

## Design of Character Building for Learners in Boarding Schools In West Sumatera

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### Abstract

*This study aims to see how the school management in developing the character of students in one of the boarding school in West Sumatera. This study uses qualitative methods with a case study approach. Sources of data were taken to 38 informants consisting of 8 elements of the school namely the principal, teacher, boarding supervisor, security and cleaning service, canteen keeper, students and parents. All data obtained by in-depth interviews with all informants, the authors also took data through direct observation at the research site. Overall the results of the study show that there are seven character values instilled by the school, namely religious character, curiosity, discipline, confidence, responsibility, independence and honesty. The seven character values are instilled through twelve activities such as tahsin and tahfidz Al-Quran, worship services, prayers in congregation, learning clinics, training and guidance, Arabic and English communication programs in the dormitory, motivation, joint sports, mutual cooperation and daily activities. Character building design as implemented by the school, it turns out that it is able to change the behavior of students in a more positive direction such as manners, discipline, obedience to worship, obedient to the rules, clean and tidy life, daring to appear, regular life, and honest behavior. This means that the school has succeeded in fostering the character education of students through various activities and all these activities are well planned by the cooperation of all elements of the school. The author considers the design to be emulated by other schools as a guide in fostering the character of students.*

**Keywords:** *Design, guidance, character building, boarding school*

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana strategi pihak sekolah dalam menumbuhkan karakter peserta didik pada salah satu sekolah berasrama di Sumatera Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Sumber data diambil kepada 38 orang informan yang terdiri dari delapan unsur pihak sekolah yaitu kepala sekolah, guru, pembina asrama, satuan pengamanan dan kebersihan, penjaga kantin,*

*peserta didik dan orang tua. Seluruh data diperoleh dengan cara wawancara mendalam kepada seluruh informan, penulis juga mengambil data melalui observasi langsung di lokasi penelitian. Secara keseluruhan hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat tujuh nilai karakter yang ditanamkan pihak sekolah yaitu karakter religius, rasa ingin tahu, disiplin, percaya diri, tanggung jawab, mandiri dan jujur. Tujuh nilai karakter tersebut ditanamkan melalui dua belas kegiatan seperti tahsin dan tahfidz Al-Quran, bimbingan ibadah, sholat berjamaah, klinik belajar, pelatihan dan bimbingan, program komunikasi bahasa Arab dan Inggris di asrama, motivasi, olah raga bersama, gotong royong serta kegiatan harian. Desain pembinaan karakter sebagaimana diimplementasikan pihak sekolah tersebut, ternyata mampu merubah perilaku peserta didik ke arah yang lebih positif seperti sopan santun, disiplin, taat beribadah, patuh pada aturan, hidup bersih dan rapi, berani tampil, hidup teratur, dan perilaku jujur. Artinya pihak sekolah telah berhasil membina pendidikan karakter peserta didik melalui berbagai kegiatan dan semua kegiatan tersebut terencana dengan baik oleh kerja sama semua unsur sekolah. Penulis menilai desain tersebut perlu dicontoh oleh sekolah lainnya sebagai panduan dalam membina karakter peserta didik.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Desain, pembinaan, pendidikan karakter, sekolah berasrama*

## **Introduction**

Character is the character, character or personality of a person who is characteristic of himself and formed through the internalization of values, which is done both in the family, school and society (Murphy, 2002). In general, characters can be reflected in a person's behavior when socializing with his environment (Lapsley & Power, 2005; Murniyetti et al., 2016). A person can be said to have a good character if in him shows behavior in accordance with the standards and social norms set out in a community community both from the aspect of religion and social issues in every situation (Berkowitz, 2002; Pala, 2011; Afifah et al., 2018; Agusti et al., 2018).

According to Lickona (1999), Majid, & Andayani, (2011), Kesuma, (2011) said there are ten signs of the times that need to be aware of because it will bring the nation to the brink of destruction, these 10 signs are i) increased violence among teenagers, ii) use of bad words and nonstandard language, iii) group influence in acts of violence, iv) increased self-destructive behavior, drugs, alcohol and free sex, v) the decline in good and bad morals, vi) decreasing work ethic, vii) the lower respect for parents and teachers, viii) low sense of individual and group

responsibility, ix) the risk of lies/dishonesty and x) there is mutual suspicion and hatred among others.

If we look at the reality that is happening to the Indonesian people at this time, then the ten moral decadences above occur in the realm of society. It is precisely according to the writers of the Indonesian nation that it is in dire need of fostering character education in order to rebuild Indonesia's positive character so that it can be released from the rampant moral crisis (Narawati, 2019; Love & Crawford, 2011).

### **Literature Review**

Education is one of the effective ways in shaping the character of students, so naturally the implementation of education in schools has the essence of value education related to the character education of students themselves. According to Muslich (2011) the three important roles of the young generation in the effort to develop national character are youth as a positive builder of national character, youth as empowering character and youth as character engineers in line with the need for competitiveness to strengthen the resilience of the nation (Engkizar et al., 2018; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999).

School is an institution that plays an important role in forming the character of students. Many ways to build the character of students in the school. One of the ways is to foster character through various activities well-planned and mature. According to the authors character building can be said to be effective if the results achieved in these activities are in accordance with the objectives set. In simple terms, the measure of the effectiveness of character building is the achievement of the stated objectives of the activity (Benninga et al., 2003). In the context of Islamic education the actual character building must start from within a family. So, it is not surprising if a child gets intense character building that will make him have a positive character and will develop rooted in him (Hakim, 2014; Zulmuqim, 2018).

From the various results of the research the authors have collected, there are currently various forms of moral decadence of the young generation of the nation.

The decadence at least illustrates the fragility of Indonesia's young generation's personal character. First, drug abuse. There are 3.8 to 4.2 million drug users in Indonesia among students. Of these drug users 48% were addicts and 52% were merely trial and consumer (BNN, 2012; Murniyetti et al. 2016). Second, pornography, 64% students study sex through porn movies and pirate DVD. As a result, 39% of respondents aged 15-19 years and 25% aged 20-25 years have had sex (KPAI, 2016). Third, free sex, 800 types of pornographic videos produced by domestically, 90% of the videos are played by students (Probosiwi, & Bahransyaf, (2015; KPAI, (2016). Fourth, abortion cases, almost 2.4 million occur every year or (700-800 thousand), and the perpetrators are from teenagers (Nindya & Margaretha, 2012; Ikhsanifa, 2014). Fifth, prostitution, 150,000 children under the 18 years of age become sex workers, half of these sex workers are under 18 years of age, while 50,000 of them have not reached the age of 16 years of age (KPAI, 2016). Sixth, student brawls, in 2012 there were 139 brawls, even 12 of them caused death, and in 2011 out of 339 cases of brawls caused 82 children to die (KPAI, 2016). Seventh, motorcycle gangs, gambling, motorcycle gang bets range from 5 to 25 million rupiah per illegal street racing, the effects is around 60 people die each year (Damri et al., 2017).

Various data and research results of researchers as illustrated above shows the fact that nowadays society, especially parents, are more concerned with brain intelligence than the character building of their children. (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). Whereas Megawangi (2004) explains that parents who fail in educating their children's character may be caused by busyness or because they are more concerned with the cognitive aspects of the child, therefore the school is one of the leading institutions that can still be expected to build character children as official government institutions.

Therefore, according to the character education writer, it is good, honest and noble behavior. The current condition of Indonesia is quite alarming, frequent acts of violence, corruption, manipulation, lies and conflict. These educational

institutions have not been able to realize the educational objectives of the regulation mandated by 20 of 2003 paragraph 3 concerning the National Education System which states that the function is to develop abilities and forms in order to educate the life of the nation.

Boarding schools have their own advantages from public or schools where students do not live in dormitories. Among the advantages of boarding schools is that having a religious education curriculum is more dominant than general education, students are not easily affected by an environment that is not good, the school is free to make the desired program and students can be controlled for 24 hours to facilitate communication between teachers and students (Zulmuqim, 2018; Buchori et al., 2016; Retnawati et al., 2018).

So according to the author in reality, the formation of the characteristics of the dormitory students is still not effective. This can be seen from the behavior of boarding students who climb the dormitory fence, smoke in a dormitory environment and have a small gang in a dormitory environment. The problems of the students above cannot be separated from the conditions of the students before entering the dormitory. Therefore, with the various behaviors of the students that are seen, character building is needed continuously as long as the students are in the dormitory environment. Based on the fact that Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Padang Panjang West Sumatera provides continuous character building to boarding students, the authors feel the need to study further about how the school's strategy in fostering the character of boarding students in Madrasah Aliyah (MAN) 1 Padang Panjang West Sumatera.

## **Method**

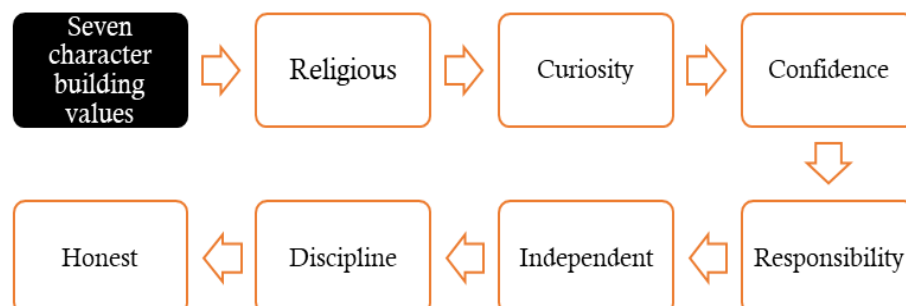
This study uses qualitative methods through a case study approach. According to Yin (1993) case studies are appropriate to use if researchers want to see and explore the results of a program or activity that has been carried out. Whereas Denzin & Lincoln (1994) state that research design like this can help researchers understand problems in a deep and complex manner. The source of

research data was taken to thirty-eight informants consisting of eight elements of the school namely the principal, teacher, boarder, board and security unit, canteen keeper, students and parents. All data obtained by in-depth interviews with all informants, the authors also took data through direct observation at the research site.

All data collected through in-depth interviews are analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is one of the more flexible ways to identify, analyze, and report qualitative research data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The thematic analysis design starts from the transcription process of interviews, data reduction, grouping data into a theme, then reported in the form of dialogue or team verbs (Engkizar et al., 2018).

### **Finding and Discussion**

Based on the results of interviews with all informants and the author's observations while conducting the research, the overall results of the study showed that there were seven character values instilled by the school namely religious character, curiosity, discipline, confidence, responsibility, independence and honesty. The seven character values were instilled through twelve activities such as tahsin and tahfidz Al-Quran, worship services, congregational prayers, learning clinics, training and guidance, Arabic and English communication programs boarding, motivation, joint sports, mutual cooperation and daily activities. In order to make it clearer, the seven character values instilled by the school can be seen in Figure 1. as follows:



**Fig 1. Seven character building values for students**

Seven character values instilled by the school to the students as shown in Figure 1. above were conveyed when interviewing the author directly with all the informants. Although the seven themes were conveyed by informants in ways and styles of language that were slightly different, but had more or less the same intentions. To be more interesting, the author will display excerpts of interviewing the author with all informants.

**First:** namely character building **religious**, according to the informant the activities of tahsin and tahfidz Al-Quran are carried out three times every week and are guided directly by the landlady of the dorm, sometimes the school also brings counselors from outside the school. This activity aims to improve the Al-Quran reading of students to be better and more correct in reading the Al-Quran. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in the following table 1.

**Table 1. Interviews excerpts of religious character building**

Activities	Informant	Excerpts of interviews with informants
<i>Tahsin and tahfidz Al-Quran.</i>	Landlady of the dorm	<i>To better understand students are given a guidebook on how to read the Al-Quran correctly by giving tajwid books, ...</i>
	Landlady of the dorm	<i>, yes tahsin and tahfidz Al-Quran activities are guided by boarders so that Al-Quran reading of students is more correct and good,</i>
	Landlady of the dorm	<i>,...in each meeting students must memorize 10 verses of the Al-Quran and the activities are carried out three times a week,</i>
	Landlady of the dorm	<i>After completing the Maghrib prayer, the Ustadz usually gives us advice and advice (students)</i>
	Learners	<i>We are fostered for how to memorize the Al-Quran, how to pray properly and various other ways of worship,</i>
	Learners	<i>I want to be like our teacher who memorized the Al-Quran.</i>

**Second:** namely, **curiosity** character building, according to the informant this activity was carried out through clinical activities learning with the process of understanding and training. According to the informant, the character of this curiosity will be formed by providing understanding of the material to the students

will make students better understand, as well as habituation done by the teacher such as telling students to do the exercises questions, so that students are accustomed to looking know the answers to the questions made by students. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in table 2. below:

**Table 2. Interviews excerpts of curiosity character building**

Activities	Informant	Excerpts of interviews
<i>Learning Clinic</i>	Learners	<i>The teachers taught us how to stimulate curiosity by giving learning questions to be solved together, for example, the teacher explained the mathematical material using the chankin formula so that we were challenged to prepare it diligently and diligently...</i>
	Learners	<i>Our students must stimulate their curiosity by giving questions that are a bit difficult so that they are active and diligent in learning,</i>

**Third:** namely, **confident** character building, according to informants this program is carried out through guidance and training activities by providing understanding, guidance, habituation, application, motivation, reword. According to informants, the process of building a confident character was delivered by the boarding supervisor and coach. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in the following table 3.

**Table 3. Interviews excerpts of confident character building**

Activities	Informant	Excerpts of interviews
<i>Guidance and training</i>	Landlady of the dorm	<i>... We train students' confidence to appear in public so that their self-esteem arises, we do this by displaying self-motivated videos...</i>
	Learners	<i>With this activity we all feel more confident in everything...</i>

**Fourth:** namely, **independent** character building, this activity is carried out through student's daily programs such as washing clothes, cleaning beds, independent learning. The development of independent character is carried out



with rules, tools, habituation and sanctions. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in table 4.

**Table 4. Interviews excerpts of independent character building**

Activities	Informant	Excerpts interviews
<i>Carry out daily dormitory duties</i>	Headmaster	<i>Every learners must obey the rules of the hostel such as throwing trash in its place, cleaning the bedroom by themselves, so that they will become independent personalities in all things...</i>
	Learners	<i>Yes, we are always lined up by boarders, teachers, principals how to learn independently such as cleaning the bedrooms neatly, washing clothes, ... and mutual cooperation activities together ...,</i>
	Teacher	<i>..... We at this school also held the cleanest room competition every six months, and for the archers we also gave prizes so they were excited.</i>
	Learners	<i>...The teacher and boarder always remind us to always be tidy and maintain a clean environment.</i>
	Learners	<i>... With this activity we feel more independent than before, I feel that way.</i>

**Fifth:** namely, *responsibility* character building, according to the informant this activity was carried out through mutual cooperation activities and was responsible for carrying out the daily duties of the dormitory that had been determined by the parties. Character building this responsibility is done by the process of rules, exemplary, advice, reprimand and assignment. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in the following table 5.

**Table 5. Interviews excerpts of responsibilities character building**

Description of activities	Informant	Excerpts interviews
<i>Mutual cooperation</i>	Learners	<i>..., every week we always have mutual cooperation activities, in this activity all of them are like the teacher, Landlady of the dorm...</i>
	Teacher	<i>This activity is very positive to teach students how to live together and learn to</i>

	<i>be responsible for nature and the surrounding environment,</i>
Headmaster	<i>, we always hold it so that trained students can work together with each other...</i>
Learners	<i>I think this activity is very good for training us to be responsible to nature and the environment...</i>

**Sixth:** namely, *honest* character building, according to the informant the activity was carried out by the school and the teacher appointed several students to be assigned as supervisors in each activity. The purpose of this activity is so that dishonest students will be deterred from doing lies in various activities carried out by the school. The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in table 6.

**Table 6. Interviews excerpts of honest character building**

Description of activities	Informant	Excerpts interviews
<i>Supervision by seniors at each activity</i>	Learners	<i>,... the teacher appoints a number of people who are believed to be supervisors in each activity, so lying students will be found out ... for those who lie they will be penalized, in my opinion this method is very effective in educating us to always be honest in every activity,...</i>
	Teacher	<i>... Right! The appointment of several students as supervisors in every important activity, so that they are always honest ...</i>
	Learners	<i>,... in my opinion this method is very good so that all students here are honest in whatever their behavior, ...</i>
	Learners	<i>Yes, for those who are dishonest, they will be penalized by the teacher and the school...</i>

**Seventh:** namely, *discipline* character building, according to informant, the activities carried out included conducting morning apples and monitoring the daily activities of students. Character building is also carried out through the process of making rules and sanctions for students who violate agreed conditions. Efforts to

foster character like this according to the informant have been able to change most of the behavior of students towards a better (honest). The passage of interviews with informants can be seen in table 7.

**Table 7. Interviews excerpts of discipline character building**

Description of activities	Informant	Excerpts interviews
<i>Do monitoring daily activities of learners</i>	Teacher	<i>,... students must comply with all the rules of the hostel such as the obligation to attend the morning apples every day before entering the class, ... then we monitor the dormitory which must be locked at certain hours.</i>
	Learners	<i>... If we are late or violate the rules that have been set then we will be sanctioned by the school, this method has been able to educate us discipline in all activities...</i>

In principle the coaching strategy in instilling the values of character education for students in schools is not regulated in a standard and absolute manner. However, the most important thing is how these character values arrive, are understood, embedded, and are expected to become permanent behavior in each student's self. By looking at the results of this study, it is clear that the seven strategies for implementing character education in boarding schools as contained in the results of this study have succeeded well. This means that the activities carried out by the school have had a significant impact on changes in student behavior.

According to Smith (2013), character building strategies that are based on a single strategy are not sufficient to convey character values. The results of this study are supported by the research of Thambusamy & Elier (2013), Usman (2009), Ekowarni (2010), Lickona (1999), Koesoema (2011) Yusnita et al., (2018) who found that among the successful application of character values to students can be carried out through multiple approaches both through classroom learning and outside-class learning.

The author sees that character building carried out by boarding schools is also not regulated in a standard and absolute manner. But the most important thing is

how the character values that have been implanted can be understood and can be applied by students in their daily lives. The results of this study are also supported by direct observation of the authors at the school where the research was conducted, the authors see firsthand changes in students' daily behavior such as manners, diligent worship, regular life, honesty, clean and tidy life, and rules-abiding behavior.

Indeed the implementation of character education aims to produce students who are able to behave in accordance with religious, social and cultural rules and norms. Boarding schools are one of the most effective means to implement, develop and succeed the national character education agenda. According to Zulmuqim (2018) the education of Islamic boarding schools or Islamic boarding schools has the advantage of character building because santri or students live 24 hours in Islamic education institutions under the guidance of clerics and other educators or from day to day (*day to day*). The advantages of the boarding school system combine religious education with general education. So that the coaching of the hostel has a very big role in determining the success of character education (Rokhman & Syaifudin, 2014; Huda et al., 2017).

The results of Syahdara's research (2013), Setyorni (2016) and Roihan (2016) found that the implementation of character education in the dormitory needs to be systematically and continuously designed and supported by the school in various forms of business and activities. Therefore, according to the author, the boarding board has carried out various kinds of efforts in fostering the character of boarding students through understanding, guidance, rules, application, habituation, reward and punishment, motivation, reprimand, advice, supervision, exemplary and media (Kamaruddin, 2012; Trisiana, 2015).

The results of this study have illustrated that, the strategy of character building for students conducted by the school at Padang Panjang State Islamic School (MAN) in West Sumatera has at least succeeded in instilling seven values of karate education such as religious, curiosity, self-confidence, responsibility, caring and

honest. The embedded values will certainly have a positive impact on students' behavior later when they continue their education at a higher level. The results of this study are supported by Juidani, (2010); Hakim (2014); Julaiha, (2014); Murniyetti et al. (2016); Agusti et al., (2018); Afifah et al., (2018); Hakim, & Rahayu, (2019), which generally concluded that the strategy of fostering character education in schools should be carried out in various ways, teachers and the school must be creative and try their best to design and carry out coaching so that the desired goals are achieved well.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of fostering character education for students is an indisputable necessity, so it is appropriate that the coaching activities are carried out in a planned, systematic, professional and sustainable manner. There are no standard rules in fostering the character of students. Then various ways and efforts can be made by the school so that character values can become permanent behavior for students in the future.

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