. This research is qualitative, employing a historical-factual approach with descriptive, comparative, and interpretative methods to analyze and obtain a clear understanding of KH. Imam Zarkasyi's thoughts on moral education.[5]

Investigating character education in educational institutions will help other institutions learn how to participate in building the character of their students. Other educational institutions can learn from the methods and impacts of character education in a particular institution, supported by research on this theme. The hope is that educational institutions will be increasingly able to enhance their capacity to cultivate good moral character in their students. It is expected that these institutions will produce more individuals with strong moral character.

This educational institution is intriguing because it emphasizes character education, consists of students who are both santri and university students, and includes individuals from various Islamic sects. The institution also implements a learning contract and imposes sanctions, including expulsion, for those who violate its rules. This approach contrasts with traditional pesantren, which typically follow a single sect and vary in terms of student age. Therefore, research on this Ma'had represents a new case, building

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[5] Hakim As Shidqi, *Pendidikan Akhlak Menurut Kh. Imam Zarkasyi Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pendidikan Karakter Bangsa* (Surabaya: Tesis--Fakultas Tarbiyah Uin Sunan Ampel, 2011).

upon existing concepts of character education. As such, this study is expected to fill this gap or complement the existing knowledge on the subject.

This study aims to investigate the approaches or methods used by Ma'had al-Jami'ah in shaping the character of mahasantri at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, as well as the outcomes and challenges encountered in the process. These questions will be addressed through qualitative research methods, specifically field research with a descriptive-analytic study. This research will describe and analyze the phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts of individuals at Ma'had al-Jami'ah at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

Data collection in this study was conducted through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with mahasantri living at the Ma'had to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences. Participatory observation allowed the researcher to directly experience and observe daily life at the Ma'had, as well as the social interactions among mahasantri and the management. Documentation included official records, diaries, and other materials relevant to the research. The collected data were then analyzed using thematic analysis, in which key themes were identified, analyzed, and interpreted to understand the approach of Ma'had in character development for the mahasantri.

The sampling process in this study used purposive sampling techniques, where informants were selected based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research objectives.[6] These criteria include selecting mahasantri who have lived at the Ma'had for at least one year and who are willing and able to provide rich and in-depth information about their experiences. The researcher also aimed to choose informants from diverse backgrounds and academic disciplines to obtain a broader range of perspectives.

The data analysis technique in this qualitative research involves several steps. First, the data from interviews, observations, and documentation are transcribed and organized. Second, the researcher repeatedly reads and reviews the data to identify emerging patterns and themes. Third, the data is analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, where key themes are identified and interpreted within the context of relevant theories and literature. Fourth, the researcher conducts data triangulation to ensure the validity of the findings by comparing data from various sources and methods. The results of the analysis are then presented in a narrative form, comprehensively describing Ma'had's approach to character development for mahasantri.

This study describes the findings related to the profile of the Ma'had, discussing its history and the dynamics of the diversity of mahasantri, academic activities, and character development programs at Ma'had al-Jami'ah UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. It further explores the model and character-building

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[6] Ilker Etikan, Sulaiman Abubakar Musa, And Rukayya Sunusi Alkassim, "Comparison Of Convenience Sampling And Purposive Sampling," *American Journal Of Theoretical And Applied Statistics* 5, No. 1 (2016): 1–4.

practices in the Ma'had. Additionally, the study examines a theoretical framework for character development from various theorists. Finally, the research identifies the character development model employed at Ma'had al-Jami'ah.

B. Profile and Character Education at Ma'had Jami'ah

Ma'had al-Jami'ah positions itself as a center for the cultivation of noble character, the habituation of good deeds, the strengthening of faith, and the development of Islam in its moderate, rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for all creation) form. This institution is a student pesantren under the auspices of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Its legal foundation traces back to the Rector's Decree of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya Number: In.03/HK.00.5/SK/245/P/2005. This legal decision positioned the pesantren as a non-structural entity within UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. From 2005 to 2013, the pesantren experienced significant growth, culminating in its official designation as one of the Technical Implementation Units (UPT), which later became known as the Ma'had al-Jami'ah Center. The UPT Ma'had al-Jami'ah was established based on the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation Number: 13 of 2013, published on March 15, 2013.

The presence of the student pesantren, Ma'had al-Jami'ah, at UIN Sunan Ampel plays a crucial role in developing students' potential. The vision and mission of Ma'had al-Jami'ah at UIN Sunan Ampel are to become a center for student learning in the fields of language (Arabic and English), the cultivation of faith and morals, as well as a center for Qur'anic memorization (Tahfidz). By becoming this learning hub, it is expected that students with strong character will emerge. To achieve this, the institution organizes learning and character-building programs systematically and effectively in alignment with its vision and mission.

The Rector of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya appoints a Director (Mudir) to lead Ma'had al-Jami'ah. The Director is assisted by an Assistant Director for academic affairs and student affairs, as well as an Assistant Director for facilities and infrastructure. The Director is also supported by the head of administration to manage the administrative operations at the Ma'had al-Jami'ah Management Office. The head of administration is assisted by several staff members, including those responsible for academic affairs, finance, IT/information systems, and general affairs.

To oversee and guide the students (henceforth referred to as mahasantri) in the male and female dormitories (Ma'had), musyrif (male supervisor) and musyrifah (female supervisor) are appointed. The musyrif and musyrifah provide guidance, supervision, and support to the mahasantri intensively, 24 hours a day within the dormitory. In addition to the guidance provided in the dormitories, Ma'had al-Jami'ah also conducts character-building and learning activities in classrooms during the evening, after Maghrib prayer until 8:00 PM (WIB). The guidance is provided by faculty members or lecturers who have been appointed by the Rector through a decree upon the proposal of the Ma'had Director.

As a student pesantren, Ma'had al-Jami'ah refers to a pesantren located within a university campus, although some institutions, such as the State Islamic University (UIN) Malang, use the term Ma'had Al-'Ali. The main characteristic of this pesantren is that the majority of its students are university students, and it does not accept non-students. The existence of Ma'had al-Jami'ah within the campus environment aims to achieve two concurrent goals: to foster the development of an academic culture as a distinctive feature of student pesantren and to provide character (moral) education in daily life through various exemplary models that are expected. Another specific characteristic of the mahasantri in this Ma'had is the diversity in their places of origin. In terms of religion, all of them are Muslim. However, they come from different regions. This is in contrast to other pesantren or boarding houses around UIN Sunan Ampel. The diversity referred to in this study pertains to the different backgrounds of the mahasantri residing in the Ma'had.

Due to the diverse backgrounds of the mahasantri, the members of this educational institution exhibit a variety of cultural patterns, characteristics, languages, and perspectives. However, Ma'had al-Jami'ah does not focus on these differences but rather on the shared intent and goal of seeking knowledge. Finding common ground in perceptions is indeed not easy given this diversity. Nevertheless, it has become a mutual commitment among the mahasantri to pursue knowledge, which includes learning from one another to understand differences and to respect each other amidst this diversity.

To achieve its vision and mission, Ma'had establishes collective habits for the mahasantri. The institution organizes activities such as performing the five daily congregational prayers, the habit of waking up early, performing Tahajjud prayer, reading the Qur'an, memorizing the Qur'an, studying classical Islamic texts, engaging in academic discussions, writing, performing Istighosah, and more. These activities serve as positive habits aimed at instilling discipline and shaping the character of the mahasantri.

In addition to the well-scheduled daily activities, Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah also conducts evening lessons. These evening sessions are held from Monday to Wednesday, starting after the Maghrib prayer and concluding at 8:00 PM. The classes are led by highly competent instructors in their respective fields. The subjects taught include Fiqh (worship, interpretation of legal verses), Sufism (ethics hadith, pure Sufism), and English.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, there is a specific program designed to develop the soft skills of mahasantri in writing. This activity is called writing skill, and it is facilitated through an organization known as the Pesantren Journalism Community (PJC). PJC is a student organization focused on journalism and writing.

To train the mahasantri in organizational skills, Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah has established the Dewan Mahasantri (DM). The Dewan Mahasantri acts as a driving force, assisting the musyrif and musyrifah in encouraging mahasantri to actively participate in the Ma'had's programs. In addition to this, the DM also organizes activities with an academic focus, in line with the pesantren's vision and mission, such as

the Orientation for Love of Pesantren (ORCIP), Advanced Reasoning Training (DBL), and other similar events.

In addition to fostering habits, Ma'had also socializes character values to ensure they are understood by the mahasantri. Every time the Director of Ma'had delivers a speech, whether in formal or informal settings, he always inspires and encourages the mahasantri to emulate values such as discipline, honesty, enthusiasm, simplicity, and to become mahasantri who are intelligent, critical, virtuous, and of noble character. He believes that every change starts from within oneself. Achieving one's goals requires hard work and determination.

Discipline development at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah begins when prospective mahasantri register. Each candidate is asked about their commitment to participating in the Ma'had program. They are also questioned whether their decision to register was made of their own will or at the request of their parents. Additionally, they are asked if they are willing to adhere to the rules and participate in the Ma'had programs. A written statement is also required, which is signed by the mahasantri, confirming their willingness to follow all activities, programs, and regulations to be implemented by Ma'had.

Commitment alone is not enough; Ma'had also monitors the attendance of mahasantri in its programs and activities. Attendance records are kept to encourage mahasantri to maintain discipline in participating in Ma'had activities. Those who skip activities and those who are diligent will be identified through these attendance records. These records will be considered in the semester evaluation, in addition to the final exam for the evening classes. Based on the attendance records, the Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah management assesses the level of participation of the mahasantri. This evaluation is important for the mahasantri to pay attention to, as it serves as the basis for the Ma'had administrators to decide whether they will be allowed to stay for the next academic year.

With this approach, the education at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah is more democratic while still maintaining discipline in line with the institution's goals. To join this institution, mahasantri are not coerced. However, if they agree with the institution's objectives, they are required to participate in the programs designed to achieve those goals. This approach is non-authoritarian and is easily accepted by all mahasantri, becoming a distinctive feature of Ma'had. They commit to and collectively strive to achieve the institution's objectives. Unity is the key to successfully implementing the programs and activities of Ma'had.

Through these efforts, it is expected that the mahasantri will be able to develop skills in line with the intended goals. By applying effective teaching methods, providing role models from the supervisors, and encouraging active participation from the mahasantri in every activity, they will gain the confidence and optimism needed in all aspects of life. This will help them better understand themselves within Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah. As a result, they will become fully developed individuals with strong character, capable of benefiting both themselves and others.

The character developed through these habits resulted in achievements. The team from Ma'had al-Jami'ah UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya won the overall champion title in the Musabaqah Ilmiah competition at the National Conference of Mudir and the Musabaqah Ilmiah Ma'had PTKIN held at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The event took place from August 7 to 9, 2023. The competition, which involved mahasantri, included various contests such as the Musabaqah Hifdzil Qur'an (MHQ), Musabaqah Qiraatul Kutub (MQK), English Speech, and Arabic Speech.

C. Perspective from Other Studies

The Ma'had al-Jami'ah institution represents an effort to build moral character or akhlak among students at the university level, particularly at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Behind this endeavor lies a theoretical foundation on how to cultivate the moral character of individuals. To illustrate and contextualize the character development model of this institution, it is essential to compare it with the major schools of thought in this field. Several schools of thought exist regarding the cultivation of human character. These include virtue ethics, the influence of the environment, the influence of the individual, and a combination of both the environment and the individual.

Virtue Ethics emphasizes the development of moral character traits such as courage, honesty, generosity, and wisdom.[7] Character, in this framework, refers to a person's inherent qualities or mental tendencies that are good, rather than merely the actions or consequences of those actions. A person possessing such character will naturally develop towards a better and more fulfilling life. In Virtue Ethics, the focus shifts from asking, "What should I do?" to asking, "What is the right direction for personal development?".[8] These core characters are nurtured through habitual practice. According to this perspective, such character traits do not form instantly but are developed through consistent, repeated actions. For example, a person does not become courageous after a single brave act, but through repeated acts of bravery carried out consistently. Similarly, honesty and generosity are not traits that appear suddenly; they are the result of habitual actions and interactions with others. Through good habits, a person develops a propensity for virtuous qualities.[9]

In the perspective of behaviorist psychology, as proposed by Skinner, moral actions are influenced by the environment. To foster moral behavior in an individual, it is essential to create an environment that provides positive reinforcement for moral actions and negative reinforcement for immoral actions.[10] Positive incentives include rewards such as praise, convenience, or gifts, while

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[7] Thomas Lickona, "Character Education: The Cultivation Of Virtue," In *Instructional-Design Theories And Models* (Routledge, 2013), 591–612.

[8] Kirsten Ainley, "Virtue Ethics" (2017).

[9] Dorothea Frede, "Aristotle's Virtue Ethics," In *The Routledge Companion To Virtue Ethics* (Routledge, 2015), 17–30.

[10] Gordon Vessels And William Huitt, "Moral And Character Development," In *National Youth At Risk Conference, Savannah, Ga, March* (Citeseer, 2005), 8–10.

negative incentives involve criticism, obstacles, or punishment. Moral education is an effort to provide stimuli that are expected to generate responses in the form of moral actions.[11]

From the sociological perspective of Émile Durkheim's concept of social facts, the role of norms and exemplary models is crucial in the formation of character and morality in society. An individual's morality and character are shaped by the norms and the examples set by influential figures within the community. Moral standards are passed down from one generation to the next through explanation and role modeling. Culture significantly influences an individual's perception of moral events.[12]

Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development posits that there is a progression in an individual's moral thinking, emotions, and actions. Moral development is the result of evolving reasoning about concepts of justice. In the pre-conventional stage, children prioritize their own interests, focusing on what is good or pleasing for themselves. In the conventional stage, individuals give importance to the well-being and happiness of their group. In the post-conventional stage, individuals focus on the greater good of humanity, including future generations. Factors that influence moral development include age and cognitive structure, which shape moral thinking and decision-making. Cognitive structure refers to the basic principles that guide how an individual interprets moral phenomena .[13]

To build moral character according to Kohlberg, continuous efforts are required, including setting examples, encouraging individuals to understand the perspectives of others both within and outside their group, fostering moral reasoning, and providing individuals with the freedom to reflect. Moral development is influenced by interactions with the environment and an understanding of social norms. Moral education is also crucial for internalizing moral values, alongside external encouragement from the surrounding environment.[14]

Thomas Lickona synthesizes various approaches in formulating character development into three key elements: knowledge, appreciation, and moral behavior. To build character, learners need to understand what constitutes good and bad behavior. This knowledge does not always come from teachers but also from an understanding of the moral impulses that arise from within, as a consequence of human social nature. Positive moral values such as honesty, justice, empathy, care, perseverance, self-discipline, and humility are among the key aspects. Next, they need to appreciate or value these good character traits. Then, they carry out virtuous actions through habitual practice, supported by reinforcement mechanisms such as rewards and punishments. These three core elements adopt character development theories from virtue ethics, environmental influence, and individual influence.

[11] Asman Asman, Suyadi Suyadi, And Miftachul Huda, "Character Education As Brain Education: Spiritual Neuroscience Studies In Islamic Education," *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna* 12, No. 2 (2021): 77–86.

[12] Gisela Trommsdorff, "The Development Of Moral Values In Cultural Contexts," The Oxford Handbook Of Moral Development: An Interdisciplinary Perspective 1 (2020): 145–63.

13 Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stages Of Moral Development," *Moral Education* 1, No. 51 (1971): 23–92.

[14] M Zainul Hafizi And Hadi Wiyono, "The Importance Of Moral Education In The Formation Of Children's Character," *Ijgie (International Journal Of Graduate Of Islamic Education)* 4, No. 2 (2023): 345–350.

D. Data Analysis

As a pesantren based on Islamic principles, Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah applies an Islamic perspective in the management of its educational system. In Islam, character education has been emphasized since the advent of Islam, with the prophethood of Muhammad SAW. According to the narration,[15] Muhammad explained:

انما بعثت لأتم صالح الأخلاق (8952)

It means: *"Indeed, I was sent to perfect good character."* (Narrated by Bukhari in Shahih Bukhari, Book of Etiquette, Baihaqi in Syu'ub al-Iman, and Hakim).

This hadith illustrates that the teachings of Islam brought by the Prophet are not solely focused on strengthening aspects of faith and worship, but also on the reinforcement of morality (akhlak). Regardless of how strong one's faith is, supported by consistent acts of worship day and night, without the foundation of noble morality, that faith and worship would lack meaning, or more precisely, be incomplete.

Ma'had fosters character development by making the perfection of character its central orientation, vision, and mission. The vision and mission of this institution are to become a center for student learning in the fields of language (Arabic and English), the cultivation of aqidah (faith) and akhlak (morality), as well as a center for Qur'an memorization (Tahfidz al-Qur'an). This focus also shapes how the organization is structured and the activities it undertakes, all of which are oriented towards moral development.

The activities at Ma'had in cultivating akhlak (morality) comprise a blend of Islamic religious rituals, the study of ethics, writing training, and organizational practice. These activities complement each other in the same way that hablum minallah (relationship with Allah) complements hablum minannas (relationship with others). Religious rituals would be empty without an understanding of morality towards Allah and fellow human beings. This understanding through study becomes richer when paired with reflection in writing training and further deepened through practical experience in organizational activities.[16]

Several studies support the connection between rituals and adherence to norms as well as a sense of solidarity.[17] In the context of Ma'had, these rituals refer to Islamic religious practices, while the norms pertain to akhlak (morality). Rituals are an essential part of the effort to internalize akhlak and a commitment to uphold moral principles.[18]

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[15] Ahmad, *Musnad Ahmad* (Riyadh: Muassas Al-Risalah, 1999).

[16] Eleanor Lawrence, Maggie W Dunn, And Suri Weisfeld-Spolter, "Developing Leadership Potential In Graduate Students With Assessment, Self-Awareness, Reflection And Coaching," Journal Of Management Development 37, No. 8 (2018): 634–51.

[17] Harvey Whitehouse, "Rethinking Ritual: How Rituals Made Our World And How They Could Save It★," *Journal Of The Royal Anthropological Institute* 30, No. 1 (March 2024): 115–132.

[18] Harvey Whitehouse, *Inheritance: The Evolutionary Origins Of The Modern World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press Of Harvard University Press, 2024).

The activities of Ma'had reflect a combination of rituals, study, and the practice of akhlak through organizational involvement. Congregational prayers (the five daily prayers), tahajjud, istighosah, and the study of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning) on akhlak are part of the moral and spiritual formation. Additionally, there are activities focused on learning Arabic and English, as well as training in expressing thoughts both orally and in writing.

Training in organization within the Mahasantri Council is an integral part of character education that enriches experience and nurtures essential values for social life. Through organizational activities, individuals learn to collaborate within a team, lead, and manage time and resources efficiently. They learn to respect differing opinions, build effective communication, and resolve conflicts wisely. In the process, they also learn to take responsibility for tasks and decisions they make, as well as understand the importance of integrity and honesty in all interactions. Therefore, practicing organization not only develops practical skills but also shapes a strong and dignified character in everyday life .[19]

In the development of the moral character of the Mahasantri at Ma'had al-Jami'ah, the paradigm used involves various character-building theories, both from an Islamic and Western perspective. The similarities between character formation in both Islamic and Western versions are inevitable, as both use reason as the source of ethical views. Western ethics formulates goodness through reason, which then gives rise to views on virtue ethics, utilitarianism, and deontology. In contrast, Islam not only formulates goodness based on reason but also through understanding the revelation sent to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Therefore, the framework for character development in Islam has its own uniqueness, but it is also open to learning from Western character development approaches, as Islamic teachings are receptive to reason-based perspectives, including those from the West.

In Islamic perspective, character development is carried out by emulating the morals of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This involves aspects of faith, worship, ethics, and manners, which are instilled through understanding, intention, and the practices of habituation and exemplarity set by the caretakers. Furthermore, from the standpoint of Western knowledge, Ma'had employs several Western theories in building character.[20]

First, this model integrates the principles of virtue ethics, which emphasize the development of good character through the consistent practice of moral habits. Second, it acknowledges the importance of the social environment in shaping individual values and morality. Social norms established through commitment and exemplarity influence individual moral behavior. Third, the character development model stresses the significance of reinforcing desired moral behaviors. This reinforcement is carried out by providing rewards for desired moral actions and sanctions for moral violations. Fourth, character

[19] Ludwig Bstieler And Martin Hemmert, "Increasing Learning And Time Efficiency In Interorganizational New Product Development Teams," Journal Of Product Innovation Management 27, No. 4 (2010): 485–99.

20 Dedi Et Al., "Problems And Challenges Of Moral Education In Indonesia: A Conceptual Framework," *Education, Religion, And Social Studies* Vol. 13 No. 1 (2023), No. 2023 (N.D.).

formation through organization. Ma'had builds character through the establishment of the Mahasantri organization. Within this organization, individuals are given the freedom to express their thoughts and feelings, but they must always consider the interests of the group. This encourages members to shift their focus from personal interests to the collective goal. Organizing becomes an activity that not only benefits the individual but also the group as a whole. Through this process, the institution helps shape a moral perspective that is both independent and experience-based, without coercion or dogmatic teaching.

With a holistic approach, Ma'had's model not only acknowledges the complexity of the factors that shape individual morality but also provides a strong foundation for the development of quality and sustainable character. Thus, this model reflects Ma'had al-Jami'ah's commitment to producing a generation of students who are not only intellectually capable but also strong in morality and Islamic values. The Director of Ma'had and the musyrif-musyrifah provide continuous guidance and exemplary behavior to the mahasantri. Through exemplarity and norms, group members are more likely to follow these established norms. A similar view is also found in the Qur'an, specifically in Surah Al-Ahzab: 21 and Ash-Shaff: 2-3.

Character formation is also influenced by the environment through the provision of incentives and punishments (operant conditioning). For mahasantri who excel, Ma'had may offer a scholarship as a positive incentive. This scholarship encourages mahasantri to adhere to the established practices in order to earn the reward. On the other hand, for mahasantri who violate the rules and customs of the Ma'had, an evaluation process determines whether they can continue their stay at the institution. Leaving the Ma'had is considered a punishment for the mahasantri, as the Ma'had offers intensive education and affordable accommodation.

This Ma'had also adopts a sociobiological approach. The development of moral character is influenced by instincts, cognition, emotions, and social interactions. The Ma'had provides knowledge and motivation for engaging in moral actions and establishes a behavioral contract. The Director, along with the musyrif and musyrifah, impart knowledge about morals and ethics, while also motivating the mahasantri to practice them. They conduct interviews to secure the commitment of the mahasantri in achieving their goals and adhering to the discipline set by the Ma'had. This process represents a form of moral knowledge preparation and a commitment to act in accordance with moral principles.

This Ma'had also instills the value of tolerance within its character education. This is an effort to cultivate the movement of moral awareness from the pre-conventional stage to the conventional and post-conventional stages, as outlined in Lawrence Kohlberg's framework. Without the integration of morality and tolerance, the scope of moral allegiance remains limited to oneself (pre-conventional) or one's own group (conventional). Tolerance broadens moral allegiance, extending it to groups outside one's own, ultimately fostering a commitment to humanity at large.

1. Habituation of Good Actions

Ma'had al-Jami'ah employs the habituation of good actions for its students. Habituation refers to the deliberate repetition of actions until they become ingrained as character traits or tendencies that are easily performed. The development of good character encourages students to engage in actions that are both virtuous and correct. This process instills in them a stronger sense of direction and purpose in life, driven by the growth of their character.

Good habituation is an effective method to be applied within the Ma'had al-Jami'ah environment to shape the character of its students. On one hand, it is a heavy responsibility for the caregivers and musyrif-musyrifah to continuously encourage students to engage in good habits. However, the result is the emergence of positive motivation from within the students themselves.

In this pesantren, a number of good habits are instilled as the pillars of student life. One of these is the Tahajjud prayer, a nightly worship performed with sincerity to draw closer to Allah. In addition, congregational prayers have become an inseparable routine, teaching togetherness and solidarity in worship. Collective prayers also play an essential role in strengthening the bonds among students and reinforcing faith collectively. Moreover, the evening study sessions are well-utilized to acquire knowledge and deepen religious understanding, making this pesantren a place that nurtures both spirituality and intellect. By fostering these habits, the pesantren shapes individuals with noble character who are committed to fully practicing their faith.

Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah, the musyrif and musyrifah actively work to cultivate the daily habits of the students around the clock by providing regular reminders. One method they use is waking students with loudspeakers broadcasting a CD of the Qur'an, ensuring that students rise upon hearing the recitation. Additionally, they collaborate with the Dewan Mahasantri (Student Council) to go from room to room, reminding students to carry out the habits instilled in them, such as performing the Tahajjud prayer and participating in congregational prayers.

2. Role Modeling of Daily Character

The Ma'had community cultivates a distinct culture similar to that of traditional pesantren, where role modeling plays a central role in shaping the character of its members. In pesantren life, the exemplary conduct of the kiai holds a decisive influence on the community, serving as a moral compass for the students. In the context of Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah, the caretakers (pengasuh) assume a role comparable to that of the kiai. Although they may not carry the same title, their function is equivalent: to provide moral and spiritual role models for the students. Their example carries significant weight in the personal growth and character development of the mahasantri, reinforcing the formation of noble conduct (akhlāq).

Although he does not reside permanently within the Ma'had, the leadership of the Director of Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah carries an aura comparable to that of a kiai in the pesantren tradition. On every

occasion, he provides encouragement and serves as a role model by consistently emphasizing the importance of reading, writing, and the pursuit of knowledge. He inspires students not only to engage diligently in intellectual activities but also to aspire toward continuing their studies to the highest academic levels.

In addition to serving as a model in academic pursuits, the Director of Ma'had also inspires students to cultivate creativity in its various forms. This includes activities such as writing, authoring books, developing soft skills, and engaging in a wide range of other creative endeavors. Through this example, students at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah are encouraged to express themselves creatively and productively, enabling them to grow into empowered individuals who contribute positively across different dimensions of life.

The role of the musyrif and musyrifah is equally vital in providing daily role models for the students, as they accompany and guide them throughout the day and night at Ma'had. They consistently offer mentorship and set examples of good habits, from waking up at night for tahajjud prayer, performing congregational prayers, and practicing proper use of language in daily conversations, to other aspects of disciplined living. Through their constant presence and guidance, the musyrif and musyrifah serve as living examples that shape the students' moral and spiritual growth.

To cultivate role modeling in character formation, Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah organizes study sessions that emphasize the practical refinement of morality (akhlaq). One of its core programs is a regular weekly study of the kitab kuning every Thursday evening, focusing on Al-Fath Ar-Rabbani, a seminal work by the eminent scholar Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani. This text provides extensive guidance on shaping individuals into pious, courteous, and socially beneficial persons. It offers a profound exploration of moral cultivation, noble conduct, and the transformative journey toward becoming a devout believer and, ultimately, a Sufi. Through these in-depth studies, the students (mahasantri) are expected to gain meaningful insights and wisdom that can be translated into daily practice. The text thus serves not only as a source of spiritual enrichment but also as an inspirational guide that nurtures moral character and broadens their spiritual horizons.

3. Fostering Discipline

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are distinctive educational institutions characterized by their strict discipline and highly structured routines. Daily activities typically begin early in the morning, often before dawn, and extend until late at night. Students engage in a range of practices such as performing tahajjud prayers, participating in congregational prayers, and studying classical Islamic texts under the guidance of their teachers (asatidz or kiai). These activities are carried out regularly, with limited exceptions on designated rest days such as Fridays. This disciplined model of education sets pesantren apart from other educational institutions and plays a vital role in shaping their students' unique character and identity.

Building on this reality, one of the primary goals of character education in pesantren is to instill discipline in students, which in turn nurtures their independence. A disciplined student is better equipped to manage life's realities in accordance with their capacities. Conversely, a lack of discipline often leads to negative consequences, particularly when individuals are confronted with life's challenges and difficulties.

Ma'had al-Jami'ah, as one of the key pillars of UIN Sunan Ampel, places the cultivation of strong discipline among its foremost objectives. This discipline serves as a fundamental cornerstone in the character-building process envisioned and implemented by the institution.

This character-building process is both structured and systematically scheduled, beginning at dawn and continuing until late at night. Through such discipline, mahasantri are expected to fully engage in the entire formation program. The discipline instilled within this setting is also intended to remain with them beyond the Ma'had environment, carrying over into their regular academic studies at UIN Sunan Ampel.

One example of the character formation activities at Ma'had al-Jami'ah is the language development program. This program takes place after the dawn prayer and focuses on introducing and mastering new vocabulary, particularly in Arabic and English. The choice of early morning is not merely a matter of schedule but is intentionally designed to cultivate perseverance and discipline among the mahasantri. By making a habit of rising early and consistently participating in the language program, students are expected to develop the resilience needed to succeed in their academic pursuits.

To reinforce discipline among the mahasantri, the administrators of Ma'had al-Jami'ah implement an attendance system. This system serves as an initial framework for cultivating discipline, even though at first it may feel obligatory or burdensome for students who have already spent their afternoons attending regular classes in their respective faculties.

Fostering disciplined character among the mahasantri of Ma'had al-Jami'ah is a complex process, particularly given their diverse cultural and social backgrounds. The key to achieving this goal lies in the involvement of all parties administrators, musyrif, and the students themselves. Shared cooperation and commitment from every stakeholder are crucial in creating a supportive and conducive environment that nurtures discipline as a core character trait among the mahasantri.

The participatory model adopted at Ma'had al-Jami'ah fosters a disciplined environment without coercion. Self-awareness serves as the primary foundation for developing discipline, yet the roles of administrators and musyrif remain vital in providing reminders and corrective guidance when necessary. Through this approach, students are encouraged to internalize the importance of discipline and to consciously practice it in their daily lives.

4. Fostering a Tolerant Character

Ma'had al-Jami'ah can be seen as a miniature representation of Indonesia, bringing together students from diverse academic disciplines, regions, and even countries. This diversity is reflected in their distinct cultural backgrounds and daily practices. Such plurality is one of the unique characteristics of Ma'had al-Jami'ah, providing students with opportunities to learn how to understand and appreciate differences while broadening their perspectives on the rich cultural and traditional landscape of Indonesia.

Character education at Ma'had al-Jami'ah requires the active involvement of all stakeholders. The diverse backgrounds of the students, if not managed properly, may give rise to primordial attitudes that could hinder the process of character formation. Therefore, collaboration and commitment from all parties—administrators, musyrif (mentors), and the students themselves are essential to create a conducive environment that supports the cultivation of noble character.

Character education at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah is designed as a comprehensive approach that integrates moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action, in line with Thomas Lickona's character education framework. Within this context, the primary aim is to enhance the moral capacity of students across these three dimensions. By instilling moral values and fostering awareness of the importance of ethical behavior, the program seeks to cultivate students who are responsible, caring, and principled in various aspects of life. Thus, character education at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah serves as a vital foundation for shaping students into individuals with strong integrity and well-grounded personalities.

First, moral knowledge serves as the foundational pillar for students at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah. From the outset, they are guided not to confine themselves within the boundaries of shared origins or backgrounds. To reinforce this principle, students from different academic programs are deliberately not placed in the same dormitory room. This arrangement teaches them that diversity should never be a barrier to embracing universal human values. For example, honesty and justice must be practiced both toward oneself and toward others, regardless of differences in academic discipline or cultural background. By internalizing and applying this moral knowledge, students at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah are expected to cultivate strong character and uphold moral values in their daily lives.

A deep understanding of diversity is essential for students at Ma'had al-Jami'ah to navigate differences with wisdom. With a solid foundation of knowledge about pluralism, students learn to view diversity as a natural and integral part of life. This knowledge not only broadens their perspective but also shapes them into individuals who are inclusive and tolerant. Conversely, a lack of understanding about the essence of diversity can foster primordial attitudes that may lead to harmful conflicts. Therefore, education on diversity at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah serves a dual purpose: it prevents potential conflicts while also nurturing individuals who are open-minded and capable of embracing differences as a valuable asset in social life.

Second, moral feelings play a crucial role in shaping the character of students at Ma'had al-Jami'ah. They are encouraged to recognize and cultivate emotional values that emphasize the reality that the world is not inhabited by a single group, but by a wide diversity of communities. Through this emotional awareness, students develop a deeper sense of character, realizing that personal excellence is inseparable from the contributions and presence of others. Violence against others, therefore, is not only harmful to its victims but also undermines the very human values within the perpetrator. At the core of human existence is the universal desire for harmony and peace, making violence incompatible with the true essence of humanity. Thus, nurturing moral feelings provides students with a strong foundation for living with empathy, tolerance, and a deep awareness of human rights.

With a solid understanding of diversity and a heightened level of emotional sensitivity in responding to differences within the Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah environment, students gradually develop greater self-awareness. This emotional disposition fosters the realization that they are an integral part of the broader, diverse human community. When such an understanding takes root, it naturally cultivates an attitude of tolerance. Mere knowledge of differences is insufficient to shape a truly tolerant character unless it is accompanied by an emotional commitment to embracing diversity.

Third, moral action. Daily life at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah is markedly different from that of students residing in other parts of the campus. Here, behavioral supervision is carried out consistently, ensuring that students cultivate a sense of responsibility not only for themselves but also for their broader social obligations. This is rooted in a mutual agreement: students commit not only to the goals of studying at Ma'had but also to adhering to its rules and accepting supervision as part of achieving those goals. Such oversight trains students to value discipline, accountability, and awareness of their roles in building a cohesive community. In this way, the Ma'had environment shapes students into individuals who are not only self-responsible but also actively engaged in social responsibility and collective life.

Within the environment of Ma'had al-Jami'ah, moral action in relation to student diversity is reflected in attitudes of respect and tolerant behavior in daily life. Student activities are not determined by a person's background or origin, but rather by the shared value and benefit of the activity within the community. This demonstrates that in their interactions, students avoid prejudice and stereotypes based on ethnicity, religion, or social background. Such behavior reflects moral values and an awareness of the importance of appreciating diversity within the community. These values serve as a foundation for fostering harmonious relationships and mutual respect among students at Ma'had al-Jami'ah.

The administrators and musyrif-musyrifah at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah hold a crucial responsibility in guiding and modeling character development for the students. Particular emphasis is placed on exemplifying tolerant behavior, in order to prevent contradictions between the values of tolerance being taught and the realities of everyday interactions within the institution. The importance of such role modeling lies in the need for consistency between the principles instilled in students and the behavior demonstrated by their mentors. In other words, the musyrif-musyrifah are expected to embody and

practice the values of tolerance, serving as concrete examples for students while avoiding confusion or conflict between what is taught and what is experienced in the daily life of Ma'had al-Jami'ah..

Instilling tolerant attitudes among students within a diverse environment represents one of the central challenges for Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah. The key question is how to teach students to appreciate differences and to conduct themselves appropriately within a plural setting. This challenge becomes even more complex given that this campus-based pesantren is located in Surabaya, the second-largest metropolitan city in Indonesia after Jakarta. Surabaya is widely recognized as a multicultural city inhabited by people from diverse backgrounds. Consequently, character education at Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah must not only address differences among the students themselves but also equip them with the skills and understanding necessary to engage constructively and respectfully within the heterogeneous social landscape of Surabaya.

In implementing its character education programs, Ma'had al-Jāmi'ah encounters several challenges, although many of these can be addressed and mitigated. Some of the key obstacles faced in carrying out these habituation practices include:

a. Limited individual awareness among students. Some students have not yet fully recognized the importance of participating in the habituation activities that have been carefully planned and communicated to all. As a result, a number of them frequently miss these programs, often citing permissions or other personal reasons.

b. Inadequate facilities and infrastructure. Both male and female students at Ma'had still face limitations in terms of facilities, particularly for worship. For instance, there is no dedicated prayer space or musholla available. Instead, students must use the library hall, which is small and insufficient to accommodate all of them. As a result, some students perform congregational prayers in the library hall, while others pray at the mosque. This situation highlights the urgent need for improved facilities and infrastructure to ensure that students can carry out their religious practices in a more comfortable and appropriate environment.

c. Diverse backgrounds of students. The mahasantri come from various social, cultural, and educational contexts. Some are still unfamiliar with the routines and practices applied in Ma'had, making adaptation initially challenging. However, this diversity is not a major obstacle. What they need is sufficient time and opportunity to gradually adjust to the habits and values cultivated in Ma'had. Through repeated practice and consistent routines, students will begin to feel more comfortable and accustomed to the programs. This illustrates that each individual undergoes a unique learning process, and with patience as well as appropriate support, mahasantri can adapt, grow, and fully integrate into the educational environment of Ma'had.

This study examines the model of moral character development implemented in student-based Islamic boarding schools (pesantren mahasiswa). The model possesses distinctive characteristics that may not be easily replicated in other educational institutions. The caretakers of the pesantren are well-

educated in both Islamic studies and academic scholarship, providing in-depth guidance to the mahasantri (student-residents). The availability of affordable dormitory facilities further strengthens the appeal of the pesantren, encouraging students to remain committed and adhere to its regulations. However, applying this model to other educational settings with different institutional characteristics would require careful adjustments to account for contextual differences.

E. Conclusion

The approach of Ma'had al-Jami'ah in shaping student character adopts a model that integrates three key dimensions: knowledge (cognitive), emotion (affective), and behavior (psychomotor). These dimensions are fostered through habituation, structured guidance, and continuous mentoring. The outcomes of this character-building process are reflected in students' commitment to congregational prayer, discipline in academic learning, and achievements in scientific writing. However, the implementation of these programs is not without challenges, particularly due to the diverse backgrounds of the mahasantri and the lack of strong parental encouragement in fostering learning motivation. The character formation program carried out by Ma'had al-Jami'ah plays a crucial role in supporting students' academic journey. It helps them remain resilient against external distractions while maintaining focus and consistency in their studies at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

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