

## Management of Character Education in the Ta'dzim Tradition: Studies in the Dayah Mudi of the Great Mosque of Samalanga

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**ABSTRACT.** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji model manajemen pendidikan karakter berbasis dayah di Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga, salah satu lembaga pendidikan Islam tradisional terbesar di Aceh. Dalam konteks krisis moral generasi muda, pesantren (dayah) memiliki potensi besar sebagai institusi yang menanamkan nilai-nilai karakter melalui pendekatan berbasis nilai dan keteladanan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa model manajemen pendidikan karakter di Dayah MUDI Mesra tidak tersusun dalam kurikulum tertulis, tetapi berjalan secara sistematis dan berkelanjutan melalui tiga tahapan utama: (1) perencanaan berbasis nilai dan tradisi keilmuan yang diwariskan secara turun-temurun, (2) pelaksanaan melalui keteladanan, pembiasaan, dan pengawasan kolektif, serta (3) evaluasi yang bersifat pembinaan moral dan spiritual. Pendidikan karakter tidak hanya menjadi tanggung jawab formal pengasuh, melainkan merupakan sistem sosial yang hidup dalam keseharian santri. Model ini menunjukkan bahwa manajemen pendidikan karakter berbasis dayah mampu menciptakan lingkungan pembinaan akhlak yang autentik dan konsisten. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pentingnya mengintegrasikan prinsip-prinsip manajemen pendidikan Islam berbasis nilai dalam pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan karakter di lembaga formal, dengan mengadopsi kearifan lokal pesantren sebagai sumber inspirasi utama.

*Keywords:* Manajemen pendidikan, Karakter, Dayah, Pesantren, Nilai Islam, MUDI Mesra

**ABSTRACT.** This study aims to examine the character education management model based on the traditional Islamic boarding school (dayah) system at Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga, one of the largest Islamic educational institutions in Aceh. Amidst the current moral crisis among youth, pesantren play a significant role in instilling values through value-based and exemplary approaches. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the character education management model at Dayah MUDI Mesra is not formally documented in a written curriculum but operates systematically through three key stages: (1) planning based on values and scholarly traditions inherited across generations, (2) implementation through role modeling, habituation, and collective supervision, and (3) evaluation through moral and

spiritual guidance rather than administrative assessment. Character education is not limited to formal instruction but is embedded in the daily social and religious life of the students. This model demonstrates that value-based character education management can create a consistent and authentic moral development environment. This study recommends integrating Islamic value-based educational management principles into the development of character education curricula in formal educational institutions, drawing inspiration from the local wisdom and educational practices of pesantren.

**Keywords:** Educational Management, Character Education, Dayah, Pesantren, Islamic Values, MUDI Mesra



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## INTRODUCTION

Character education in Islam is an integral part of the main goal of education, which is to form a complete human being (*insān kāmil*) who is not only intellectually intelligent but also superior in morals and spirituality. This is in accordance with the words of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, "*Indeed I was sent to perfect noble morals*" (HR. Ahmad). In the modern context, character education is an urgent need in the midst of a moral crisis that hits the younger generation due to the rapid flow of globalization and information technology advances that are not accompanied by value filters. Character education is one of the essential aspects in the formation of a whole human being. In the context of Islamic education, character is not only understood as socially good behavior but also as a manifestation of the spiritual and moral values inherent in Islamic teachings. One of the key concepts in character education in traditional Islamic boarding schools, especially in Aceh, is *ta'dzim*, which is a respectful and civilized attitude towards teachers and knowledge. This concept has been firmly rooted in the practice of education in dayah as a form of internalization of Islamic values in the lives of students (Ahwan & Marzuki, 2021).

Dayah, as a traditional Islamic educational institution, has a peculiarity in transmitting character values, not only through teaching materials, but through social relations, examples, and an inner atmosphere built in the dayah environment. In the Acehnese tradition, the practice of *ta'dzim* is not only interpreted as outward manners but includes an attitude of inner respect that serves as the main pillar in the process of educating the character of students (Amelia et al., 2022). Traditional Islamic educational institutions such as dayah (pesantren) have an important role in shaping the character of the younger generation. Dayah Mudi Samalanga Grand Mosque is one of the oldest and largest educational institutions in Aceh that still maintains the tradition of *ta'dzim* strongly. Known as the center of traditional Islamic science, this dayah not only produces graduates who master the yellow book, but also has a strong character in terms of manners, discipline, and respect for knowledge. This characteristic makes education management in Dayah Mudi not only focus on the curriculum, but also on the management of adab values as an integral education system (Arijuddin et al., 2025). The main problem raised in this study is how the management of character education in the form of *the ta'dzim* tradition is systematically applied in the lives of students in Dayah Mudi Masjid Raya Samalanga (Fadhli, 2020). This research is important because character education is currently often reduced to the form of curriculum formalities,

while the essence of spiritual and cultural values is actually marginalized. Through a qualitative approach, this study aims to examine in depth the form, process, and impact of *ta'dzîm-based* character education management, as well as how these values are internalized and managed by the dayah (Attaufiqi et al., 2024).

## **METHOD**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the practice of character education management in the *ta'dzîm tradition* in the Dayah Mudi environment of the Samalanga Grand Mosque. Qualitative research is particularly relevant in exploring complex social, cultural, and religious values that cannot be quantitatively measured, but must be understood contextually within a specific sociocultural space. (Lexy J. Moleong, 2021). The research design used was a single case study, where Dayah Mudi of the Samalanga Grand Mosque was chosen as the main focus because it is one of the oldest and most influential dayah in Aceh that still consistently practices the values of *ta'dzîm* in its education system. This location is considered representative to understand the dynamics of character education management based on local wisdom in the Islamic tradition of Islamic boarding schools in Aceh.

The research subjects consisted of dayah leaders (Abi Mudi), senior teachers, final year students, and alumni who are active in the community. Informants were selected purposively based on their significant involvement in the management of education and the character development of students. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to provide space for informants to explain their experiences and views freely, but still within the framework of the research focus. Observation was carried out by participating in various activities in the dayah environment, such as the teaching-learning process, worship activities, interaction between teachers and students, and other daily activities. Documentation studies include a review of internal documents such as rules, activity schedules, and educational archives. (Scott, 2017). The main instrument in this study is the researcher himself, in accordance with the characteristics of qualitative research. The researcher used interview guidelines, field notes, and observation sheets as auxiliary instruments to ensure consistency of data collection. Data analysis was carried out inductively using an interactive model from Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out by sorting out relevant information, then presented in the form of a thematic narrative, followed by interpretation to answer research questions. (Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M, 1994).

To ensure the validity of the data, the source and method triangulation technique was carried out. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from various informants, while method triangulation is carried out by matching data from interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, the validation process is also carried out through the member check technique, which involves confirming the results of data

interpretation with the informants to ensure that the meaning carried out by the researcher is in accordance with reality and does not deviate from the informant's subjective experience.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The character education management model applied at Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga shows a distinctive system, rooted in Islamic values and salafiyah education traditions. This system reflects a form of value-based management, which not only relies on formal structures but also relies more on the internalization of values through example and habituation. This is in line with the view (Mulyasa, 2011) that Islamic education actually aims to form a complete human being, not only in intellectual aspects, but also spiritual and moral.

#### **1. Planning: Integration of Islamic Values in Cultural Structure**

Character education planning at MUDI Mesra is not carried out in writing in the form of an official document. However, the substance of planning is very strong because it is based on a deep understanding of the values of Islamic boarding schools, which are cultural and spiritual. Values such as sincerity, *tawadhu'*, responsibility, and manners towards teachers are basic values that become the foundation in the character education process. In an in-depth interview with Aba Sayed Mahyiddin, TMS, one of the elements of the leadership of Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga, it was revealed that the character education system in the dayah was not prepared in the form of a written curriculum as is commonly found in formal educational institutions. He said:

"Here, we do not compile a character curriculum in writing. But we all understand what must be instilled in students. It has all been a part of daily life for a long time. We inherited it from our teachers."

This statement reflects that the character education system in this dayah is built based on the transmission of values from generation to generation, which is cultural and spiritual, not administrative. Values such as sincerity, obedience to teachers, simplicity, discipline, and responsibility are not taught through certain subjects, but are internalized through daily life practices, social interactions, and the example of teachers (*teungku*) and dayah leaders. Furthermore, Aba Sayed explained that the system has been running for decades and has proven effective in shaping the character of students. Although there is no formal curriculum document, all elements of dayah teachers and caregivers have a uniform understanding of the values that must be instilled in students. This understanding comes from the collective experience and educational traditions that live in the dayah environment. This model shows that in the context of Islamic education management based on Islamic boarding schools, values and traditions are the main guidelines in the planning and implementation of character education, not just formal instruments. This unwritten curriculum actually shows the existence of a form of "living curriculum", in which character values are not learned theoretically, but are formed directly through habituation, example, and spiritual appreciation. This indicates that the process of the spiritual role of the leader (Abu), as stated by (A. Ajan, 2018),

that charismatic leadership in pesantren is the center of control of all strategic planning, both explicitly and implicitly.

## **2. Implementation: Example, Habituation, and Collective Oversight**

The implementation of character education at MUDI Mesra takes place through three main approaches: example, habituation, and collective supervision. Exemplary (*uswah*) is the most dominant strategy. Students learn morals not from lectures alone, but from the behavior of teachers who become real models, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH: *Indeed, there was a good role model in the Prophet (QS. Al-Abzab: 21)*. One of the senior students said in an interview: "We see how the *teungku* live. From the way they eat, speak, and even be silent, they also contain lessons. It's deeper than just a lecture."

In addition, habituation in daily routines such as waking up before dawn, congregational prayers, studying the book, and community service are effective instruments of character building. In this case, habituation forms the *habitus* of students in the social structure of the pesantren that is repetitive and consistent<sup>3</sup>. The supervision was carried out collectively by senior students, room administrators, and *teungku*. One of the room administrators, Tgk Iqbal, said that: "If there are students who make mistakes, they are usually immediately advised by their roommates or conveyed to my *teungku*. This is not because we want to punish, but because we all feel that we have a responsibility for our friend's morals." This shows that character supervision in pesantren runs through social networks and a sense of moral responsibility between individuals, not through technological systems or formal mechanisms. In this context, Ghofur (2018) explained that the *habitus* of students is formed by the social structure of pesantren that is consistent in the habituation of values, both explicitly and implicitly.

Character supervision is carried out collectively by senior students, room administrators, and *teungku*, which creates an atmosphere of mutual protection of moral values. This shows that the character management system in *dayah* does not depend on technological or administrative devices, but on social networks and moral responsibility between individuals.

## **3. Evaluation: Transformation Through Coaching**

Evaluation in the character education system at Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga does not follow a formal assessment pattern based on administrative instruments, such as attitude forms, behavioral indicators, or numerical scores. Different from the evaluative approach commonly applied in the formal education system, the evaluation process at MUDI Mesra is non-formal, qualitative, and transformative. The evaluation was carried out through direct observation of the daily practices of students, social interactions, and moral attitudes in various contexts of pesantren life. This evaluation approach places more emphasis on qualitative observation of value expression in daily actions. For example, how students greet others, maintain cleanliness, show respect in front of teachers, and maintain manners in the assembly of knowledge. One of Tgk Supriadi's teachers, M. Sos., stated in the interview that:

"We don't need grades to know how the morals of the students are. It is enough to see how he greets people, maintains cleanliness, and behaves in the assembly. That's enough as an assessment."

This statement shows that evaluation standards in Islamic boarding schools are more contextual and rely on daily spiritual and moral experiences. In this case, spiritual development is the main instrument in the evaluation process. When violations of values or deviant behavior are found, handling is not carried out through administrative sanction mechanisms such as suspension or written personality notes, but through educational and spiritual approaches, namely by providing personal advice (*mau'izhah*) and dialogical moral coaching. This evaluation model refers to the concept of spiritual *tarbiyah*, which aims to touch the inner or heart dimension (*qalb*) of students, not just regulate external behavior. This is in line with the view of Nata (2012), who emphasizes that the main goal of character education in Islam is the formation of moral integrity and spiritual awareness, not just obedience to rules. Therefore, character evaluation must function as an instrument of self-transformation, not just as a tool of classification or administrative selection.

This approach reflects the characteristics of the value system of *pesantren*, which is integral, where moral education is not separated from spiritual development. From the perspective of classical Islamic education, personality transformation cannot be achieved only through the mastery of knowledge or adherence to norms, but through the process of internalizing values in a deep and contemplative manner. This informal and relational evaluation allows students to experience the process of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), an important stage in Islamic education that aims to form a complete human being (*insan kamil*).

From the perspective of education management, character evaluation carried out through spiritual coaching shows that the effectiveness of education does not always rely on the accuracy of quantitative data or administrative reports, but on the depth of the pedagogical relationship between educators and students. The evaluation of this model also supports a holistic education paradigm that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects, as developed within the framework of values-based Islamic education management. Thus, character evaluation in MUDI Mesra can be categorized as a form of transformative evaluation that positions students as learning subjects who are active in the process of moral and spiritual growth. Evaluation is no longer understood solely as a measure of success, but as an integral part of the process of forming authentic morals and personalities. This model is not only relevant in the context of Islamic boarding schools but also provides a conceptual contribution to the development of a character evaluation model that is contextual and rooted in Islamic values in the formal education system.

#### **4. The Relevance of the Model to Islamic Education Management**

The character education management model at MUDI Mesra shows that modern management principles such as strategic planning, systematic implementation, and continuous evaluation have been applied substantively, albeit in a non-formal manner.

Values such as Islamic vision, spirituality-based leadership, and moral collectivity-based supervision suggest that the management of Islamic education does not always have to follow Western patterns that are based on documents and indicators, but can be developed from the value systems that live in traditional Islamic culture. In a closing interview, the dayah leader said: "If outsiders ask where the management documents are, maybe we can't show them. But if they see how we educate the students, how they live and grow here, then that's our real management."

These findings confirm that the management of Islamic education does not have to rely on Western models that are based on administrative indicators. On the contrary, management can be built from a value system that is integrated into traditional Islamic culture. Thus, this study confirms that Islamic boarding schools, especially dayah such as MUDI Mesra, have an effective and relevant character education management system, especially in the midst of the moral crisis that hits the current young generation. The strengthening of this system can be used as an inspiration for the development of character education in formal institutions, by adapting to the modern context without losing the basic values of Islam.

## Discussion

This research reveals that the character education management model applied in the Dayah MUDI of the Great Mosque of Samalanga (MUDI Mesra) represents a distinctive system, which is firmly rooted in Islamic values and the tradition of salafiyah education. These findings suggest that the system reflects a value-based management approach, which does not rely on formal instruments, but emphasizes the internalization of value through example, habituation, and social supervision (Masuud et al., 2025). This approach is in line with Mulyasa's (2011) thought that the main goal of Islamic education is the formation of a whole human being in intellectual, spiritual, and moral aspects (Asse et al., 2023).

The results of the study show that character education planning in Dayah MUDI Mesra Samalanga is not formulated in the form of administrative documents or written curriculum as is commonly found in formal educational institutions. Instead, the planning process takes place implicitly through a mechanism of cultural and spiritual value transmission. The main values, such as sincerity, *tawadhu'*, responsibility, and respect for teachers, are instilled through the legacy of living traditions and the *ta'lim bil hal* method, which is teaching through example and direct habituation in daily life. This model emphasizes that the planning of character education in pesantren cannot be separated from charismatic leadership that has spiritual authority (Azizi et al., 2023). As stated by Ajan (2018), in the context of Islamic boarding schools, the strategic planning process comes from the *spirit of al-qiyadah* or the spiritual power of a leader, where the central figure (in this case Abu or the leader of the dayah) is the main actor in determining the direction and orientation of educational values that are carried out collectively (Bezanilla et al., 2019).

The implementation of character education at MUDI Mesra is carried out through three main approaches: exemplary (*uswah*), habituation of values in daily practice, and collective supervision by the internal community of the Islamic boarding school. The example of the teachers (*teungku*) serves as a real model in the formation of student morals. This strategy is

rooted in the principles of the Qur'an, especially QS. Al-Ahzab (33): 21, which emphasizes the importance of role models in the educational process. Habituation is applied systematically through daily routines such as waking up before dawn, congregational prayers, recitation of the yellow book, and social activities such as mutual cooperation. This pattern forms the habitus of students in a repetitive and consistent social structure (Ahwan & Karfida, 2025). As explained by Ghofur (2018), character habitus is formed from continuous social practices in communities that have a strong value system. Meanwhile, the supervision system is not implemented by formal officials, but by internal actors such as senior students, room administrators, and teachers. This reflects the collectivity-based moral control system that is a typical characteristic of value management in Islamic boarding schools. This mechanism serves not only as social control, but also as a form of character education through shared responsibility.

The evaluation of the success of character education in this dayah is not carried out through quantitative instruments such as attitude reports or numerical scores. On the contrary, the evaluative approach used is qualitative and transformative, namely through direct observation of the behavior of students and spiritual guidance based on religious advice and reflection. When there is a deviation in grades, the approach taken is personal *tarbiyah*, not administrative sanctions. This evaluation model reflects the orientation of character development in Islam, which focuses on the inner and heart dimensions (*qalb*), not solely outward behavior. In line with the view of Nata (2012), character education in Islam aims to form a person who is spiritually and morally whole, so that the evaluation of success must consider aspects of the individual's internal transformation (Cahyono, 2022).

The character education management model applied at MUDI Mesra shows conformity with the principles of holistic Islamic education management, namely value-based strategic planning, implementation through cultural internalization, and evaluation through spiritual approaches. These findings make an important contribution to the discourse of Islamic educational management, particularly in asserting that the effectiveness of management does not always depend on formal structures and administrative apparatus. On the contrary, the context of pesantren shows that a management system based on values, culture, and spirituality is actually able to create a more authentic and transformative educational environment. This challenges the modern education management paradigm, which tends to be technocratic and bureaucratic (Firdaus, 2023). Therefore, this model has high relevance to be adapted in the formal education system, especially in strengthening sustainable and contextual character education in accordance with Islamic values (Van Der Graaf et al., 2020).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the management of character education in Dayah MUDI Masjid Raya Samalanga (MUDI Mesra) is a distinctive model and firmly rooted in Islamic values and salafiyah educational traditions. This model shows a form of value-based management that is carried out in a non-formal, but systematic and effective manner. Internalization of character is carried out through the example of teachers (*uswah*), habituation of values in daily life, and collective supervision based on the social structure of the pesantren.

Character education planning is not carried out through administrative documents, but through the inheritance of the core values of the pesantren culturally and spiritually. The implementation emphasizes example and habituation, while the evaluation is carried out in the form of spiritual coaching, not numerical assessment. The charismatic leadership carried out by the figure of Abu becomes the center of control of the entire managerial process, both explicit and implicit.

These findings reinforce the theoretical view that Islamic education is not only aimed at intellectually educating, but also at forming moral and spiritual individuals. The character education management model at MUDI Mesra has proven to be relevant and effective in shaping the character of students in the midst of the challenges of the current moral crisis of the younger generation. Therefore, this system can be a strategic alternative for the development of character education in formal institutions while maintaining the basic values of Islam and adapting them to the context of modern education.

## **CONFESSION**

Overall, the findings of this study show that dayah, as a traditional educational institution, has a complete and effective character education management system, which is carried out through values, example, habituation, and coaching. This system not only answers the internal needs of Islamic boarding schools but also makes a great contribution to the discourse on the development of value-based character education in the context of contemporary Islamic education management.

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