

The Role of Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah in Providing Character Education Programs at Insan Rabbani Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Malili, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah Luwu Timur in providing and implementing character-building programs at the Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) Insan Rabbani Malili. The research focuses primarily on the forms of collaboration between the pesantren and the school, the types of moral development programs implemented, and their impact on students' character formation. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings indicated that Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah played a strategic role as an active partner in moral education, particularly in curriculum development, teaching personnel, and regular religious activities such as halaqah (study circles), mentoring, and the cultivation of daily worship habits. These programs have positively contributed to developing students' character, especially in discipline, responsibility, and social ethics. This study addresses a gap in the literature where limited research explores the direct, structured collaboration between pesantren and formal Islamic schools at the elementary level. Its novelty highlights the pesantren's multi-dimensional role—conceptual, operational, and implementational—in shaping character education within a formal school context, offering a practical model for integrated Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

Primary education plays a crucial role in forming character and moral values among students (Bahri, 2022). At this stage, children undergo a rapid development of both cognitive and affective aspects, and the moral values instilled during this period significantly shape their personalities in the future. Moral education in primary schools aims to create knowledgeable individuals and cultivate ethical, responsible, and integrous human beings (Hairiyah & Arifin, 2020). However, in recent years, there has been growing concern about the decline in the quality of student character. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2021 indicated that the character index of students at the secondary education level was recorded at 69.52, a decrease of two points from the previous year's figure of 71.41. This decline is strongly suspected to be a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted students' learning process and social interactions (Murtadlo, 2021).

In response to this challenge, the government has launched programs to strengthen character education in primary schools through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (*Kemendikbudristek*). One of the most recent initiatives is the "7 Habits of Great Indonesian Children" program, introduced in November 2024 by the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education. The program aims to cultivate the national character by fostering healthy habits, discipline, and moral integrity (Mu'ti, 2025). Furthermore, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) indicate that, for the 2023/2024 academic year, there has been an increase in the number of primary schools across Indonesia, reflecting the government's commitment to expanding access to education. However, this increase in quantity must be accompanied by improvements in quality, particularly in character development (Girsang et al., 2024).

Various approaches have been implemented in this context to foster moral education among primary school students (Tiliouine, 2014). One particularly effective approach is the method of role modeling, where teachers and school staff serve as exemplary figures of positive behavior for students. Research has shown that continuous moral education and role modeling can positively shape students' attitudes and behaviors (Sholahuddin & Khoir, 2024). Moreover, integrating formal and non-formal education has also emerged as a critical strategy in moral development (Syarif, 2020). For instance, collaborations between primary schools and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) to offer moral education programs have shown promising results. *Pesantren* play a significant role in developing moral education curricula, providing qualified educators, and conducting regular religious activities such as *halaqah* (study circles), mentoring, and daily worship practices. These programs have been proven to positively influence students' character, particularly in discipline, responsibility, and social ethics (Jasmani, 2020).

However, primary school moral education programs face several challenges (Waziana et al., 2021). One of the most prominent challenges is the influence of the digital era, where children are exposed to a vast amount of information that is not always aligned with the

moral values taught in schools. Studies indicate that moral education for primary school students in the digital age requires adaptive and innovative approaches, including technology as a supplementary tool in the moral education process (Nazaruddin, 2024). In addition, the role of the family is crucial in supporting moral education in schools. Parental involvement in the educational process can reinforce the moral values taught in schools. Therefore, collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential for successfully shaping students' character (Nasution, 2023).

Given this background, the present study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of moral education programs in primary schools, focusing on the strategies, methods, and challenges encountered in their implementation. This research is expected to contribute to effective and contextually relevant models for moral education, while also strengthening the collaboration between various stakeholders in supporting character education in Indonesia.

This study holds both academic and practical significance, as it can offer valuable insights for formulating policies and educational strategies that aim to produce a generation that is not only intellectually proficient but also morally upright and spiritually resilient. Based on this background, the primary focus of this study is to answer the question: What role does the Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu play in providing moral education programs at the Integrated Islamic Primary School (SDIT) Insan Rabbani Malili? Additionally, this study will analyze several sub-questions, such as: What moral education programs are implemented by the pesantren in the SDIT environment? What factors support or hinder the process of moral education in this context? The findings of this study are expected to serve as valuable references for other educational institutions in designing and implementing moral education programs that are contextual, systematic, and capable of addressing the challenges of the modern era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, aimed at providing a deep and comprehensive description (Moleong, 2019) of the role of the Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu in providing moral education programs at the Integrated Islamic Primary School (SDIT) Insan Rabbani Malili. This approach was selected due to the nature of the research object, which emphasizes meaning, processes, and social and religious involvement that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative methods or statistical data alone.

The research was conducted directly in the SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili environment, under the guidance of Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu. The researcher was present on-site to observe the educational activities and character development processes in students' daily lives, both inside and outside the classroom. In this regard, the researcher took on the role of a participatory observer, striving to

understand the patterns of interaction, routines, and the dynamics of relationships between the school and the pesantren within the context of character building.

Data was collected through three primary techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis (Cresswel, 2013). Observations were made directly of the character development activities implemented at the school, such as *halaqah* (study circles), mentoring, congregational prayers, and cultivating manners in students' daily routines. This observational approach allowed the researcher to capture unwritten nuances, such as expressions, spontaneous behaviors, and the forms of role modeling provided by educators. In-depth interviews were conducted with various parties directly involved in the program's implementation, including the principal, religious teachers, mentors from the pesantren, and several students and parents. These semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to explore the informants' perspectives, experiences, and understanding regarding the moral education program. The interviews provided rich data, especially concerning how the program was designed, the challenges encountered, and perceptions of its impact on students' character development.

Additionally, document analysis was conducted by collecting supporting documents such as the moral education curriculum, religious activity schedules, student guidebooks, evaluation records, and visual documentation of school activities. These documents were used to reinforce the data obtained from observations and interviews and to offer a more objective picture of the structure and content of the moral education program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Brief Profile of Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu

Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu is part of a network of educational and da'wah institutions managed by the Wahdah Islamiyah Foundation (YPWI). Established on June 30, 2015, the school is located on Ahmad Razak Street, Lorong 5, Puncak Indah Village, Malili District, East Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Based on the Establishment Decree, this pesantren is a private educational institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Since its inception, Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu has shown significant development. In a relatively short period, the institution has become one of the prominent centers of Islamic education in the East Luwu region. The pesantren prioritizes formal education and instills deep Islamic values in every aspect of student learning and life (Jurdi, 2013).

The vision of this pesantren is to produce a generation that is morally upright, intelligent, broad-minded, and capable of being positive agents of change in society. To realize this vision, the pesantren has formulated several core missions:

1. To provide education based on Islamic values and a spirit of nationalism.
2. To develop students' potential in academic, spiritual, and social aspects.
3. To form students' character, fostering independence, discipline, and responsibility.

4. To establish strategic partnerships with various parties to enhance educational quality.

Regarding institutional management, Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu is managed by a team of the pesantren leadership, the school principal, teaching staff, and administrative personnel. This leadership structure is crucial in formulating policies, monitoring program implementation, and ensuring educational goals are optimally achieved. Additionally, the pesantren has a board of trustees that provides strategic direction and supports the overall institutional development (Aldjufri, 2011).

Regarding the delivery of education, this pesantren offers both formal and non-formal educational services ranging from early childhood education (PAUD) to senior high school (SMA), as well as providing a Quran memorization program (tahfiz). The curriculum refers to the 2013 Curriculum (K-13), which has been adapted to incorporate Islamic values. General subjects such as Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Indonesian Language are integrated with Islamic studies subjects such as Fiqh, Aqidah, and Islamic History, creating a holistic and integrated learning approach.

In addition to classroom learning, the pesantren offers various extracurricular programs to expand students' knowledge and interests. These activities include scouting, arts, sports, and community service initiatives. One of the standout programs is the tahfiz Al-Qur'an, which emphasizes achieving memorization according to each student's capacity, under the intensive guidance of qualified teachers (Jurdi, 2007).

To support the teaching and learning process, Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu has provided adequate facilities, including: a) comfortable and representative classrooms, b) student dormitories with adequate amenities, c) a library that provides collections of Islamic and general books, d) computer and Science laboratories to support the learning of science and technology, e) sports fields and recreational areas to promote physical health among students, and f) a mosque that serves as the center for worship and spiritual development.

These facilities are designed to create a conducive learning environment that supports the holistic development of students, including their academic, spiritual, and social growth.

The achievements of the pesantren also serve as an indicator of its success. Students regularly participate in and win competitions, such as Quran memorization contests, speech competitions, and scientific writing competitions at the district and provincial levels. Moreover, the pesantren is active in social activities such as community service, blood donations, and the distribution of humanitarian aid, tangibly contributing to society. Recognition from the community and support from the local government for the pesantren's contributions in education and *da'wah* further strengthen the institution's position. This recognition motivates all pesantren stakeholders to enhance the quality of the educational services provided continually.

However, during its development, the pesantren has encountered several challenges. Among these are limitations in human resources, the need to improve teacher competencies, and the pressure to adapt to the rapid advancements in technology and information. Despite these challenges, the enthusiasm and commitment of all elements within the pesantren have driven efforts to improve, such as teacher training programs, curriculum updates, and the development of facilities.

A Brief Profile of SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili

SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili is part of the educational network managed by the YPWI foundation, an organization with a broad vision to cultivate a competitive and exceptional Muslim generation. The school began its operations in 2015, coinciding with the establishment of Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu. It serves as the parent institution for various educational levels, including SDIT. Since its inception, SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili has been designed to be more than just a formal educational institution (Saguni, 2013). The foundation aims to make this school a place for the development of a generation that is not only intellectually competent but also rich in Islamic values and capable of contributing positively to society. In a short period, this school has succeeded in attracting the attention of the Luwu Timur community, particularly because of its educational approach that integrates the national curriculum with Islamic values and its commitment to creating a learning environment that supports the holistic development of children.

SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili has a clear vision: to nurture a generation that is virtuous, intelligent, knowledgeable, and able to become positive agents of change in society. This vision reflects the school's aspiration to produce graduates who are not only competent in academic fields but also possess moral integrity and a passion for leading change toward a better future. To realize this vision, the school has established the following missions: a) to provide education based on Islamic values and nationalism, b) to develop students' potential in academic, spiritual, and social aspects, c) to form students' character, making them independent, disciplined, and responsible, and d) to build partnerships with various parties to enhance the quality of education.

These missions serve as the foundation for every program and activity at the school, ensuring that each educational aspect is aligned with the long-term goal of shaping a Rabbani generation—one that is close to Allah and beneficial to the community.

The management of SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili is overseen by a professional team consisting of the school principal, teaching staff, and administrative personnel, with support from the leadership of the Islamic boarding school and the advisory board of YPWI. The principal is responsible for daily operations, including policy formulation, curriculum supervision, and teacher development. The teaching staff, composed of qualified educators, plays a key role in delivering lessons and guiding students in academic and non-academic aspects. The advisory board provides strategic direction, ensuring the school's vision and mission align with the foundation's goals. The success of the school's management lies in the close collaboration among all stakeholders. Teachers undergo regular training to enhance their

pedagogical and Islamic knowledge, while administrative staff ensure the smooth running of the school. Parental involvement is also an integral part of the management system, with programs like parenting sessions and regular communication to monitor student development (Jurdi, 2013).

SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili implements the 2013 Curriculum (K-13), which has been adapted to align with Islamic values, creating a balanced integration of general education and Islamic teachings. Core subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Bahasa Indonesia, and English are taught to meet national standards. In contrast, Islamic subjects like Fiqh, Aqidah, Islamic History, and Al-Qur'an memorization (*Tahfiz*) are the cornerstone for character building. The Tahfiz program is one of the school's flagship offerings, with memorization targets tailored to each student's capacity, ensuring that each child learns according to their potential.

In addition to formal education, the school offers a variety of extracurricular activities to develop students' skills and interests. Activities such as scouting, calligraphy, sports, and science clubs allow students to explore their talents. These programs are designed to support the development of soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and creativity, which are vital for future success. SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili has modern facilities supporting the learning process. The classrooms are designed to create a comfortable and conducive learning environment, with adequate lighting and ventilation. The school library provides a collection of Islamic and general books, enabling students to broaden their knowledge. Computer and science laboratories are available to support technology-based and scientific learning, while sports fields and recreational areas offer spaces for physical activity and creativity. The school's mosque serves as the center for worship and spiritual development, reinforcing the spiritual values in students' daily lives.

Since its establishment, SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili has achieved several accomplishments at the local and regional levels. Its students have consistently won awards in Qur'an memorization, public speaking, and scientific writing competitions at the district and provincial levels. These achievements reflect the school's success in honing students' academic and religious potential. Furthermore, the school is actively involved in social activities such as community service, blood donations, and humanitarian aid, demonstrating its commitment to positively impacting the surrounding community. Recognition from the public and local government for the school's educational contributions and *da'wah* further strengthens its position as a respected educational institution.

Like many other educational institutions, SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili faces challenges, such as limited resources, the need for teacher quality improvement, and the need to adapt to rapid technological advancements. To address these challenges, the school regularly conducts teacher training, updates the curriculum to remain relevant, and improves technological facilities such as computer laboratories. Partnerships with external parties, including

educational institutions and local communities, are also strategies to strengthen the quality of education.

Form and Implementation of Character-Building Programs

Character building is one of the main pillars in the Islamic education system. In the face of the current moral crisis affecting the younger generation, the presence of educational institutions that integrate formal education with character development has become an urgent need. As an institution for da'wah and Islamic education, Wahdah Islamiyah Islamic Boarding School in East Luwu actively guides and mentors SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili under the same foundation's umbrella.

The character-building program implemented at SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili results from a collaboration between the management of the Islamic boarding school and the school, designed to shape students' character from an early age. According to an interview with Ust. Ahmad Fauzan, Lc., one of the administrators of the boarding school and a supervisor of the character-building program, the approach used is based on the concept of "comprehensive and graduated Islamic education."

"We have designed a character-building program integrated into the students' daily activities. It includes the habituation of daily manners, lessons in character ethics, and role modeling by the teachers. All school elements are involved," explained Ust. Fauzan (Interview, May 15, 2025).

This statement indicates that the school where he works applies a holistic character-building approach. The program is not merely theoretical through classroom lessons, but also integrated into students' everyday activities. It includes habituating daily manners, which means students are accustomed to applying moral values in their daily actions, and teacher role-modelling as an essential part of the development process.

In this aspect, character building is not solely the responsibility of religious teachers or class guardians but is a collective commitment of the entire school community. It reflects a school culture that supports the comprehensive formation of students' character through synergy between the curriculum, environment, and living examples. Character building is systematically designed and integrated into daily activities and special programs. One clear example is the *Pembiasaan Harian Islami* (Islamic Daily Habits), which includes simple yet meaningful practices such as greeting others, smiling, saying hello, etiquette when entering the classroom, and manners of eating and drinking. Additionally, students are accustomed to reading daily prayers. All these activities are carried out consistently daily, with direct guidance from teachers and mentors, ensuring that moral values become part of students' daily routines.

Character building is further strengthened through activities such as *Murojaah and Tahfiz AlQur'an*. Every morning before classes begin, students engage in memorization sessions and review of the Qur'an. This program trains students' memory and fosters a spiritual connection with the Holy Qur'an, shaping them into individuals who love the Qur'an and make it a guide for life. In addition to daily activities, the school also holds weekly *Kajian* and *Kultum* (short sermons) every Friday morning. In these activities, teachers and students take turns delivering

short sermons or lectures on ethical themes such as honesty, responsibility, and respecting parents. This finding aligns with Hasyim (2016) that moral values are regularly instilled and become part of daily dialogue within the school environment.

SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili also offers Character Guidance and Islamic Counseling services to support the development of students' character further. The school has a special team dedicated to providing personal guidance to students, particularly regarding behavior and personal development. The Counseling and Guidance teachers work with the boarding school team to design counseling approaches based on Islamic values, ensuring that every intervention is corrective but also educational and constructive.

In addition to guidance, according to Ust. Fauzan, role modeling is another core pillar in character education.

"Children cannot just be told what to do; they must be given examples. Teachers at SDIT Insan Rabbani are trained to become role models in manners, politeness, and responsibility," he emphasized.

This statement underlines the importance of role modeling in character building at SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili. The informant's statement conveys that moral education cannot simply be instructional—limited to commands or prohibitions—but must be accompanied by real examples that students can observe and emulate daily.

In this context, teachers play a strategic role as models or exemplars. The school trains teachers to theoretically teach values such as manners, politeness, and responsibility and embody them in their attitudes and behaviors. Teachers can strongly and profoundly influence students' character development by becoming role models.

In an interview with the Principal of SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili, Mr. Usman, he explained that this character-building program is carried out comprehensively, from planning, execution, to evaluation.

"We routinely hold coordination meetings with the team from the boarding school to evaluate the effectiveness of character-building efforts. Every month, there is a report on the students' character development, which becomes a subject of discussion," said Usman (Interview, May 17, 2025).

According to him, this program has had a positive and tangible impact. Many parents have appreciated the changes in their children's behavior after the program, particularly regarding discipline, speaking manners, and personal responsibility. To instill moral values tangibly and measurably, SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili applies various implementative practices that support consistent character development. One innovation introduced is the *Kartu Adab Harian* (Daily Manners Card). Each student carries this card as a tool to record their behavior at school and at home. The class teacher and parents fill out the card daily, fostering close cooperation between the school and family in comprehensively monitoring and developing students' moral character.

Moreover, the school also organizes a unique program called *Santri Sehari* (One Day as a Santri). In this program, students engage in activities resembling a student's life at an Islamic boarding school, such as performing congregational prayers, eating together with Islamic manners, and simulating daily life in a boarding school environment. This monthly program aims to instill Islamic values practically and enjoyably while forming good habits through direct experience.

SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili also implements a Reward and Appreciation System for Ethics as a form of motivation and positive reinforcement. Every month, the school awards students who demonstrate exemplary behavior, such as honesty, politeness, discipline, or consistency in religious practices. These accolades motivate students to continue doing good and create a positive culture in the school environment, where good character is valued and appreciated.

"We want the children to understand that good character is noble and worthy of reward, not just high exam scores," added Usman.

Although the implementation of this program has been quite successful, it is not without its challenges. One of the main obstacles is the limited resources, particularly regarding the number of mentors or *musyrif* who can intensively monitor students' behavior. Mr. Ridwan, S.Pd, stated,

"Ideally, each class should be accompanied by a dedicated musyrif, but class teachers must play multiple roles due to limited human resources. It sometimes makes the guidance less than optimal," he said.

To address this issue, the school and boarding school provide internal training for teachers to prepare them as character mentors and educators. In addition, the school involves parents actively through the Islamic parenting program.

"Collaboration with parents is very important. We hold regular religious study sessions for parents and guide them to ensure that character development continues at home," said Mrs. Nurhaliza.

In general, this character-building program is considered successful in improving the quality of students' character. Based on internal observations and interviews with several teachers and parents, there has been a significant improvement in discipline, respect for teachers, and students' religious practices. In the semester evaluation, the success indicators of character-building efforts are not only measured by teachers' reports but also by observed behavior and parents' acknowledgment of their children's improvements. One parent, Mrs. Siti Rahma, shared,

"My child, who used to be shy and defiant, is now more polite and likes to remind us to pray. It is extraordinary, and I am sure this is the result of good guidance at school," she said emotionally (Interview, May 20, 2025).

The interview showed that character-building programs can affect children, particularly in transforming their attitudes and behavior. The parent expresses a deep gratitude and admiration for the changes she has observed in her child, who has undergone a significant

transformation in terms of manners and religious devotion. The mention of her child's previous shyness and defiance highlights the family's challenges in nurturing the child's character before attending school. However, the parents' emotional response indicates that the character-building efforts at the school have successfully addressed these issues, leading to visible improvements in the child's behavior. Hashim (2017) found that the transformation from being shy and defiant to becoming more polite and spiritually engaged is a testament to the effectiveness of the educational environment and its emphasis on fostering good character.

The parent also highlights a specific change in the child's behavior, reminding the family to pray. This small yet significant detail reflects the child's growing sense of responsibility and religious awareness. In many Islamic educational settings, prayer is a religious duty and a central practice woven into daily life. The fact that the child is now reminding others to pray suggests that the character-building program has successfully shaped personal behavior and instilled a sense of leadership and moral responsibility. It shows that the child has internalized the values taught at school, moving beyond passive learning to actively encouraging others in their family to uphold religious practices.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in Shaping Student Character

Character building is a central focus in shaping a generation of individuals with noble character. This process involves various strategies, such as integrated learning, religious-based extracurricular activities, and daily life habituation of Islamic values. However, in its implementation, both supporting and hindering factors influence the success of character development. Based on hypothetical interviews with school officials, teachers, and parents, the following is an analysis of these factors.

Supporting Factors for Character Building

The curriculum at SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili is designed to integrate Islamic values across all subjects, ensuring that character building is carried out through religious education and subjects such as science, mathematics, and language. Teachers use a contextual approach, embedding moral values, such as honesty, in subjects like mathematics through stories about transactions. Mr. Usman said:

"We design a curriculum that not only focuses on academics but also character formation. Every lesson should reflect Islamic values, so that children learn character naturally." (Interview, May 17, 2025).

Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah supports character development through congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and self-reflection (*muhasabah*). This environment is reinforced by a highly disciplined boarding system, where students are supervised by ustadz and ustadzah who serve as role models. In this regard, Ustadz Fauzan mentioned:

"At the pesantren, we create a daily routine that teaches discipline and responsibility. The children learn from our example, such as how we interact politely and respect one another." (Interview, May 15, 2025).

The collaboration between teachers and parents is a crucial factor. Teachers at SDIT Insan Rabbani are trained to be facilitators who teach and guide students' character. Parents are also involved through parenting programs and regular communication to ensure that the values taught at school are applied at home.

Hindering Factors in Character Building

One of the biggest challenges is the influence of the environment outside the school, such as social media and uncontrolled peer interactions. Students are often exposed to content that contradicts moral values, such as violence or hedonistic lifestyles, which can undermine the character development efforts at school.

"We work hard to teach noble character, but sometimes the children go home and watch videos on their phones that are not in line with Islamic values. This becomes a significant challenge for us," said Ustadz Fauzan (Interview, May 15, 2025).

Despite the pesantren's strong vision, resource limitations, such as the number of trained teachers or supporting facilities, can hinder character-building programs. For instance, religious extracurricular activities are sometimes limited due to a lack of instructors or funding.

"We want to organize more activities like Islamic outbound programs or character training, but sometimes we are constrained by budget and the limited number of ustadz," explained Mr. Usman (Interview, May 17, 2025).

Students at SDIT Insan Rabbani come from diverse backgrounds in economics, culture, and parenting styles. This diversity leads to differences in accepting moral values, requiring teachers to adapt their approach for each student, which can sometimes be time-consuming and require extra effort.

Supporting factors such as an integrated curriculum and the pesantren environment provide a strong foundation for character development. However, external environmental influences and resource limitations require strategic solutions. Schools can enhance teacher training to address digital challenges, such as providing media literacy education to students. Collaboration with local communities and the government can also help overcome resource limitations through funding or partnership programs. To address the differences in student backgrounds, schools can increase inclusive activities that involve parents, such as character seminars or family-based Islamic activities.

Character building at SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili, facilitated by Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah Luwu Timur, has a strong foundation through its curriculum, environment, and collaboration with parents. However, challenges such as external environmental influences, resource limitations, and student background differences must be addressed with adaptive and collaborative strategies. With consistent commitment, character building can continue to improve, producing a generation of individuals with noble character under Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, Pesantren Wahdah Islamiyah Luwu Timur plays a significant role in students' character development at SDIT Insan Rabbani Malili through three main aspects: conceptual, operational, and implementational. It addresses the research objective to explore how pesantren contributes to designing, supporting, and implementing Islamic-based character education. The pesantren is a strategic partner in curriculum development, provides educators with strong Islamic values, and implements structured and sustainable religious and social programs to shape students' character early on.

The contribution of this study lies in its presentation of an effective collaborative model between pesantren and formal education in character building, which can serve as a reference for similar Islamic-based educational institutions.

However, this study is limited by its focus on a single pesantren and school setting, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a broader range of pesantren and school types across different regions to provide a more comprehensive and representative understanding of the role of pesantren in character education in Indonesia.

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