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Internalization of Student Character Values through Sports-Based Extracurricular Activities in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

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Abstract: The cultivation of Islamic character values through extracurricular activities is a vital component in strengthening the holistic mission of modern Islamic boarding schools, where extracurricular sports such as futsal, football, takraw, and badminton not only serve as a means of physical development but also as a strategic arena for instilling core personality values in students. This study aims to analyze the process of internalizing these values, to identify the reinforcement mechanisms applied, and to highlight the pedagogical significance of sports-based extracurricular programs in shaping Islamic character education. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving 15 informants consisting of the principal, teachers, and students, with data collected through structured interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed thematically using NVivo 12 to ensure systematic coding and categorization. The findings reveal that modern Islamic boarding schools apply a total educational environment in which extracurricular sports activities are used to instill values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control, concluding that sports activities function not only as a medium for physical growth but also as an effective pedagogical tool for holistic character education, with implications underscoring the strong potential of modern Islamic boarding schools in shaping morally grounded and socially responsible students.

Keywords: Character internalization; extracurricular sports; role modelling; instructor competence.

Abstrak: *Penanaman nilai-nilai karakter Islami melalui kegiatan ekstrakurikuler merupakan komponen vital dalam memperkuat misi holistik sekolah berasrama Islam modern, di mana olahraga ekstrakurikuler seperti futsal, sepak bola, takraw, dan bulu tangkis tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana pengembangan fisik tetapi juga sebagai arena strategis untuk menanamkan nilai-nilai kepribadian inti pada siswa. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis proses internalisasi nilai-nilai tersebut, mengidentifikasi mekanisme penguatan*

yang diterapkan, dan menyoroti signifikansi pedagogis program ekstrakurikuler berbasis olahraga dalam membentuk pendidikan karakter Islami. Pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif digunakan, melibatkan 15 informan yang terdiri dari kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa, dengan data yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi, dan dianalisis secara tematik menggunakan NVivo 12 untuk memastikan pengkodean dan kategorisasi yang sistematis. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa asrama Islam modern menerapkan lingkungan pendidikan menyeluruh di mana kegiatan olahraga ekstrakurikuler digunakan untuk menanamkan nilai-nilai seperti disiplin, tanggung jawab, kerja sama, kepemimpinan, dan pengendalian emosi. Kesimpulannya, kegiatan olahraga tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai media untuk pertumbuhan fisik tetapi juga sebagai alat pedagogis yang efektif untuk pendidikan karakter holistik, dengan implikasi yang menggarisbawahi potensi kuat asrama Islam modern dalam membentuk siswa yang berlandaskan moral dan bertanggung jawab secara sosial.

Kata Kunci: *Internalisasi karakter; ekstrakurikuler olahraga; teladan; kompetensi instruktur.*

INTRODUCTION

Internalization is the psychological process by which external norms and values become integrated into an individual's belief system and identity, guiding behavior intrinsically rather than through external enforcement. Piaget (1932) viewed it as the incorporation of moral rules into cognitive structures.[1]Vygotsky (1978) described it as the transformation of social functions into personal psychological functions.[2] In character education, Lickona (2013) emphasized that internalization occurs when moral values are not only taught but personally embraced as commitments.[3]Berkowitz & Bier (2005) identified it as the highest stage of character formation.[4]Where actions stem from internal conviction rather than authority. Similarly, Kohlberg (1981) linked internalization to post-conventional moral reasoning.[5] Individuals act according to universal principles they believe in. Unlike obedience, routine compliance, or short-term conformity, internalization ensures values are sustained across contexts as part of one's identity.

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[1] Jean Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1932), 12–13.

[2] L. S. Vygotsky, Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes, ed. Michael Cole, Vera John-Steiner, Sylvia Scribner, dan Ellen Souberman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 56–57.

[3] Thomas Lickona, Educating for Character: Mendidik untuk Membentuk Karakter: Bagaimana Sekolah Dapat Mengajarkan Sikap Hormat dan Tanggung Jawab, terj. Juma Abdu Wamaungo (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2013), 85–100.

[4] Marvin W. Berkowitz dan Melinda C. Bier, What Works in Character Education: A Research-Driven Guide for Educators (Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership, 2005), [halaman yang relevan setelah verifikasi].

[5] Lawrence Kohlberg, The Philosophy of Moral Development: Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice, vol. 1 of Essays on Moral Development (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), [halaman yang relevan setelah verifikasi.

Internalization refers to the psychological process by which external norms, values, or rules become integrated into an individual's own belief system and self-concept. Once internalized, these values are upheld not because of external enforcement but because the individual perceives them as personally meaningful, morally binding, and part of their identity. In character education, internalization means that values such as discipline, honesty, or responsibility are transformed into intrinsic motivations guiding behavior across contexts and over time.

Building on this national urgency, Modern Islamic Boarding Schools provide a distinctive model of holistic education. They serve not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to cultivate character through a comprehensive 24-hour boarding system[6]. The residential model enables intensive internalization of values through role modeling, habituation, and supervision in dailylife[7]. Consequently, Modern Islamic Boarding Schools provide a conducive environment for embedding values such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, andindependence[8].

To strengthen this process, extracurricular activities emerge as one of the most effective strategies for character internalization in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools[9]. These activities, designed to develop students' talents and interests, also serve as experiential learning platforms where positive values are practiced and reinforced.[10] In this context, extracurricular programs function not

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[6] Encung Encung and Ibnu Rusydi, "Implementation of Philosophy of Religion Principles In Islamic Education of Islamic Boarding School," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2026): 415–31, https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i2.2436.

[7] Achmad Qusyairi Mahfudi and Moh. Rifa'i, "Implementation of School Culture in Improving Religious Character in Islamic Boarding Schools," *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2025): 493–509, https://doi.org/10.54437/urwatulwutsqo.v14i2.2206.

[8] Mustain Mustain and M. Yunus Abu Bakar, "The Role of Islamic Boarding School Education in Shaping Students' Religious Character Amid the Challenges of Globalization," *Hikmah* 22, no. 1 (2025): 83–100, https://doi.org/10.53802/hikmah.v22i1.455.

[9] A Rohaeni et al., "Management of Noble Moral Education for Islamic Senior High School Students at Persatuan Islam Boarding School," *Journal of Industrial Engineering & Management Research* 2, no. 4 (2021): 154–71, https://doi.org/10.7777/jiemar.v2i4.174.

[10] Muhammad Munif, Fathor Rozi, and Andi Noer Mu'ti Sulaiman, "Implementation of Experiential Learning Method in Developing Grouping Skills To Support Students'Interests and Talents," *EduSphere: Journal of Educational Innovation and Learning* 1, no. 1 (2025): 9–16, https://doi.org/10.65678/edusphere.v1i1.134.

only as skill development but also as a medium for instilling discipline, cooperation, leadership, and integrity in students' daily lives.[11]

Among the various extracurricular forms, sports-based activities stand out as particularly effective. Beyond physical development, sports cultivate values such as sportsmanship, emotional regulation, mental resilience, and teamwork.[12] Through activities like futsal, football, takraw, and badminton, students are trained physically while simultaneously shaped mentally and socially through rules, group dynamics, and experiences of winning and losing.[13]

The structured environment of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools further enhances the effectiveness of these activities. With institutional support and competent instructors, extracurricular sports are implemented in a disciplined and continuousmanner[14]. This ensures that the process of character formation is not limited to technical skills but extends to moral values, aligning with the core objectives of Islamic education[15]. In practice, Modern Islamic Boarding Schools have developed diverse extracurricular programs as part of their integrated system of student development. These programs are designed to balance physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth. Sports activities such as futsal, football, takraw, and badminton thus become not only avenues for achievement, but also instruments for embedding Islamic character values into students' daily lives.

Previous studies have confirmed the contribution of extracurricular activities to character formation, especially in aspects of discipline and

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[11] Ali Armadi et al., "Fostering Character Education in Elementary Schools: The Impact of Extracurricular Activities," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 16, no. 3 (2024): 3401–11, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i3.5536.

[12] Hwayong Son and Liza Berdychevsky, "Recreation and Sport Programs for Social-Emotional Development among Socially Vulnerable Youth," *Journal of Leisure Research* 57, no. 1 (2026): 62–85, https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2024.2429540.

[13] Hasbunallah Arief Saleh, Hasyim Hasyim, and Muhammad Mifta Fauzan, "Influence Learning Strategies to Enhance Physical Condition and Focus in Young Badminton Players During Matches," *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 5, no. 2 (2024): 311–22, https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v5i2.1429.

[14] Rustan Efendy, Ali Rahman, and Abdul Rahim Karim, "Scientific Transformation of Islamic Boarding Schools through Role of Alums the Islamic Education Study Program," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2023): 355, https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.349.

[15] Juwairiyah Juwairiyah and Zainuddin Fanani, "Integration of Islamic Values in Learning Methods: Building Character and Spirituality in the Digital Era," *AL-WIJDÃN Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 10, no. 1 (2025): 113–30, https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v10i1.6215.

responsibility.[16] However, most of these studies have focused primarily on outcomes rather than the internalization process itself. They often overlook the systematic mechanisms of habituation, role modeling, and social interaction that occur within the unique 24-hour environment of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools.[17] Moreover, much of the existing research has been conducted in formal school contexts, leaving Modern Islamic Boarding Schools with their integrated boarding system relatively underexplored.[18] This gap highlights the need for deeper investigation into how extracurricular sports activities function as vehicles for character internalization in Islamic boarding schools.

Against this backdrop, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on the internalization process itself. By examining structured habituation, instructor role modeling, and social interaction, the research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how values are not merely taught but truly internalized into students' behavior.[19,20]. At the same time, the effectiveness of extracurricular activities in character formation is influenced by various supporting and challenging factors. Instructor competence, consistency of supervision, and the dynamic nature of students' personalities all play significant roles in shaping outcomes.[21] These complexities underscore the importance of analyzing the process in detail to identify both strengths and limitations in current practices.

The urgency of this study arises from the growing challenges of globalization and digital transformation, which increasingly shape the behavior of younger generations and often erode traditional values of discipline, responsibility, and social ethics. In this context, Modern Islamic Boarding

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[16] Nurul Faizatin Nufa and Istichomahwati Istichomahwati, "Integration of Students' Character Education Through Extracurricular Programs A Systematic Review," *Journal of Blended and Technical Education* 1, no. 2 (2025): 145–57, https://doi.org/10.70764/gdpu-jbte.2025.1(2)-12.

[17] Heri Azmi, Lahmuddin Lubis, and Abdurrahman Abdurrahman, "Islamic Counseling and Educational Integration: A Holistic Model from Indonesian Pesantren," *Journal La Edusci* 7, no. 4 (2026): 897–912, https://doi.org/10.37899/journallaedusci.v7i4.3223.

[18] Muhardi Muhardi, "Transformation of Islamic Boarding School Management," *DIMAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2025): 8–23, https://doi.org/10.58577/dimar.v7i1.478.

[19] Ghiffari Syauqy Said, Muhtadi Ridwan, and Ahmad Sholeh, "Formation of Discipline Character Through Internalization of the Value of Islamic Religious Education in the Students of the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School," *Fondatia* 9, no. 2 (2025): 461–81, https://doi.org/10.36088/fondatia.v9i2.5752.

[20] Asep Nursobah et al., "Integrative Model of Religious Habituation in Building Students Religious Character," *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 2 (2025): 310–25, https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v6i2.1142.

[21] M M Ruziyevna, "The Importance of Personal and Psychological Characteristics in Forming Supervisory Competence in Future Teachers," *Spanish Journal of Innovation and Integrity* 51 (2026): 30–38, https://www.sjii.es/index.php/journal/article/view/977.

Schools must reinforce their role as holistic educational institutions capable of producing graduates who are morally grounded, socially responsible, and resilient in facing contemporary challenges. To address these demands, extracurricular activities, particularly sports, offer a practical and engaging medium for instilling character values through experiential learning, making them an important area of study for strengthening character education. This urgency naturally leads to the need to examine how extracurricular sports activities are systematically integrated into the educational environment of Modern Islamic Boarding School.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To strengthen the identification of the research position within the existing literature, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer based on publications indexed in the Scopus database. The analysis aimed to map research development, author collaboration patterns, country distribution, and keyword trends related to Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, Character Values, and Extracurricular Activities.

Based on the Scopus database using the keywords "Modern Islamic Boarding Schools," "Character Values," and "Extracurricular Activities," a total of 18 relevant documents were identified. The co-authorship analysis indicates that research in this field is still supported by a relatively limited collaboration network. Most authors are connected only within small collaboration groups, suggesting that the research community has not yet developed an extensive collaborative structure. Several authors, including Nurul Azizah, Syarifah, and Saiful Anwar, occupy relatively central positions by connecting multiple researchers within the network, as illustrated in Figure 1.

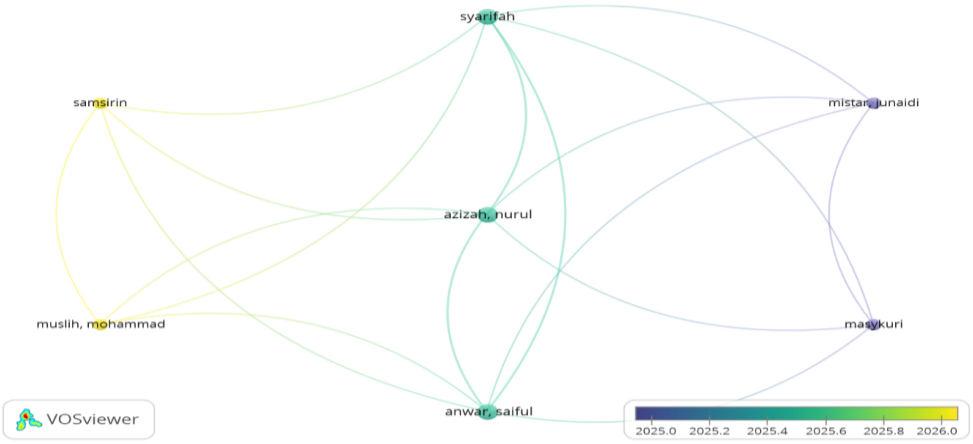


Figure 1. Co-authorship Analysis Using VOSviewer

Furthermore, the country co-authorship analysis reveals that Indonesia is the dominant contributor to this research area and has the broadest international collaboration network. Indonesian researchers are connected with scholars from Malaysia, Thailand, Turkey, Sweden, China, Brunei Darussalam, and Uganda, although the overall international collaboration remains relatively limited, as shown in Figure 2. These findings indicate that studies concerning Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, Character Values, and Extracurricular Activities remain highly concentrated within the Indonesian context.

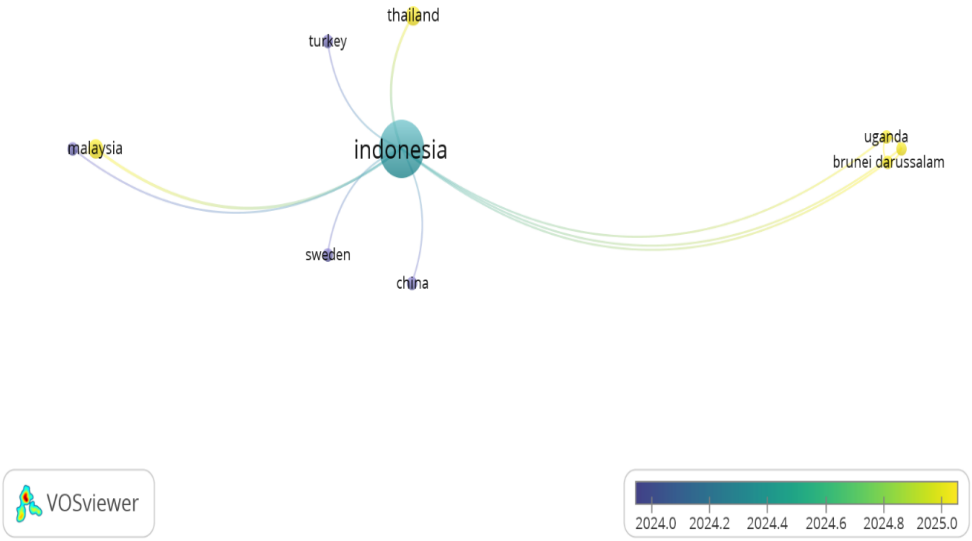


Figure 2. Country Co-authorship Analysis Using VOSviewer

The keyword co-occurrence analysis further demonstrates that previous studies are primarily centered on the keywords character education, Islamic boarding school, and Islamic boarding schools. Other frequently occurring keywords include student, curriculum, educational institutions, entrepreneurship, character building, educational quality management, pesantren, and Islamic guidance, as presented in Figure 3. More recent publications have introduced themes such as 24-hour educational ecosystem and *halaqah subuh*, indicating the emergence of new research directions within Islamic boarding school studies**.**

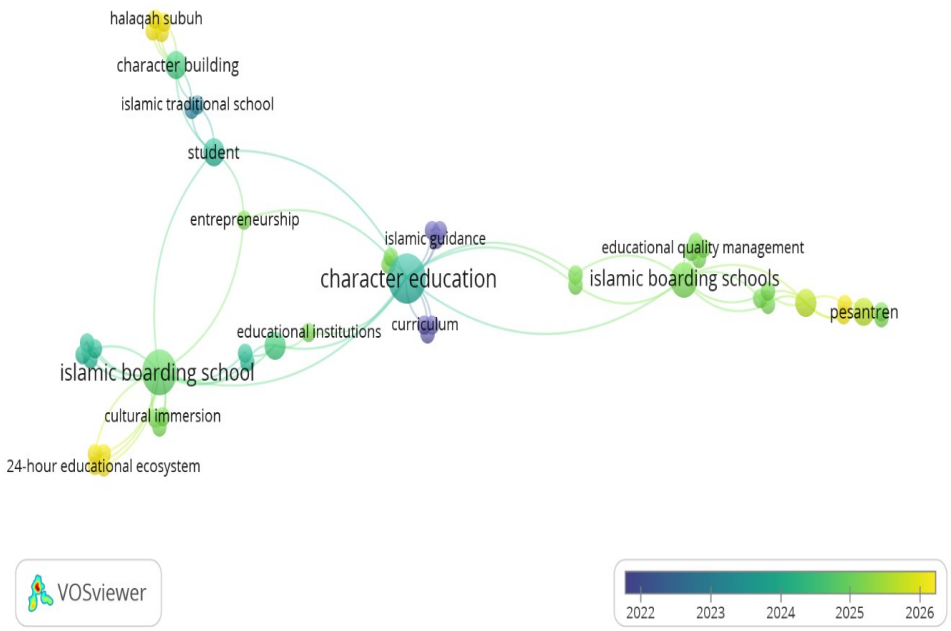


Figure 3. Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis Using VOSviewer

Overall, the bibliometric findings indicate that research on Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, Character Values, and Extracurricular Activities remains in an early stage of development. Author collaboration networks are still limited, publications are predominantly produced by Indonesian researchers, and existing studies mainly focus on character education, Islamic educational management, curriculum, and student development. More importantly, no dominant keywords specifically address sports extracurricular activities, character internalization, habituation, role modelling, or social interaction as mechanisms of character formation.

These bibliometric findings are consistent with previous empirical studies, which have generally emphasized the outcomes of extracurricular activities, particularly in fostering discipline and responsibility, rather than examining the internalization process itself. Moreover, most existing studies have been conducted in formal school settings, leaving Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, with their distinctive 24-hour educational system, relatively underexplored. Consequently, there remains a significant research gap concerning not only what character values are developed through extracurricular sports activities but also how these values are systematically internalized through structured habituation, instructor role modelling, and social interaction within the holistic boarding school environment.

Addressing this gap, the present study positions extracurricular sports not merely as recreational programs but as pedagogical strategies embedded within the educational system of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools. Rather than focusing solely on character education outcomes, this study investigates the process of character internalization by examining structured habituation, instructor role modelling, and social interaction within sports-based extracurricular activities. By doing so, the study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of more effective, contextual, and sustainable character education models in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools.

Building upon the identified research gap, this study is guided by the following research question: How does the process of character internalization occur through extracurricular sports activities in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools, particularly through the mechanisms of structured habituation, instructor role modelling, and social interaction within the holistic boarding system? This question connects the broader educational challenges with the distinctive context of Islamic boarding schools and provides the foundation for developing a more comprehensive understanding of character education through extracurricular sports activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

Method and Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a single-case study design to explore the process of character internalization through extracurricular sports activities in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools. The case boundary was defined as one modern Islamic boarding school located in West Sumatra, Indonesia, selected because of its established extracurricular sports programs and integrated 24-hour boarding system. The unit of analysis was the process of character internalization as experienced by students, teachers, and administrators within the school's extracurricular sports activities. The sports programs examined included futsal, football, takraw, and badminton, which were chosen because of their consistent implementation and popularity among students. Fieldwork was conducted over three months, from February to April 2026, allowing for sustained observation of routines, interactions, and practices. A case study design was chosen because it enables an in-depth examination of phenomena within their real-life context, capturing the complexity of social

interactions and educational practices.[22] The qualitative orientation emphasizes meaning, interpretation, and contextual understanding, which are essential for analyzing how values are internalized in daily student activities.

Research Instruments

The primary instruments of data collection were structured interviews, complemented by observation and documentation. The interview protocol was developed following a semi-structured format that included opening questions to build rapport, key questions focusing on the internalization of character values through sports activities, and closing questions to allow reflection. This protocol ensured consistency across informants while still providing space for elaboration and contextual insights. To strengthen its relevance, the interview guide was reviewed by two independent experts in Islamic education, who assessed the appropriateness of the questions in relation to the study's objectives and the cultural context of modern Islamic boarding schools. Rather than claiming statistical validity and reliability, this review process enhanced content relevance and contributed to procedural trustworthiness, ensuring that the instrument was aligned with the research focus and ethically sound. Observation was conducted to capture direct student behavior during extracurricular sports activities, focusing on routines, interactions, and value-oriented practices. Documentation, including institutional records and extracurricular program reports, provided supporting evidence and contextual detail. The triangulation of interviews, observation, and documentation strengthened the credibility of the findings by allowing cross-verification of data from multiple sources.

Data Sources

Data were obtained from 15 informants consisting of the principal, teachers, and students actively involved in extracurricular sports programs. This purposive sampling ensured that participants had direct experience and knowledge relevant to the research focus.[23] The diversity of informants allowed for multiple perspectives, strengthening the depth and reliability of the analysis.

Data for this study were obtained from 15 informants, consisting of one principal, four teachers, two sports coaches, and eight students who were actively involved in extracurricular sports programs. The principal was included

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[22] E. Efendi, A. Jaafar, and E. Engkizar, "Muslim Women's Leadership in Conflict Management in Higher Education," *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Tarbiyah* 11, no. 2 (2026): 826–38, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24042/tadris.v11i2.30474.

[23] Mustamir Mustamir and Muhammad Tang, "Integrating Multicultural Values in Islamic Religious Education: A Case Study in Junior High Schools," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 17, no. 1 (2025): 105–15, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i1.6296.

to provide institutional perspectives on policy and character education goals, while teachers contributed insights into pedagogical integration between academic and extracurricular domains. Coaches were selected because of their direct role in organizing and supervising sports activities, thereby serving as role models and facilitators of value internalization. Students were recruited to capture lived experiences of participation and the ways in which values were internalized through daily practice.

Recruitment followed a purposive sampling strategy, with criteria including: (i) direct involvement in extracurricular sports programs (futsal, football, takraw, and badminton), (ii) a minimum of one year of active participation or supervision, (iii) willingness to provide reflective accounts of experiences, and (iv) availability during the fieldwork period. This composition ensured that the perspectives represented both institutional leadership and grassroots participation.

Thematic sufficiency was achieved by balancing diversity of roles with depth of engagement. The inclusion of multiple stakeholder groups allowed for triangulation of perspectives, while the number of informants was sufficient to capture recurring themes without redundancy. This ensured that the analysis could move beyond individual anecdotes to identify systematic patterns in the internalization of character values within the holistic boarding school environment.

Data Analysis Techniques and Tools

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying, coding, and categorizing recurring patterns and themes.[24,25,26,27]. Thematic analysis was considered the most appropriate technique for this study, as it provides flexibility and depth in interpreting qualitative data while remaining systematic and rigorous. NVivo 12 software was employed to facilitate coding, organization, and visualization of qualitative data. The use of NVivo enhanced

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[24] Mochamad Arif Faizin, "Islamic Boarding Education Management Reform: Transformation Strategies to Improve Competitiveness and Relevance," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 16, no. 2 (2024): 2497–2506, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v16i2.4462.

[25] Abdurrahman Abdurrahman, Baharuddin Baharuddin, and M Samsul Hady, "Change Management Strategies for Enhancing Education Quality at Islamic Boarding School," *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan* 17, no. 1 (2025): 930–941, https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v17i1.6009.

[26] E Engkizar et al., "Challenges and Steps in Living Quran and Hadith Research: An Introduction," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education (IJMURHICA* 8, no. 3 (2025): 426–435, https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v8i3.396.

[27] Engkizar et al., "Tartil Method as an Effective Strategy for Transforming Students' Positive Attitudes in Learning the Qur'an."

transparency and rigor in the analysis process, ensuring that findings were grounded in empirical evidence.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six phases: familiarization, initial coding, theme searching, theme review, theme definition, and reporting. Coding combined a deductive orientation—guided by the five targeted values of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control—with openness to inductive insights emerging from the data. A codebook was developed iteratively, beginning with categories derived from the literature and refined through pilot coding. This codebook included definitions, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and sample excerpts to ensure consistency across the dataset.

Two researchers independently coded all transcripts, compared results, and resolved disagreements through discussion and reference to the codebook, with occasional consultation from a senior researcher. Negative cases were deliberately retained to challenge and refine emerging themes. NVivo 12 software was used to organize and visualize coded data, but rigor was ensured through systematic procedures rather than reliance on software alone. A reflexive audit trail was maintained, documenting coding decisions, theme development, and researcher reflections, thereby enhancing transparency and procedural trustworthiness. Triangulation across interviews, observations, and documentation further strengthened the credibility of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they were fully aware of the study's purpose and procedures. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by using pseudonyms and securing all data in password-protected files. The study adhered to ethical guidelines for qualitative research, emphasizing respect, trust, and voluntary participation[28,29,30,31,32].

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[28] Fajli Aijat Mau, "Integrating Character Education in Al-Syifa Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study Approach," *Edu Spectrum: Journal of Multidimensional Education* 1, no. 1 (2024): 01–14, https://doi.org/10.70063/eduspectrum.v1i1.30.

[29] Engkizar Engkizar et al., "Quran Teachers' Skills as Pedagogical Foundations: Conceptual and Practical Insights into Nine Competencies," *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning* 2, no. 1 (2026): 22–38, https://doi.org/10.67055/xt598c43.

[30] Ihin Solihin, Aan Hasanah, and Hisny Fajrussalam, "Core Ethical Values of Character Education Based on Islamic Values in Islamic Boarding Schools," *International Journal on Advanced Science, Education, and Religion* 3, no. 2 (2020): 21–33, https://doi.org/10.33648/ijoaser.v3i2.51.

[31] Sari Dea Ika Meilani, Suyono Suyono, and Almaydza Pratama Abnisa, "Interpersonal Communication Patterns in Developing Excellent Character Through Student Discipline in

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the research process. Ethical clearance was obtained in accordance with the Ethical Considerations regulated by the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), ensuring compliance with national standards for research conduct. Formal permission was also secured from the leadership of the Islamic boarding school where the study was conducted, guaranteeing institutional endorsement of the research activities.

All participants, including the principal, teachers, coaches, and students, were informed of the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights, and written informed consent was obtained prior to participation. For student participants under the age of 18, parental consent was obtained alongside student assent, ensuring voluntary participation with full awareness. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning pseudonyms and storing all data in password-protected files accessible only to the research team. The study adhered to BRIN's ethical guidelines for qualitative research, emphasizing respect, trust, and voluntary participation throughout the fieldwork.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation revealed several interconnected themes that highlight the role of extracurricular sports in shaping student character within Modern Islamic Boarding Schools. The findings demonstrate that the internalization of values such as discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control does not occur in isolation, but rather through a dynamic interplay of structured habituation, instructor role modeling, and social interaction within the boarding school's holistic environment. These mechanisms collectively contribute to observable behavioral changes among students, reinforcing the effectiveness of sports-based extracurricular activities as a medium for character education. The following sections present the detailed results for each item, supported by thematic evidence and contextual interpretation.

The analysis of data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation revealed several interconnected themes that highlight the role of extracurricular sports in shaping student character within Modern Islamic Boarding Schools. The findings indicate that values such as discipline,

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Islamic Boarding Schools," *El-Fatih: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Penyuluan Islam* 4, no. 01 (2025): 01–11, https://doi.org/10.65178/elfatih.v4i01.1.

[32] Engkizar et al., "Tartil Method as an Effective Strategy for Transforming Students' Positive Attitudes in Learning the Qur'an."

responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control are internalized through a dynamic interplay of structured habituation, instructor role modeling, and social interaction within the boarding school's holistic environment.

Rather than asserting observable behavioral change, the results emphasize how these mechanisms were consistently described and interpreted by participants across different roles. Informants' accounts illustrate how routines, guidance, and peer interactions contribute to the reinforcement of character values, suggesting that sports-based extracurricular activities function as a meaningful medium for character education. The following sections present detailed thematic evidence for each value, supported by contextual interpretation.

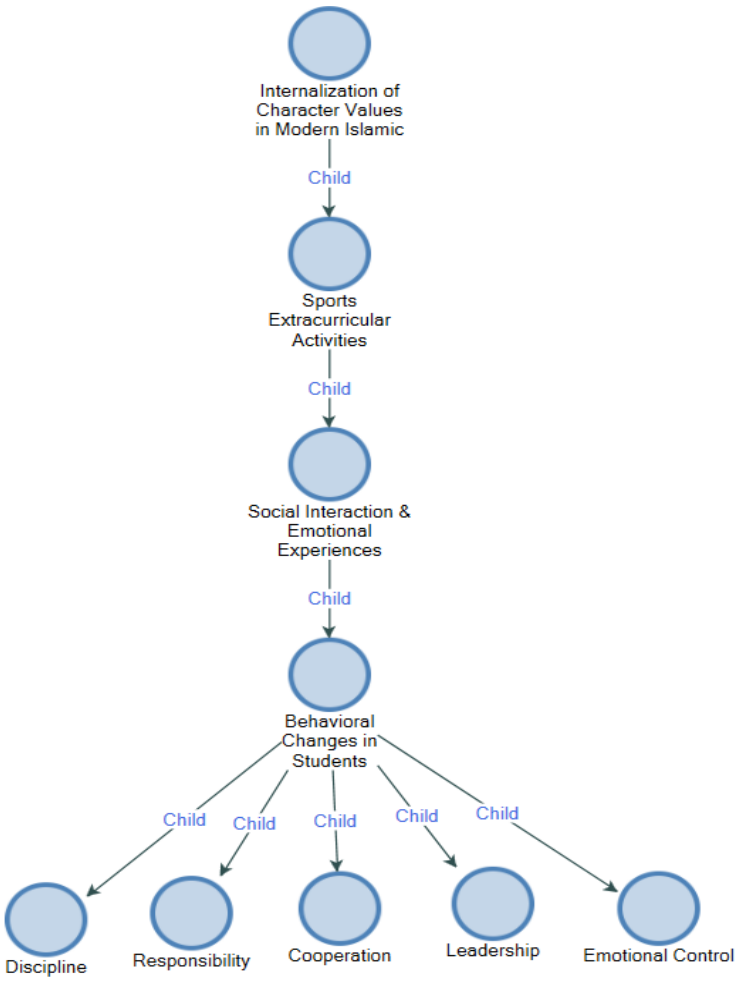


Figure 4. Framework of character value internalization

Based on the findings analyzed using NVivo 12, it was revealed that the internalization of character values in modern Islamic boarding schools occurs through interrelated processes. Extracurricular sports activities, as well as social interactions and emotional experiences, serve as practical arenas for the formation of these values. Both of these pathways lead to tangible changes in student behavior, reflected in discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control. To clarify these findings, the author presents five main themes supported by interview excerpts from the informants.

Discipline

Discipline is a fundamental aspect of character education, encompassing punctuality, adherence to rules, and self-regulation. Solehah & Manshur (2025) emphasize that discipline is the foundation of moral development, enabling students to internalize values through structured routines and institutional expectations[33]. In Islamic education, discipline is closely tied to spiritual practice, where consistency in worship and daily routines reinforces moral integrity. Within the boarding school environment, discipline becomes both behavioral and spiritual, shaping students' daily conduct.

Informants consistently highlighted discipline as a value shaped through sports routines. One student reflected:

"Joining futsal practice every morning has taught me to wake up early and respect the schedule, even when I feel tired." (Inf-01).

Another expressed it differently: *"The rules in football make me realize that discipline is not only about time but also about respecting the game and the team."* (Inf-02).

A third informant added a personal nuance: *"I used to be careless with time, but now I feel guilty if I miss practice because discipline has become part of me."* (Inf-03). These varied voices show how discipline is internalized through both external rules and internal awareness.

Responsibility

Responsibility refers to the willingness to be accountable for one's actions, decisions, and commitments. Responsibility is central to citizenship and moral education, ensuring individuals recognize the consequences of their

[33] I Solehah and U Manshur, "Educational Management Strategies for Internalizing Islamic Education Values in Shaping Students' Disciplinary Character," *Journal of Educational Management Research* 04, no. 05 (2025): 2391–2401, https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v4i5.1257.

choices.[34,35]. In boarding schools, responsibility extends beyond personal accountability to collective responsibility, where students must consider the impact of their actions on peers and the institution. This dual dimension strengthens both individual maturity and social cohesion.

Responsibility was internalized through role delegation and accountability in team activities. One student explained:

"When I was chosen as the team leader, I felt responsible not only for myself but also for the performance of my friends." (Inf-04).

Another emphasized the collective aspect: *"If I miss practice, the team suffers, so I learned to be responsible for my commitments."* (Inf-05).

A third informant expressed it in a reflective tone: *"Responsibility here is not just about me; it's about how my actions affect the whole group."* (Inf-06). These perspectives illustrate responsibility as both individual and communal.

Cooperation

Theoretical meaning: Cooperation is a social value that emphasizes collaboration, mutual support, and collective achievement. Cooperative activities foster social bonds and reduce individualistic tendencies, making them essential for holistic education[36]. In sports, cooperation is not only about teamwork but also about empathy, communication, and trust among members. Within boarding schools, cooperation is reinforced by the communal living environment, where students must work together in both academic and extracurricular contexts.

Cooperation was reinforced through teamwork and collective problem-solving. One informant shared:

"In sepak takraw, if one player fails, the whole team loses, so we must cooperate and support each other." (Inf-07).

Another reflected: *"I realized that winning is not about being the best alone, but about working together as a team."* (Inf-08).

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[34] Ahmad Salabi, "The Role of Islamic Boarding School Culture in Forming Discipline and Collective Cooperation in Darul Hijrah Islamic Boarding School," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 1 (2025): 282–95, https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i1.2468.

[35] Siti Qomala Khayati, "Islamic Boarding Schools as a Solution to Child Violence: A Holistic Approach to Character Education," *Qoumun: Journal of Social and Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2025): 61–71, https://doi.org/10.65097/qoumun.v1i1.43.

[36] Syarifah et al., "Fostering Tolerance Through the Hidden Curriculum: An Ethnographic Study of Inclusive Education in an Indonesian Islamic Boarding School," *Munaddhomah* 6, no. 4 (2025): 603–17, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i4.1960.

A third informant added: *"Cooperation makes me feel that my success is everyone's success, and my mistakes are shared too."* (Inf-09). These experiences illustrate how cooperation becomes a lived practice in sports.

Leadership

Educational leadership involves guiding, influencing, and motivating peers toward shared goals. Veth (2026 defines leadership as a process of social influence that maximizes group effectiveness.[37] In character education, leadership is not merely positional but also moral, requiring role modelling, decision-making, and the ability to inspire others. Boarding schools provide a natural arena for leadership development, as students are often given responsibilities to lead peers in academic, religious, and extracurricular activities, thereby nurturing confidence and initiative.

Leadership was internalized through opportunities to guide peers and make decisions during matches. One student stated:

"Being the captain taught me how to motivate my friends and make quick decisions during the game." (Inf-10).

Another added: *"I learned that leadership is not about commanding, but about setting an example and encouraging others."* (Inf-11).

A third informant emphasized: *"Leadership here means being trusted, and that trust makes me more careful in my words and actions."* (Inf-12). These testimonies highlight how sports provide a natural arena for leadership development.

Emotional Control

Emotional control refers to the ability to regulate feelings in challenging situations, maintaining composure and resilience in both success and failure. Emotional regulation is a key component of emotional intelligence, essential for personal growth and social harmony[38]. In sports, emotional control is tested through competition, stress, and interpersonal conflict, making it a practical medium for cultivating resilience. Within boarding schools, emotional control is further reinforced by religious values that emphasize patience, humility, and self-restraint.

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[37] S Veth, S Bon, and G F Kurniawan, "Leadership Styles: A Comprehensive Review of Twenty-One Approaches," in *Digital Leadership and Innovation in ASEAN Education*, 2026, 187–236, https://doi.org.10.4018/979-8-2600-1142-3.ch007.

[38] Afiful Ikhwan et al., "Integrating Emotional and Spiritual Quotient (Esq) With Prophetic Values in Human Resource Development," *Afkar* 27, no. 1 (2025): 383–426, https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol27no1.10.

Emotional control was cultivated through experiences of winning, losing, and managing competitive stress. One informant explained:

"When we lost the match, I felt angry, but the coach reminded us to accept defeat with patience." (Inf-13).

Another shared: *"Sports taught me to control my emotions, not to shout at friends when mistakes happen."* (Inf-14).

A third informant expressed: *"I used to get frustrated easily, but now I try to calm myself because I know emotions affect the whole team."* (Inf-15). These reflections show how sports nurture resilience and emotional regulation.

Discussion

The results of this study highlight the profound role of extracurricular sports in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools as a medium for character internalization. Rather than functioning merely as recreational activities, sports become an arena where values are lived, practiced, and reinforced through daily routines, peer interaction, and institutional guidance. This finding resonates with the broader discourse on character education, which emphasizes that values are best taught through experiential learning and holistic environments. The voices of students, teachers, and administrators confirm that discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control are not abstract ideals but tangible outcomes of structured engagement in sports.

The emphasis on discipline observed in this study reflects the theoretical claim that discipline is foundational to moral development. Krettenauer & Stichter (2023) argue that without discipline, other virtues cannot be sustained, as self-regulation and consistency are prerequisites for responsibility and integrity.[39] Informants' reflections on punctuality, adherence to rules, and respect for schedules illustrate how discipline is embedded in the boarding school environment. These findings align with Said & Putri (2025, who noted that pesantren instill discipline through both religious and extracurricular routines.[4041] The connection between theory and practice is evident: discipline is

[39] Tobias Krettenauer and Matt Stichter, "Moral Identity and the Acquisition of Virtue:A Self-Regulation View," *Review of General Psychology* 27, no. 4 (2023): 396–409, https://doi.org/10.1177/10892680231170393.

[40] Said, Ridwan, and Sholeh, "Formation of Discipline Character Through Internalization of the Value of Islamic Religious Education in the Students of the Wali Songo Ngabar Islamic Boarding School."

[41] Elza Eka Putri, Hendra Harmi, and Dewi Purnama Sari, "Positive Discipline as a Transformative Approach to Strengthening Students' Worship Practices," *Journal La Edusci* 6, no. 6 (2025): 1176–94, https://doi.org/10.37899/journallaedusci.v6i6.2741.

not only enforced externally but gradually internalized as a personal commitment, bridging behavioral and spiritual dimensions.

Responsibility emerged as another central theme, closely linked to accountability in team roles. Responsibility is a cornerstone of citizenship education, ensuring individuals recognize the consequences of their actions[42]. The informants' testimonies ranging from feeling accountable as team leaders to recognizing the collective impact of attendance illustrate responsibility as both individual and communal. This dual dimension aligns with Bahri (2026, who found that responsibility in pesantren is cultivated through delegated tasks and peer accountability.[43] The synthesis suggests that sports provide a practical arena where responsibility is experienced directly, reinforcing theoretical perspectives with lived practice.

The findings also underscore cooperation as a value reinforced through teamwork and collective problem-solving. Yulianto (2025) argues that cooperative activities foster social bonds and reduce individualism, and the students' reflections on *sepak takraw* and shared victories confirm thisassertion[44]. Anilon (2026 similarly observed that communal living in pesantren strengthens cooperation among students, and this study extends that insight by showing how sports amplify cooperation[45]. The transition from theory to practice is seamless: cooperation is not only a pedagogical goal but a necessity in sports, where success depends on collective effort.

Leadership was internalized through opportunities to guide peers and make decisions during matches. Haddad (2021 defines leadership as a process of social influence, and the informants' experiences motivating teammates, setting examples, and earning trust illustrate this process vividly.[46] Mubarak (2026 found that pesantren environments naturally cultivate leadership through

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[42] Jacob A. Francom, "Roles High School Principals Play in Establishing a Successful Character Education Initiative," *Journal of Character Education* 12, no. 1 (2017): 17–34, https://doi.org/10.1108/jced-08-2017-0003.

[43] Rosidi Bahri et al., "Moral Leadership Development in Indonesian Islamic Boarding Schools: A Comparative Study of Two Pesantren," *British Journal of Religious Education*, 2026, 1–17, https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2026.2627921.

[44] Irfan Yulianto, Tutuk Ningsih, and M Slamet Yahya, "Social Group Dynamics as a Mechanism for Character Development Through Traditional Games," *Journal of Innovation and Research in Primary Education* 4, no. 4 (2025): 3025–43, https://doi.org/10.56916/jirpe.v4i4.2438.

[45] Basir Jarah Anilon et al., "Academic Commitment of Muslim Filipino Students in an Islamic Boarding School: A Phenomenological Study at Islamic Boarding School," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2026): 227–45, https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v9i1.302.

[46] Gina Haddad, Donna O'Connor, and Kellie Burns, "The Decision to Adopt a Formal Athlete Leadership Group: Qualitative Insights from Professional Football Coaches," *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 52 (2021): 101803, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2020.101803.

student responsibilities in religious and social activities.[47] This study adds to that body of knowledge by demonstrating how sports provide an additional arena for leadership development, where decision-making and role modeling are tested under pressure. The integration of theory and practice shows that leadership in boarding schools is both positional and moral, requiring confidence, initiative, and ethical conduct.

Emotional control, finally, was cultivated through experiences of winning, losing, and managing competitive stress. Rao (2024 identifies emotional regulation as a key component of emotional intelligence, essential for resilience and social harmony.[48] Informants' reflections on patience in defeat and restraint in conflict confirm this theoretical perspective. Rahmahadikusuma & Rahmani (2024 highlighted the role of pesantren in teaching patience and humility as spiritual values, and this study demonstrates how sports complement those teachings with experiential reinforcement.[49] Emotional control thus emerges as a value that bridges psychological resilience and religious virtue, reinforcing the holistic mission of Islamic boarding schools.

Synthesizing these findings, it becomes clear that extracurricular sports in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools are not peripheral but central to character education. The integration of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control reflects a holistic approach, consistent with the pesantren's mission to produce morally grounded and socially responsible graduates. This study contributes to the literature by filling a gap in previous research, which focused primarily on formal classroom contexts, by highlighting the unique role of sports in Islamic boarding schools. The discussion demonstrates that theory, expert opinion, and prior studies converge with empirical evidence, confirming that sports are a powerful pedagogical tool for character internalization.

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[47] Mubarak Mubarak et al., "Pesantren Strategies in Maintaining Islamic Education Traditions and Shaping Santri Social Identity in the Midst of Social Change," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 2 (2026): 565–79, https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v7i2.2632.

[48] Gundugurti P. Rao et al., "Developing Resilience and Harnessing Emotional Intelligence," *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 66, no. Suppl 2 (2024): S255–61, https://doi.org/10.4103/indianjpsychiatry.indianjpsychiatry_601_23.

[49] Raditya Rahmahadikusuma and Ataollah Rahmani, "Equestrian Activities for Character Building in Islamic Boarding Schools: Insights from Imam Bukhari Pesantren within the SDGs Framework," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 25, no. 03 (2026): 799–810, https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v25i03.16166.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how extracurricular sports activities in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools contribute to the internalization of character values. The findings clearly show that discipline, responsibility, cooperation, leadership, and emotional control are consistently reinforced through structured routines, peer interaction, and the holistic educational environment of the boarding school. These values are not abstract ideals but lived experiences, embedded in students' daily practices and confirmed through their reflections. In answering the research questions, the study demonstrates both the specific values cultivated and the mechanisms of their reinforcement, affirming that sports are a powerful vehicle for character education in Islamic contexts.

The novelty of this research lies in positioning sports as a central pedagogical tool within pesantren, expanding the discourse on character education beyond religious instruction and communal living. By highlighting how values are internalized through experiential learning in extracurricular contexts, the study fills a gap in the literature and underscores the unique contribution of sports to holistic education. The implications are significant: educators should design extracurricular programs deliberately as instruments of character formation, coaches should integrate value-based approaches into training, and policymakers should support sports initiatives as part of the broader mission of Islamic boarding schools to produce morally grounded and socially responsible graduates.

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