



Integration of Akhlakul Karimah Values in the Book Ta'limul Muta'allim on Character Education: A Qualitative Case Study of Santri Formation at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore how the values of akhlakul karimah embedded in the book Ta'limul Muta'allim are integrated into character education practices for students (santri) at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba. Specifically, the research seeks to answer the question: In what ways does the use of Ta'limul Muta'allim contribute to the character development of santri in the pesantren context? The underlying problem addressed is the reduced emphasis on classical Islamic texts in pesantren curricula, which has contributed to weakened moral formation among students. This research adopts a qualitative case study design, utilizing interviews, observations, and document analysis involving teachers and students. The findings reveal several key aspects: (1) students who actively study this book exhibit increased discipline and responsibility; (2) the book effectively instills respect for teachers and fellow students; (3) text-based learning methods have a stronger impact on character formation compared to general curriculum-based methods; (4) the primary challenges in implementing this education include a lack of innovation in teaching methods and the influence of modern culture. In conclusion, Ta'limul Muta'allim serves as a relevant character education instrument and should be optimized within the pesantren education system to address contemporary challenges.



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INTRODUCTION

Character education in Indonesia faces increasingly complex challenges, particularly in response to globalization and shifting social values among younger generations (Pabbajah et al., 2020). With the rise of digital technology and exposure to foreign cultures, there has been a shift in values that has led to a decline in students' character across various educational levels, including both public schools and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) (Sandy, 2025). As an institution of Islamic education, pesantren play a crucial role in shaping character based on religious values. However, their effectiveness is now being questioned due to the diminishing study of classical Islamic texts that emphasize akhlakul karimah, such as Ta'limul Muta'allim. This decline is attributed to several factors, including curriculum shifts, changes in teaching methods, and students' declining interest in studying classical texts (Mujahid, 2021). Consequently, there is a growing disconnect between the values taught in pesantren and the realities of contemporary society, which has contributed to the weakened implementation of Islamic-based character education in daily life (Husnaini et al., 2020).

Several studies have demonstrated that character education based on Islamic values in pesantren remains relevant in shaping a morally upright younger generation (akhlakul karimah) (Ernawati, 2023). However, other research has revealed that many current character education models in pesantren still rely on traditional approaches that are less adaptive to modern challenges (Anggraini

& Kamid, 2024). For example, educational methods that focus heavily on memorization and textual understanding have not been entirely effective in fostering students' critical thinking skills in addressing the complexities of modern life. Meanwhile, other studies emphasize that effective character education must integrate Islamic values with more contextual learning methods, such as project-based learning and active learning strategies (Irfana et al., 2023). Therefore, the need for innovation in integrating character education based on classical texts like Ta'limul Muta'allim is becoming increasingly urgent to ensure its effectiveness in shaping students' character in the modern era.

Despite this growing discourse on the relevance of pesantren-based character education, limited empirical research has been conducted to investigate how classical Islamic texts—specifically Ta'limul Muta'allim—are practically implemented and internalized within contemporary pesantren settings. Most previous studies either discuss character education in general or examine pesantren pedagogy at a theoretical level, without providing concrete, context-based insights into the lived experiences of santri who engage with these classical texts. This gap highlights the need for an in-depth, field-based exploration that not only describes but critically analyzes the pedagogical integration of Ta'limul Muta'allim in shaping santri character amid modern educational and cultural shifts.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the contextual implementation of akhlakul karimah values from a classical Islamic text within a real pesantren environment, examined through qualitative case study methods. This approach enables a more nuanced understanding of how traditional Islamic wisdom can remain relevant and pedagogically effective in the modern era—especially when supported by adaptive strategies responsive to youth culture and digital transformation.

This study aims to examine the integration of akhlakul karimah values in the book Ta'limul Muta'allim in relation to character education among students at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba (Noguera-Fructuoso & Valdivia-Vizarreta, 2023). Specifically, this research seeks to identify how Ta'limul Muta'allim is taught and implemented in shaping students' character, analyze the challenges faced in applying akhlakul karimah values in daily life, and explore strategies for optimizing the teaching of this book within the context of modern education. Thus, this study is expected to provide new insights into the effectiveness of Ta'limul Muta'allim as an instrument of character education and offer recommendations for pesantren in developing more relevant and contextual educational strategies (Dian, 2023).

Based on the aforementioned issues, this study argues that strengthening character education based on Ta'limul Muta'allim remains highly urgent in fostering students' morality and ethics. In the context of globalization, which increasingly influences the lifestyles of younger generations, integrating the akhlakul karimah values contained in this book has the potential to be an effective solution for shaping Islamic-based character that is both moderate and competitive (Mujahid, 2021). Furthermore, this study hypothesizes that pesantren that implement innovative teaching methods based on Ta'limul Muta'allim will be more effective in instilling strong Islamic character compared to character education models that rely solely on general curriculum-based approaches (Habib Akbar Nurhakim, 2023). Therefore, a deeper analysis is required on how this book can be taught using more practical and contextual methods to remain relevant to contemporary developments and the needs of students in the modern era.

Akhlakul Karimah

Akhlakul karimah is a fundamental aspect of Islamic teachings that reflects moral excellence and virtuous behavior in daily life (Asykin et al., 2019; A. A. Rashid et al., 2020). Etymologically, the word akhlaq originates from the Arabic term khuluq, which means disposition or habit, shaping one's character and attitude in interacting with others (Dewi et al., 2022). In the Islamic context, akhlakul karimah refers to behaviors aligned with the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which promote values such as honesty, patience, generosity, and compassion towards fellow human beings (Ummi Hanifaa et al., 2023). Akhlakul karimah is also closely related to the concept of ihsan, which entails performing good deeds with the highest standard of sincerity and faith in Allah SWT (Arlina et al.,

2023). This concept is not merely an individual moral aspect but is also an integral part of the Islamic education system, aiming to develop individuals with integrity and strong social responsibility (Subaidi, 2020).

Akhlakul karimah manifests in various aspects of human life, including personal relationships, social interactions, and spiritual connections with God. On a personal level, individuals with akhlakul karimah exhibit discipline, honesty, and responsibility in their daily activities (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022). In social relationships, akhlakul karimah is reflected in courteous and empathetic interactions with others, as emphasized in the concept of silaturahmi, which is key to fostering a harmonious society (Dewi et al., 2022). In the educational context, the application of akhlakul karimah is carried out through learning methods based on role modeling, habituation, and character education approaches that integrate Islamic values into school and pesantren curricula (Zuhri, 2020).

The Book *Ta'limul Muta'allim*

The book *Ta'limul Muta'allim* is a classical Islamic text widely used in educational institutions, particularly in pesantren, as a guide for acquiring knowledge (Al-Shammari & Huy, 2022; Jaruszevska et al., 2022). Written by Imam Az-Zarnuji, this book discusses key principles in the learning process, such as sincerity in intention, selecting the right teacher, and the importance of perseverance in studying. It emphasizes that success in seeking knowledge is not solely dependent on intellectual capacity but also on an individual's spiritual and moral character. The values conveyed in this book align with Islamic educational principles, which prioritize character formation and personal integrity (Suhartiwi et al., 2024).

The implementation of the values taught in *Ta'limul Muta'allim* can be observed in various aspects of students' (santri) lives in pesantren. One of the primary manifestations of this book's teachings is discipline in studying and showing deep respect for teachers as sources of knowledge (Mamat, 2023). The learning approach outlined in the book also underscores the importance of humility in the pursuit of knowledge and the necessity of applying acquired knowledge in daily life (Hidayat, 2021). The application of *Ta'limul Muta'allim* within pesantren plays a crucial role in shaping students who are not only academically competent but also possess strong character rooted in Islamic values (Sudarto, 2023).

Character Education

Character education is a vital component of the educational system aimed at developing individuals with high moral values and a strong sense of social responsibility (Suyadi et al., 2022). In Islam, character education emphasizes values such as honesty, hard work, discipline, and empathy as fundamental elements in shaping a well-rounded personality (Sutarman et al., 2022). Within the Islamic educational framework, character education is implemented through various pedagogical methods, including experiential learning, role modeling by teachers, and the integration of Islamic values into school curricula (Mujahid, 2021).

Character education in pesantren is realized through various activities designed to cultivate positive habits among students. One of the main implementations of character education involves structured religious practices, such as performing congregational prayers and regularly reciting the Qur'an (Zuhri, 2020). Additionally, social engagement programs are an essential part of character education, teaching students the importance of compassion and communal values in society (Subaidi, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study focuses on the declining study of the *Ta'limul Muta'allim* book within the pesantren education system and its impact on students' (santri) character education. As an Islamic educational institution, pesantren have long served as bastions for preserving akhlakul karimah values. However, in recent decades, the teaching of classical Islamic texts has been increasingly marginalized due to curriculum changes and the influence of globalization (Mujahid, 2021). This has resulted in a lack of internalization of moral values among students and a widening gap between the theoretical character education taught in pesantren and the social realities students encounter in their

daily lives (Subaidi, 2020). Therefore, this study aims to explore how Ta'limul Muta'allim can be effectively reintegrated into the pesantren education system to strengthen students' akhlakul karimah values. Furthermore, this study investigates how the transformation of religious values, such as akhlakul karimah, can be integrated into classical Islamic text studies while remaining relevant amid contemporary societal changes (Palahuta et al., 2020).

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design, allowing for an in-depth investigation of a single unit of analysis—namely, the character education system based on Ta'limul Muta'allim at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with educators and students to understand how the book is taught, the challenges faced in its implementation, and its impact on students' character formation (Miller et al., 2023). Selain itu, data sekunder berupa kajian literatur digunakan untuk memperkuat pemahaman tentang pentingnya pendidikan karakter dalam Islam dan efektivitas pendekatan kitab klasik dalam sistem pendidikan pesantren (Creswell, 2015).

Research Participants

The research participants include educators and students directly involved in the Ta'limul Muta'allim learning process at the pesantren. Below is a list of the research participants:

Table 1. Research Participants

No.	Name	Position
1	Ustadz Farid	Teacher of <i>Adab</i> and <i>Pesantren</i> Leader
2	Ustadz Arsyul Ikram	Head of Teacher Supervisors
3	Ustadz Ardan	Dormitory Supervisor
4	Ustadz Arman Maulana	<i>Tahfidz</i> Teacher
5	Ustadz Muhammad Alwi	Head of <i>Tahfidz</i>
6	Ustadz Arliawan	Head of Administration
7	Muhammad Dihya	1st Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
8	Muhammad Fari Ibnu Mansur	1st Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
9	A. Farid Wajdi	2nd Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
10	Anas Azhar Hamrat	2nd Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
11	Muh. Ilham	3rd Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
12	Aras Al Munawir	3rd Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student
13	Haikal	3rd Year <i>Ulya/MA</i> Student

The study participants consist of educators and students who are directly involved in the learning process at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba. The key informants in this study include Ustadz Farid, who teaches *adab* and serves as the pesantren leader; Ustadz Arsyul Ikram, the head of teacher supervisors; and Ustadz Ardan, who is responsible for student dormitory supervision. Additionally, this research involves students from various educational levels, such as Muhammad Dihya (1st-year *Ulya/MA*), A. Farid Wajdi (2nd-year *Ulya/MA*), and Aras Al Munawir (3rd-year *Ulya/MA*), to gain insights from those who directly experience the implementation of character education based on Ta'limul Muta'allim (Hercegovac et al., 2020).

Research Process

The research process consists of several stages, including data collection through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore how Ta'limul Muta'allim is taught, the challenges faced in its implementation, and students' responses to classical text-based learning (Guerra & Noll, 2021). Observations were carried out by examining classroom learning processes, student-teacher interactions, and extracurricular activities related to character education. Documentation analysis included reviewing teaching materials, pesantren syllabi, and learning evaluation records to obtain comprehensive data (Y. Rashid et al., 2019).

The collected data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman's model, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2018; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction was conducted by selecting relevant information from interviews, observations, and documentation. The data was then presented in a descriptive narrative format to provide a clear depiction of the study's findings. Finally, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the results based on character education theories and case studies of other pesantren that have successfully implemented classical text-based learning approaches (Khilmayah, 2016; Kimball, 2019).

RESULTS

The research findings indicate that akhlakul karimah is a crucial aspect in shaping the character of students (santri) at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba. Based on interviews with educators, students, as well as observations and documentation, it was found that values such as honesty, patience, discipline, and respect for teachers form the core of character education in this pesantren. Students are trained to consistently demonstrate behaviors that reflect akhlakul karimah in their daily lives, both within and outside the pesantren environment. The application of these values is emphasized in various aspects of student life, including interactions with fellow students, teachers, and in academic and religious activities. The book *Ta'limul Muta'allim* serves as the primary reference for instilling akhlakul karimah values, utilizing teaching methods that emphasize role modeling, advice, and direct habituation in everyday life.

"Here, we are taught not only religious knowledge but also how to behave properly according to Islamic teachings. We must be honest, disciplined, and respectful to our teachers." (Muhammad Dihya, 1st Year Ulya/MA)

Students exhibited significant improvements in practicing akhlakul karimah values after receiving education based on *Ta'limul Muta'allim*. Interviews and observations revealed that students became more disciplined in performing religious obligations, more responsible in completing their assignments, and more polite in speech and social interactions. The teaching of akhlakul karimah is not only delivered through lectures but also through direct practice monitored by teachers and pesantren administrators. Documentation also indicated that students' daily activities were structured in such a way that every aspect of their lives reflected the values taught in *Ta'limul Muta'allim*. Discipline in worship, adherence to study schedules, and social interactions with teachers and fellow students were key indicators in assessing their character development.

"I find it easier to understand how to behave properly after studying this book. The teachers always set an example, so we can follow them." (Muhammad Fari Ibnu Mansur, 1st Year Ulya/MA)

The findings suggest that before receiving education based on *Ta'limul Muta'allim*, many students had little awareness of the importance of akhlakul karimah in daily life. They tended to act spontaneously without considering aspects of politeness and responsibility in interactions. Observations showed that the educational method applied through this book contributed to positive behavioral changes among students. Compared to their early days in the pesantren, students have become more aware of the importance of maintaining etiquette in speech, showing respect to elders, and honoring their teachers. This condition demonstrates that character education based on classical Islamic texts remains highly relevant in shaping students' morality, especially amid modern challenges that often influence the lifestyles and habits of the younger generation.

"Before, I didn't really care about how to speak politely to teachers or friends. After studying this book, I understand that speaking politely is important." (A. Farid Wajdi, 2nd Year Ulya/MA)

The study found that the teaching of *Ta'limul Muta'allim* in this pesantren is the primary approach in developing students' character. According to interviews with educators, this book was chosen due to its comprehensive content in teaching manners, learning ethics, and fundamental Islamic moral values. Observations revealed that this book was taught using traditional methods involving text reading, explanations by teachers, as well as discussions and direct practice in students' daily lives. Documentation showed that the pesantren also implemented a monitoring system to evaluate students' behavior based on the teachings of this book, where students who demonstrated

improvement in ethics and discipline were given rewards as a form of appreciation. This approach ensured that Ta'limul Muta'allim was not just a theoretical source but a practical guide in students' lives.

"This book teaches us how to be good students—not just to seek knowledge but also to maintain proper etiquette in learning and daily life." (Anas Azhar Hamrat, 2nd Year Ulya/MA)

The research findings confirm that Ta'limul Muta'allim plays a significant role in shaping students' attitudes and mentalities. Interviews revealed that students who had studied this book for a long time tended to have a higher sense of responsibility and greater discipline in following pesantren regulations. Observations showed that students who understood the book's teachings were more cautious in their behavior, particularly in showing respect toward teachers and elders. Documentation indicated that the pesantren conducted periodic evaluations to assess students' comprehension of this book through exams and group discussions, ensuring that its teachings were internalized and applied in daily life.

"I used to often forget my assignments, but after studying this book, I have become more responsible and no longer neglect my obligations." (Muh. Ilham, 3rd Year Ulya/MA)

The declining study of Ta'limul Muta'allim in pesantren education systems has led to a weakened understanding of akhlakul karimah values among students. Interviews and observations showed that students who did not receive education based on this book found it more challenging to grasp concepts of discipline, responsibility, and ethics in learning. This aligns with documentation indicating that students who received more intensive guidance in studying this book exhibited improvements in discipline, both in academics and daily activities in the pesantren. Therefore, reintegrating Ta'limul Muta'allim studies into pesantren education systems is crucial in addressing the moral challenges faced by students today.

"Before I truly understood this book, I was not very disciplined in following pesantren rules. After receiving guidance from my teachers, I realized that discipline is part of the etiquette of seeking knowledge." (Aras Al Munawir, 3rd Year Ulya/MA)

The pesantren faces significant challenges in maintaining students' character education amidst the growing influence of globalization. Interviews and observations found that one of the primary reasons for the decline in akhlakul karimah values among students was increased exposure to social media and external cultures that do not always align with Islamic values. Documentation recorded that some students experienced shifts in mindset and lifestyle due to external influences that were inconsistent with pesantren norms. To address this issue, the pesantren has implemented various strategies, including strengthening classical text-based education such as Ta'limul Muta'allim and providing deeper understanding of the importance of preserving Islamic identity in the digital age.

"I used to spend a lot of time on social media without realizing its impact. After understanding the teachings of this book, I have become more selective in consuming information and more focused on self-improvement." (Haikal, 3rd Year Ulya/MA)

Students with a deep understanding of Ta'limul Muta'allim are better able to adapt to modern challenges without losing their Islamic identity. Observations showed that students who internalized akhlakul karimah values were more cautious in choosing their social circles and the information they consumed. Documentation indicated that they were more active in religious activities and more selective about media content. These findings were reinforced by interviews with educators, who emphasized that character education based on classical texts remains an effective solution in building students' moral resilience in the era of globalization.

"We always remind students that globalization is inevitable, but they must remain firmly rooted in the Islamic values taught in the pesantren." (Ustadz Arsyul Ikram, Head of Teacher Supervisors)

The study concluded that students who did not receive character education based on Ta'limul Muta'allim were more susceptible to external cultural influences that conflicted with Islamic values. Observations showed that students lacking proper guidance in studying this book often struggled with

self-regulation and behavioral control outside the pesantren. Interviews with educators revealed that students who deeply understood this book's teachings exhibited stronger self-discipline and greater resistance to external influences. Therefore, pesantren education strategies should prioritize the integration of classical texts as a fundamental component of character education, ensuring that students are better equipped to face contemporary challenges while preserving their Islamic identity.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the integration of akhlakul karimah values in the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim* significantly contributes to shaping the character of students at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba (Payadnya et al., 2024; Saidon et al., 2022). This classical text-based character education enhances students' awareness of the importance of etiquette in seeking knowledge, discipline in worship, and respect for teachers and fellow students. These findings support previous research, which affirms that classical text-based character education in pesantren helps students build strong morality and internalize Islamic values deeply (Mujahid, 2021). Additionally, this study also found that the teaching method of the book, which involves role modeling, interactive discussions, and direct practice in daily life, is proven to be more effective compared to character education methods that rely solely on the general curriculum (Husnaini et al., 2020).

The results of this study are related to previous research, which shows that character education in pesantren plays a role in shaping Muslims who are moderate and highly ethical. A study conducted by Mujahid (Mujahid, 2021) found that pesantren in Indonesia have become the primary institutions in shaping moderate character through classical text-based education. However, this study emphasizes more on how *Ta'limul Muta'allim* can be implemented as the main tool in building students' awareness of the importance of character education. In comparison, another study revealed that pesantren-based character education, which focuses on Islamic values, not only produces religious individuals but also fosters greater tolerance toward social differences (Dian, 2023).

A reflection on these findings shows that *Ta'limul Muta'allim*-based character education not only contributes to the formation of individual behavior but also impacts the development of an ethical pesantren community with noble values. The application of this book increases students' responsibility in daily life, both inside and outside the pesantren environment. Observations show that students who receive education based on this book are more capable of self-control and applying Islamic ethics in various situations. This is in line with research stating that character education based on classical texts can shape individuals who are more independent and responsible in their lives (Irfana et al., 2023).

The implications of these research findings can be seen from two main perspectives (Kaliappen et al., 2021; Solihatin & Situmorang, 2024). First, in the scope of pesantren education, this study asserts that the study of *Ta'limul Muta'allim* must remain an integral part of the character education curriculum. Pesantren need to provide further training for educators so that they can deliver the material of this book with more contextual and engaging methods for students. Second, in the context of national education policy, the findings of this study show that classical text-based education models need to receive broader recognition as part of a strategy to strengthen character education in Indonesia. This approach can be a solution for an education system that is still cognitively oriented but lacks attention to moral and spiritual aspects (Husnaini et al., 2020).

Several key factors explain why *Ta'limul Muta'allim*-based education has shown high effectiveness in shaping students' character. First, this book provides clear and applicable moral guidance, which is directly implemented in students' daily lives. Second, the role-modeling and direct practice-based teaching method is easier to understand and internalize by students compared to theory-based teaching methods. Third, the pesantren environment, which supports the application of the values in this book in every aspect of students' lives, further accelerates the process of internalizing akhlakul karimah. These factors explain why pesantren that adopt a classical text-based education system can still maintain its relevance despite facing globalization challenges (Anggraini & Kamid, 2024).

Table 1. Research Findings

Research Objectives	Research Findings
Identify how <i>Ta'limul Muta'allim</i> is taught and implemented in shaping students' character	<i>Ta'limul Muta'allim</i> is taught through lectures, discussions, and direct role modeling by educators. Students are required to apply the values taught in this book in their daily lives, such as respecting teachers, maintaining etiquette in learning, and practicing discipline in worship.
Examine challenges in applying <i>akhlakul karimah</i> values in students' daily lives	The main challenges in implementing these values include the declining interest of students in classical texts, the influence of modern culture that does not align with Islamic values, and the lack of innovative teaching methods to make the book more engaging and relevant for younger generations.
Analyze strategies that can be applied to optimize the teaching of this book in the context of modern education	Optimization strategies include adopting more interactive teaching methods, such as case studies, role-playing, and integrating technology into learning. Additionally, a periodic evaluation system is needed to assess the extent to which <i>akhlakul karimah</i> values have been internalized in students' lives.
Explain the impact of <i>Ta'limul Muta'allim</i> -based education on students' character	Students who consistently study and practice this book demonstrate increased discipline, responsibility, and respect for teachers and fellow students. They are also more capable of self-control and navigating globalization challenges while maintaining the Islamic values they have been taught.
Provide recommendations for <i>pesantren</i> in developing classical text-based character education strategies	<i>Pesantren</i> need to develop a classical text-based education model that is more contextual to modern needs, including involving competent educators, designing an integrative curriculum, and establishing partnerships with other educational institutions to strengthen the relevance of this book in shaping students' character to be more adaptable to social changes.

Based on the findings of this study, several strategic steps need to be taken to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of Ta'limul Muta'allim-based character education. First, pesantren need to develop more innovative teaching methods, such as interactive discussions, case simulations, and experiential learning, so that the values in this book are easier for students to understand and apply. Second, pesantren need to establish partnerships with other educational institutions and the government to gain support in strengthening classical text-based character education. Third, further studies need to be conducted to explore how Ta'limul Muta'allim can be applied in a broader educational context, including in formal education systems outside pesantren. With these steps, classical text-based character education can continue to develop and provide a broader positive impact on shaping the moral foundation of the younger Muslim generation in Indonesia (Ernawati, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that character education based on the book Ta'limul Muta'allim not only functions as a learning method but also serves as a strong moral transformation mechanism for students (santri) at Pesantren Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq Wahdah Islamiyah Bulukumba. The results indicate that students who actively study this book are not only more disciplined in worship and learning but also possess a higher level of moral awareness in their social interactions. Furthermore, character education based on this classical text has proven to be more effective in building students' integrity compared to character education methods that rely solely on general curricula. This demonstrates that although the book originates from classical Islamic scholarly traditions, it remains relevant and even serves as a solution amid the moral challenges faced by today's younger generation.

This study provides significant contributions to the development of knowledge, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study strengthens the argument that the classical text-based education system in pesantren is not merely a preserved traditional heritage but also holds a competitive advantage over modern educational methods in character formation. The findings support various Islamic education theories that emphasize the importance of integrating knowledge and adab in shaping individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess good moral character. Practically, this study offers guidance for pesantren administrators and Islamic educational institutions in optimizing the use of Ta'limul Muta'allim as an effective learning tool. The resulting recommendations can be utilized to develop a more contextual and applicable classical text-based education strategy that aligns with the needs of today's Muslim youth.

Although this study successfully reveals the significant impact of Ta'limul Muta'allim-based education on students' character formation, there are some limitations that open opportunities for further research. This study focuses only on a single pesantren as the research object, making the results not yet generalizable to all pesantren in Indonesia. Additionally, this study primarily highlights the internalization of akhlakul karimah values within the pesantren environment, whereas future research could explore how students apply these values after returning to society. Future studies may also examine how Ta'limul Muta'allim can be adapted within formal education systems as part of strengthening Islamic-based character education on a broader scale. Thus, the findings of this study serve as a foundation for further research focusing on the optimization of classical text-based Islamic education systems in the modern era.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. All interpretations and conclusions presented are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not reflect the views of the funding agency.

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