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CONTRIBUTION OF THE BOARDING PROGRAM TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF THE ISLAMIC CHARACTER OF STUDENTS OF MAN 3 KEBUMEN

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ABSTRACT

Islamic character formation is one of the main essences of a system. This goal is aimed at producing a balanced generation, not only intellectually superior but also morally superior, based on Islamic law. One way to support this character formation is the boarding school program. This study aims to describe the implementation of the boarding school program, analyze its contribution to the formation of students' Islamic character, and identify factors that support and hinder its implementation at MAN 3 Kebumen. This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving a boarding school supervisor and nine students. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The research results show that the boarding school program is implemented through various structured and sustainable activities, such as congregational prayer, tahajud (night prayer), Quran reading, memorization (tahfidz), studying the Yellow Book, and cultivating Islamic behavior in daily life. The boarding school program makes a positive contribution to the development of students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, independence, and social awareness. The success of this program is based on the exemplary leadership of the instructors, the religious environment, a well-structured program, and school support. Factors hindering its success include a lack of discipline on the part of some students, peer influence, differences in background, and limited student housing. Therefore, the boarding school program makes a positive contribution to the development of students' Islamic character.

1. INTRODUCTION

Character is crucial in human life because it represents the articulation of values, attitude orientation, and behavior throughout life. This applies not only to the ability to understand knowledge, but also to how students can implement moral and religious values in their daily lives.

Education is not merely a place to foster academic excellence in children. It plays a central role in shaping students with good manners, responsibility, discipline, and social awareness (Nata, 2018). Therefore, character formation is one of the most important pillars of educational achievement.

Technological advancement and the rapid pace of globalization have produced a dual impact on adolescents, offering both opportunities for learning and significant moral challenges. In the educational context, these developments are closely associated with increased exposure to negative behavioral influences, which may contribute to various forms of student misconduct such as bullying, disrespect toward teachers and parents, academic dishonesty, smoking, and other disciplinary violations (Fadillah, 2018). These conditions indicate that moral and character development remains a persistent challenge within schools, particularly when educational practices tend to prioritize academic achievement over the systematic cultivation of students' character. As a result, character education requires stronger integration into school-based learning processes to ensure balanced student development between cognitive achievement and moral behavior.

To address these issues, one approach is to implement a boarding program. The boarding system provides students with intensive guidance, as they live together in a controlled and supervised environment 24/7. The boarding program within an educational institution plays a crucial role as a place for moral and spiritual development, social interaction, and a means of developing independence in students (Luluk, 2025). With its ongoing activities, the implementation of Islamic values through the boarding program in students' daily lives is expected to optimally shape positive personalities through instilling these habits.

Several previous studies have demonstrated positive outcomes for student development at school. Research by Zahroh (2021) demonstrated that the boarding program has an impact on increasing student independence by fostering responsibility in managing daily activities. Rochmah (2022) found that the boarding program can increase student learning motivation through structured academic and religious activities. Research by Auliya (2025) explains that boarding instructors play a role in instilling social values through role models and instilling these habits. Fadli (2025) stated that students' religious character can be formed through the exemplary behavior of Islamic Religious Education teachers and programmed religious activities. Furthermore, research by Syariah et al. (2025) shows that dormitory supervisors contribute significantly to the formation of students' religious character through worship guidance, moral development, and ongoing religious activities.

Although previous research has examined boarding school programs and student character development, the majority of studies reviewed focused on specific aspects. Most of this research focused solely on independence, learning motivation, religious character, social values, and the role of teachers and supervisors. Few studies have examined the contribution of boarding school programs as an integrated educational system to shaping students' Islamic character holistically. Studies linking the implementation of boarding school programs, their contribution to character development, and their supporting and inhibiting factors within a single study are still relatively limited, particularly at the Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic senior high) level.

Based on a review of previous research, there is a research gap that requires further study. To date, no research has specifically analyzed the contribution of the boarding school program as an integrated educational system to the development of Islamic character in students at MAN 3 Kebumen. Previous research has focused on specific aspects of the boarding school program, while

this study examines Islamic character formation more comprehensively, encompassing religiosity, discipline, responsibility, independence, social awareness, and morals in students.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive analytical focus on the role of the boarding school program as an integrated educational system in shaping Islamic character among students. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine specific outcomes such as student independence, learning motivation, or isolated aspects of religious character, this study analyzes the program holistically by exploring its implementation process, its educational contributions, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence its effectiveness. In this way, the boarding school program is not treated merely as a supplementary educational activity, but as a structured and systemic framework for character formation within an Islamic educational environment. This study aims to find out in depth the implementation of the dormitory program at MAN 3 Kebumen, analyze the impact of the program in forming students' Islamic character, and identify factors that influence the effectiveness of its implementation, both supporting and inhibiting.

2. METHOD

The method applied in this research is qualitative with descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore and understand social phenomena in depth based on the perspective of the participants, while also presenting a picture of the situation being experienced naturally in the field (Sugiyono, 2023). Specifically, this study is categorized as field research, namely a study in which the process of searching and extracting data is carried out directly at the research focus to ensure the conformity between the data obtained and real conditions in the field. The study was conducted at MAN 3 Kebumen, located in Kutowinangun District, Kebumen Regency, Central Java. The selection of the research location was based on the existence of a dormitory program that actively carries out various Islamic character development activities for students. The study was conducted during May 2026. The research subjects consisted of one dormitory supervisor and nine students participating in the dormitory program. To obtain representative data, the selection of informants was based on a purposive sampling technique. Through this approach, informants are not selected randomly, but rather based on special considerations (judgment sampling) that they master the information, understand the dynamics in the field, and have deep relevance to the object being studied (Sugiyono, 2023).

This study collected empirical data using semi-structured interviews to explore informants' perspectives on the implementation of the dormitory program, its contribution to students' Islamic character development, and the supporting and inhibiting factors involved. Observations were conducted to directly examine social interactions, disciplinary patterns, and religious activities within the dormitory environment. Documentation was also used to support the findings by collecting relevant materials such as activity photographs, program schedules, rules and regulations, and other institutional records. To ensure data credibility, triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation (Moleong, 2021). Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display in a structured narrative form, and conclusion drawing with continuous verification to ensure that the findings accurately reflect the empirical conditions in the field.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation conducted at MAN 3 Kebumen, the data obtained were processed using the Miles and Huberman analysis scheme (data reduction, display, and verification). The study confirmed that the existence of the boarding program contributes significantly to the instilling of religious values in students. The internalization of Islamic character is accommodated through an agenda of habituating worship, training in discipline, independence and responsibility, and strengthening noble character. Furthermore, this study also describes the field dynamics by identifying various stimulating and inhibiting factors intertwined in the implementation of the boarding program.

3.1. Implementation of the Boarding School Program in the Formation of Students' Islamic Character

The research findings indicate that the boarding program at MAN 3 Kebumen is implemented through a structured and consistently executed set of daily and routine activities within the dormitory environment. These activities include congregational prayers, tahajud prayers, Qur'an recitation, Qur'an memorization, study of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning), and other habituation-based religious practices. The program is designed not only to strengthen students' religious practices but also to internalize core character values such as independence, responsibility, and discipline. Through continuous engagement in a structured daily schedule, students become more accustomed to managing their time effectively and carrying out obligations in an orderly manner.

Furthermore, the boarding program functions as a character-building system in which behavioral values are introduced, understood, and gradually internalized through practice. Students are first provided with an understanding of proper conduct based on Islamic teachings, which is then reinforced through daily routines, enabling them to connect theoretical knowledge with lived behavior in everyday life.Habituation also plays a role in character formation because repeated behavior can form habits that become ingrained in a person. In the context of the boarding program, students are not only accustomed to understanding the importance of worship, but they are also accustomed to practicing it consistently. This shows that character formation is not simply achieved through providing material or advice, but must be accompanied by continuous practice. The results of the study indicate that students are accustomed to performing voluntary and obligatory prayers, memorizing recitations, and studying various Islamic texts according to the schedule. This is in line with Koditjah's (2015) opinion that habituation is interpreted as a space for reflection on experience and concrete actions that are practiced continuously. This pattern ensures that the internalization of values not only touches on aspects of intellectual understanding, but also transforms into a foundation of character and real actions. Thanks to the systematically designed ecosystem of activities within the boarding school, students successfully reach the limits of theological-theoretical understanding to the level of practical application of Islamic teachings in their daily routines.

Dormitory supervisors also act as mentors, supervisors, and role models in instilling Islamic values in students. Through 24-hour interactions, supervisors have greater opportunities to provide guidance, habituation, and character building to students. Research shows that dormitory

supervisors play a central role in the process of developing students' Islamic character. Students are more inclined to emulate their teachers and view them as role models in all aspects. Supervisors not only serve as role models for students in every action they take. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of character education, which places role models as a crucial instrument in the process of developing students' personalities. Role models or exemplary figures are the most effective educational tool because students tend to replicate the attitudes, actions, and habits exemplified by individuals in their immediate environment (Aminudin, 2022). In the context of the dormitory program, the exemplary behavior of dormitory supervisors becomes a tangible means of character education because students see, observe, and interact directly with supervisors in their daily lives. Through this example, religious values, discipline, responsibility, and good manners can be instilled more effectively through real practice in everyday life.

This study shows that Islamic character formation is carried out through three main approaches: role modelling (uswah hasanah), habituation, and continuous supervision. These three approaches are essential in the process of internalizing Islamic values in the dormitory environment. Students not only gain a theoretical understanding of religious values, but also receive direct guidance to implement them in their daily lives. The results of this study confirm the opinion of Jubaedah (2024), who stated that the dormitory program is a developmental activity that includes guidance that provides a good environment for religious formation through an intensive approach and continuous habituation. Learning outside the classroom, religious activities, and interaction between students are among the strategic factors in the formation of religious character. These findings also support the research of Syariah et al. (2025), which shows that intensive guidance carried out by dormitory supervisors can strengthen the formation of students' religious character. Through the supervisors' role models, students receive concrete examples of the application of Islamic values, so that the character formation process does not only take place through the delivery of theory, but also through direct experience in the field.

3.2. Impact of the Boarding Program on the Formation of Students' Islamic Character

The research results show that the boarding program has had a significant impact on the development of Islamic character in students at MAN 3 Kebumen. These results are evident in changes in student behavior, who are more religious, disciplined, responsible, independent, and have greater social awareness compared to before joining the boarding program. This religious character is formed through various activities that foster daily worship habits. Marzuki (2022) states that Islamic character formation is carried out through a conscious, planned, and continuous process of habituation, so that behavior in accordance with religion is ingrained in students.

Daily habits make students more accustomed to performing worship on time, reading the Quran, being polite, being responsible with their possessions, and managing their time effectively. Continuous habits make religious activities no longer viewed as mere obligations, but rather as needs that grow from students' personal awareness. The research results show that students in the boarding program at MAN 3 Kebumen perform congregational prayers. Overall, students at MAN 3 Kebumen's dormitory perform congregational prayers with their instructors. This demonstrates that the implementation of the program to cultivate worship is a daily part of their stay at the dormitory. The dormitory program also has an impact on fostering student discipline. The structured activity schedule requires students to manage their time effectively and comply with

established rules. This indirectly trains students to be more responsible in their duties and obligations. Observations show that students are better able to manage their time, maintain order, and complete assigned tasks effectively.

The boarding program also contributes to the development of students' independence through structured daily living arrangements in the dormitory. Students are required to manage their own basic needs, including maintaining room cleanliness, organizing personal belongings, and regulating daily activities without direct parental assistance. This structured autonomy gradually builds self-reliance and personal responsibility as part of their daily routine. In addition, the communal living environment within the dormitory facilitates continuous social interaction that shapes students' interpersonal attitudes. Through daily interactions, students learn to respect others, cooperate, assist peers, and develop empathy and social awareness in shared living situations. These processes indicate that character formation occurs not only through formal instruction but also through consistent habituation in social contexts.

3.3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of the Dormitory Program Success of the Program

Results: The success of the boarding program in developing students' Islamic character is influenced by several supporting factors. Supporting factors play a crucial role in the success of the boarding program in developing Islamic character in students. Based on field data, the exemplary role of the boarding school supervisors is a crucial and dominant factor. This finding aligns with Fatimah's (2023) opinion, which states that the effectiveness of the boarding school program is determined not only by the activities carried out, but also by the quality of implementation and the exemplary behavior of the supervisors. Supervisors who consistently exemplify Islamic behavior in their daily lives make it easier for students to trust them, thus ensuring a successful development process.

Other supporting factors include a religious dormitory environment, regularly scheduled and organized boarding school programs, and support from the school, which also contribute to the program's success. This aligns with Ni'mah's (2025) opinion, which states that a conducive educational environment significantly influences Islamic character. A religious, disciplined, and respectful environment fosters Islamic values in students. A conducive environment allows students to gain learning experiences that are not only academic, but also direct character learning through social interactions and religious activities that are carried out every day and fostered 24 hours a day.

The implementation of the boarding school program is also hampered by several factors that hinder its success. A frequent obstacle is the low level of understanding among some students about the importance of discipline. Some students still require an adaptation process because they come from diverse family backgrounds. Differences in family background and environment have a significant impact. According to Fatmawati (2016), a child's character formation is rooted in the family environment, which serves as the primary school, and is then reinforced by secondary education institutions. Within this smallest institution, parents play a crucial role in overseeing moral development and guiding children's religious understanding. The memories and stimuli experienced by children from childhood through adolescence, whether absorbed intentionally or unintentionally, are gradually internalized and construct their psychological foundation and identity. Students who are accustomed to religious life and discipline from the start are more likely

to adapt more easily to the boarding school program than those who have not yet developed such habits. This indicates that not all students can optimally follow all boarding school rules and activities in the initial stages.

Peer influence is also a factor hindering the success of the boarding school program. The intensive interactions that occur in the dormitory environment make it easier for students to engage in behavior that is inconsistent with dormitory rules. If a student exhibits behavior that is inconsistent with dormitory rules, that behavior has the potential to be imitated by other students. Interview results indicate that lack of discipline, behavior that does not comply with dormitory rules, leaving the dormitory without permission, not studying the Koran, dating, or committing other violations has the potential to influence other students to do the same.

Limited dormitory facilities constitute one of the main constraints in optimizing the implementation of the boarding program. Adequate facilities and infrastructure are essential components of educational implementation because they directly support teaching and learning processes and student development. In this context, learning environments must be aligned with students' developmental needs, including the stimulation of physical abilities, cognitive development, and emotional-social maturity. As noted by Srifariyati (2024), an effective learning process requires adequate supporting media and infrastructure, while insufficient facilities can disrupt the continuity and effectiveness of educational activities. In the case of the boarding program, the availability of facilities does not only affect the quality of instructional activities but also influences the overall management of daily student routines. Although program implementation continues, limitations in infrastructure reduce its effectiveness in achieving optimal outcomes. Nevertheless, the institution continues to make gradual efforts to improve existing facilities in order to support the sustainability and effectiveness of the dormitory program.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the boarding program at MAN 3 Kebumen effectively contributes to the development of students' Islamic character through structured religious activities, consistent supervision, and a supportive school environment. The program fosters key values such as religiosity, discipline, responsibility, independence, and social awareness. However, its implementation is still constrained by factors such as limited student discipline, peer influence, and inadequate facilities. Despite these challenges, the study successfully captures the program's implementation, impacts, and influencing factors, and suggests that it can serve as evaluation input for improving program quality. Future research is recommended to expand the scope and use comparative approaches across schools to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of boarding-based character education effectiveness.

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