

## **Student Character Education Management in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the management of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC) character education at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang, including its impacts, obstacles, and solutions in shaping religious values, discipline, and responsibility among students. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Analysis was conducted systematically to capture managerial processes in character formation during the golden age. Character education management is implemented through the POAC framework as a hidden curriculum. Planning is conducted collaboratively; organizing involves all school members as role models; implementation is based on Islamic habituation; and monitoring is performed authentically. This study offers a comprehensive analysis of elementary school character management facing digital disruption challenges through the synergy of an integrated Islamic curriculum, an underexplored focus in Indonesian educational research. This study provides guidance for educators to manage school ecosystems capable of transforming moral values into students' intrinsic awareness, addressing parenting inconsistencies between school and home. This research contributes to holistic educational management theory by formulating value integration strategies into modern managerial functions, offering solutions for maintaining student moral integrity amidst rapidly changing social dynamics, and providing actionable insights for school leaders seeking structured, sustainable character education systems.

**Keywords:** Character Education Management, Elementary School Leadership, Religious Habituation Strategy, School Culture Strengthening

### **A. Introduction**

Character education is not merely an additional program within the education system, but rather the core and heart of the entire educational process (Agus et al., 2021). Education that emphasizes only academic achievement without balancing it with character development has the potential to produce a generation that is intellectually superior but morally, socially, and spiritually fragile. In this context, education is understood as a fundamental investment for a nation to prepare the next generation, who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess integrity, responsibility,

and strong character. Education is not only tasked with enlightening the nation's life but also with shaping whole human beings who are able to live with dignity amidst constantly changing social dynamics (Hoguane & Orlando Pinto, 2023). Therefore, the management of character education is a strategic issue that determines the quality of human resources and the future of a nation. According to Minister of National Education Regulation No. 39 of 2008, character education is an effort to optimally develop students' potential in an integrated manner, encompassing talents, interests, and creativity, strengthening students' personalities and actualizing their potential, as well as preparing students to be noble, democratic, and respectful of human rights to realize a civil society.

Character education is a holistic human development process encompassing three main dimensions: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Lickona, 2022). These three dimensions must be integrated so that character values are not only understood but also internalized and manifested in concrete behavior. Character education aims to improve the quality of educational delivery and outcomes, leading to the development of students' character and noble ethics in a comprehensive, integrated, and balanced manner, in accordance with graduate competency standards. Through character education, it is hoped that students will be able to independently increase their knowledge of virtuous character, cultivate their feelings, and apply this knowledge in their daily lives. Suhifatullah et al. (2021) state that character education aims to develop students' emotional and spiritual intelligence through the process of internalizing good values reflected in daily attitudes and actions, both within the school, family, and community environments.

Character education is essentially a continuous process of habituation (Sanderse, 2020). Good values are consistently practiced and repeated until they become habits and ultimately become ingrained in an individual's character. This process requires exemplary behavior from all school members, especially teachers and educational leaders. Character education is not merely about providing understanding or definitions of good and bad but rather an effort to transform human nature, disposition, personality, and inner state in accordance with values considered noble and commendable. Through this character education, it is hoped that individuals will be born who have the freedom to make their own choices, without coercion and with full responsibility. These individuals are independent, dynamic, creative, innovative, and responsible to God, to others, to society, and to themselves. The world of education globally is currently experiencing a significant paradigm shift.

According to Law No. 20 of 2003 (National Education System Law), the explanation and Article 3 emphasize that education is not merely the transfer of knowledge but also the development of spiritual potential, personality, and noble morals. UNESCO and OECD reports confirm that the success of 21st-century education is largely determined by a school's ability to develop intellectual intelligence (IQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and spiritual intelligence. (SQ) in a balanced manner (Tucker, 2025).

This paradigm shift is then articulated in the concept of character education, which is positioned as the core of students' learning experiences. Character values, such as integrity, responsibility, empathy, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication, are recognized as key competencies determining individual success and social progress. OECD (2020) emphasizes that 21st-century skills are inextricably linked to the dimensions of character and citizenship.

Meanwhile, Ardiansyah et al. (2025) states that character education should not be treated as a supplement to the curriculum but rather as a primary foundation for developing ethical, adaptive, and responsible global citizens. In the local context, integrated Islamic educational institutions play a crucial role because they inherently place Islamic values as the primary foundation of their character education. However, the growing global awareness of the importance of character education does not always align with the empirical reality on the ground. The world of education faces serious challenges due to digital disruption, changing patterns of social interaction, and technological penetration that is not always accompanied by value control (Moravec & Martínez-Bravo, 2023). On the one hand, technology offers broad and rapid access to knowledge, but on the other hand, it triggers various problems such as cyberbullying, aggressive online behavior, the spread of hoaxes, and identity crises among children and adolescents.

UNICEF data shows a trend of increasing antisocial behavior, declining empathy, and weakening traditional moral values among school-age students (UNICEF, 2021). An international study by Twenge et al. (2021) also found a correlation between the intensity of digital media use and a decline in emotional regulation, social responsibility, and self-control in children and adolescents. These findings indicate that without strong values management, technological advances have the potential to accelerate character degradation. This condition is also reflected in the context of education in Indonesia. Research by Golann & Torres (2020) revealed a decline in discipline, honesty, and social awareness among elementary school students, particularly in urban areas. Research by Fadil et al. (2025) in a national journal reinforces these findings by stating that weak management of character education in schools significantly contributes to the low internalization of moral values, even though schools have formally adopted a character-based curriculum.

This fact indicates that the main problem with character education lies not in the absence of a concept or policy, but rather in how it is systematically and sustainably managed, implemented, and evaluated. The resulting gap is the disparity between the idealism of character education policies and the reality of practice in schools. Character education often stops at the normative and administrative level, such as the inclusion of character values in curriculum documents or school slogans, without being accompanied by thorough planning, consistent implementation, and ongoing evaluation. Many schools claim to implement character education but lack a structured and measurable management system. Character assessment is still

dominated by cognitive aspects, while the affective and behavioral dimensions of students have not received adequate attention. This represents a gap between the ideal concept of character education and the managerial practices that occur in the field.

In the researcher's view, to address the challenge of character degradation, character education cannot simply be integrated into specific subjects but must be managed comprehensively through effective and sustainable educational management, encompassing the entire school ecosystem. This view is reinforced by Mulyasa (2022), who stated that the success of character education is largely determined by the principal's leadership, the school's organizational culture, and a management system capable of consistently internalizing values in all educational activities. Effective management is necessary so that character education is not merely a discourse but is implemented through school policies, school culture, teacher role models, and parental involvement. The Integrated Islamic Elementary School model has become relevant in response to the demand for comprehensive, values-based character development. According to Dian et al. (2025), faith-based schools have significant potential in shaping students' character if supported by planned, consistent, and sustainable management.

In Indonesia, character education is legally mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System and reinforced through the Strengthening of Character Education policy. Integrated Islamic schools inherently place Islamic values as the primary foundation of character education through a values-based curriculum, the instillation of Islamic habits in daily life, and parental involvement through character parenting programmes. In line with this, various research results indicate that the success of character education in integrated Islamic schools is significantly influenced by the quality of the character education management implemented. Research by Hadi & Prayogi (2025) found that Islamic elementary schools that systematically implemented character education management, from character value planning, teacher role organisation, and Islamic habituation implementation to ongoing evaluation, demonstrated higher levels of internalisation of religious values, discipline, and responsibility among students.

Similar findings were also presented by (Dewi, 2024), who stated that the integration of character values into an integrated Islamic school culture will be effective if supported by school leadership and clear monitoring mechanisms. Furthermore, research by Fadil et al. (2025) confirmed that weak character education management results in character education being merely symbolic and not having a significant impact on student behaviour, even though the school has adopted a character-based vision. Thus, focusing on character education management at Mush'ab Bin Umair Elementary School in Palembang is relevant and important to scientifically study to ensure alignment between the vision, policies, and practices of character education at the school's operational level. Various studies have shown that the success of character education management in integrated Islamic schools depends heavily on

three main pillars: thorough planning, consistent implementation, and ongoing evaluation.

Schools with a clear and structured character education planning document (roadmap) were more effective in shaping student character than schools that relied on sporadic initiatives (Hamid et al., 2025). Principal leadership and exemplary teacher behavior are the most dominant implementation factors, as teachers serve not only as instructors but also as role models for character. Evaluation systems that focus solely on cognitive aspects fail to measure character development holistically, necessitating evaluation management that includes behavioral observations, student journals, and parental feedback. This research positions itself as novel in terms of its object focus and depth of analysis. Unlike previous research, which generally focused on the PPK program in general or at the junior high and senior high school levels, this study specifically examines character education management at the elementary school level, which is the golden age of character development, within the context of integrated Islamic schools.

The research's novelty lies in its comprehensive approach to analyzing the entire character education management cycle through the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) framework. This approach addresses not only what schools do but also how the management process is implemented, why decisions are made, and their impact on student character development. SDIT Mushab bin Umair Palembang is an educational institution that integrates Islamic values into its curriculum. Based on initial observations, this school is unique in character development through programs that foster the habit of worship and noble morals. However, managing character education in integrated schools is complex, ranging from how these character values are planned to organizing teachers as role models (*uswatun hasanah*), implementing intensive reward activities, and evaluating each student's character achievement. Thus, challenges remain in the consistency of implementation among teachers, the character documentation and evaluation system, and the lack of fully standardized managerial monitoring mechanisms.

Despite the school's best efforts, challenges in synchronizing school education and the home environment remain frequent. Furthermore, systematic management is needed so that character education becomes more than just a routine activity but also becomes ingrained in the school culture. This is supported by previous research, which suggests that the success of character education is highly dependent on the quality of management implemented by school leaders and educators. Therefore, researchers felt the need to conduct more in-depth research into how this character management pattern is implemented. This research focused on the planning, implementation, and evaluation aspects of "Management of Student Character Education at the Mush'ab bin Umair Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Palembang."

## **B. Methods**

This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The study was carried out continuously by reviewing field data to ensure that it was conducted at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang for approximately two to three months. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of the process, meaning, and dynamics of student character education management within the natural context of the educational unit. The case study design was used because the research focused on an in-depth and comprehensive study of student character education management at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang. The research focused on the implementation of management functions in student character education, including planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating. Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, with informants consisting of the principal, class teachers, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, administrative staff, parents/guardians, and students. The total number of informants in this study was 17.

The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data consisted of information regarding the planning, organization, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of character education for students, including obstacles and solutions implemented in the school. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and recording the results of the researcher's interactions with key informants. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from official school documents, including the vision and mission, character education program, organizational structure, academic calendar, school regulations, activity reports, and other archives relevant to the implementation of character education management. Secondary data were also obtained from books, scientific journals, previous research results, and relevant laws and regulations. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were conducted to obtain information regarding the implementation of character education management in the natural context of the school.

Interviews were used to gather in-depth information from informants regarding character education management, while documentation studies were used to supplement and strengthen the data from observations and interviews. Data validity was tested through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from various informants, while technical triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. Member checks were conducted to ensure the accuracy and suitability of information obtained from informants. Furthermore, researchers conducted continuous and repeated re-observations at the research sites over a period of time to ensure the consistency, accuracy, and credibility of the data obtained. Data analysis used the interactive model

of Miles et al. (2020), which was carried out continuously from the data collection process until the research was completed.

The stages of data analysis included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. During the data collection stage, researchers collected data through observation, interviews, and documentation in the form of field notes, interview transcripts, and research documents. Next, data reduction was carried out by selecting, focusing on, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data relevant to the research focus, namely student character education management. The reduced data was then presented in a systematic narrative description supported by relevant quotations to facilitate researchers in understanding the relationships between categories and identifying research patterns. The final stage was drawing and verifying conclusions, which was carried out continuously by reviewing field data to ensure that conclusions were supported by strong and consistent evidence. Through these stages, the research produced a description and in-depth understanding of the management of student character education at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

#### **Student Character Education Management**

##### *Planning*

Planning is a fundamental step in the management cycle that determines the direction of institutional policy. Research findings indicate that character education planning at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang is not simply an annual routine activity but rather a strategic process culminating in the vision of a "Quranic Generation." The integration of character values into lesson plans and teaching modules demonstrates a conscious effort by the school to make character a hidden curriculum that informs every academic interaction. An interview with the principal, Mrs. "YA," revealed that the planning process was conducted collaboratively through work meetings involving all elements of the school, from the leadership, teachers, staff, and the foundation. This multidimensional involvement ensures that character education is a collective responsibility, not solely the responsibility of classroom teachers.

This aligns with research findings from (Abdul Haq et al., 2022), which states that school management systems must be improved, as schools are encouraged to plan education (programs and activities) that instill character values, implement character-based programs and activities, and conduct character-based school quality control. And because extracurricular activities are not yet fully integrated, it is hoped that additional extracurricular activities will be added. These activities aim to optimally develop potential, talents, and interests, as well as foster student independence and happiness, which are beneficial to themselves, their families, and the community. Technically, the integration of character values into the Lesson Plan and teaching

modules at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair demonstrates a conscious effort to make character a hidden curriculum. As explained by Mrs. Pati Permata Lika, a teacher, character is not taught as a separate topic but is instilled through learning objectives, materials, and assessment activities. For example, the values of honesty, discipline, and responsibility are embedded in every instructional activity in the classroom.

This is reinforced by theory, which asserts that integrating character values into learning materials is an effective form of integrated curriculum planning, ensuring that moral values become measurable instructional objectives, not just slogans (Khasanah et al., 2022). In addition to curriculum-level planning, the school also plans daily habituation programs as part of the character education structure. Programs such as congregational Dhuha prayer, murojaah (recitation of the Koran), tadarus (Islamic recitation), and the implementation of etiquette (5S: Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Polite) are carefully planned to foster positive habits. Data from interviews with parents indicates that this planning also encompasses aspects of synergy between home and school, where the school provides parents with a control instrument in the form of a "Yaumi Amal Sheet" or daily worship report. Analytically, the success of planning at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair lies in the alignment of the philosophical vision with administrative implementation and operational support. With this comprehensive planning, the school has successfully created a clear roadmap for developing independent and religious personalities in students from an early age.

### *Organization*

In terms of organization, SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang has successfully implemented a comprehensive and systematic task delegation structure. Field findings indicate that the allocation of roles in character formation is not limited to Islamic Religious Education teachers or classroom teachers alone but extends to all educational staff, including operators, administrative staff, and even janitors. This phenomenon reflects the application of the Total Quality Management concept in education, where the quality of student character is seen as the collective responsibility of the entire school community. This inclusive organization ensures uniform standards of behavior throughout the school so that students receive consistent stimulation of Islamic values from various sources throughout their time at the school. In line with research findings from Hamid et al. (2025) on the management of the Strengthening Character Education Program Vocational School, the school has implemented values to instill character.

Organization is carried out by forming teams and assigning additional tasks to teachers to ensure that the PPK program runs according to its objectives. The implementation of the PPK program must involve students, teachers, the principal, educational staff, and the entire school community. Based on interviews with the principal, this organization is realized through a clear division of tasks that has been

established since the beginning of the school year. The structure of the team responsible for the character program involves close coordination between the student affairs department and the homeroom teachers. Researchers found that all school personnel share the same responsibility in maintaining the character ecosystem, where they not only carry out administrative duties but also serve as role models or real role models.

This was confirmed through field observations, which showed that teachers and staff consistently practiced the 5S culture (smile, greet, greeting, courtesy, and politeness) and the culture of queuing, which was then automatically organized as a standard of behavior for students. This analysis is supported by modern organizational theory in education, which emphasizes the effectiveness of collective leadership. According to Nurdi & Ahmad (2025), effective character education must apply the principles of total quality management, where every individual, from leaders to support staff, plays an active role as an agent of change. At SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair, this is evident in how the school organizes supporting facilities, such as a mosque and visual media for etiquette, which are managed in such a way as to support the achievement of the school's vision. At SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair, student compliance with rules, such as honesty and discipline in worship, grows not due to bureaucratic pressure, but rather due to an organized environment that positions adult figures in the school as role models for exemplary behavior. Thus, the organization at this school has successfully transformed the formal organizational structure into a vibrant and sustainable organizational culture.

#### *Implementation (Actuation)*

The implementation of character education at this school is implemented through a continuous and meaningful habituation strategy. Daily activities such as congregational Dhuha prayer and muraja'ah are not merely positioned as formal routines but as a means of internalizing religious values structured within the school culture. This aligns with research findings in the journal "Strategies for Building Religious Character through Habituation of Dhuha Prayer and Tadarus," which explains that consistent habituation can shape students' character because these values are ingrained through direct practice in daily life. Furthermore, research in the journal "Primary School Character Education Based on Qur'anic Habits" also confirms that systematically designed religious activities can serve as the primary foundation for building students' personalities based on Qur'anic values. Thus, ongoing habituation is an effective strategy for transforming values into inherent character traits in students.

Furthermore, the school's approach to enforcing regulations demonstrates humanistic and educational characteristics, namely by rewarding positive student behavior. This strategy aligns with the concept of reinforcement in educational psychology, which emphasizes the importance of rewards as a stimulus to strengthen good behavior. The

journal "Strengthening Character Education through School Culture" explains that providing appreciation and role models can create a conducive learning environment and encourage students to internalize values voluntarily. This approach has also proven effective in fostering students' intrinsic motivation, where they perform positive actions not due to external pressure but rather due to self-awareness. Thus, the combination of consistent habituation and an appreciation-based humanist approach can shape students' character more deeply and sustainably.

Based on the discussion above, in line with research from Sultan & Tirtayasa (2024), schools play a crucial role in shaping their students' religious character. Habituation of religious practices such as the Dhuha prayer and Quranic recitation at SMK Negeri 1 Puloampel-Serang internalizes religious character values such as discipline, responsibility, social awareness, and concern for the surrounding environment. Habituation theory underlies the religious character formation strategy used at this school. This theory emphasizes the importance of repeating religious behaviors regularly to form habits that are inherent in individuals. The role of teachers as role models and a supportive school environment are crucial in shaping students' religious character in this regard. The habituation strategy of the Dhuha prayer and Quranic recitation has proven effective in shaping the religious character of students at SMK Negeri 1 Puloampel-Serang.

This strategy can be replicated in other schools by adapting to their respective contexts and needs. This discussion is also supported by research by Islam et al. (2025). Based on the results, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious character education at Ketawanggede Elementary School in Malang City is carried out through two habits: the tadarus (Islamic recitation) and congregational dhuha prayer. This habituation process is not sufficient in the short term; it requires a long-term approach. If carried out regularly, these habits will become habits for students. This habituation is highly beneficial and must be implemented from an early age. Implementing religious character education for students requires commitment and cooperation among the school community. Without this collaboration, the implementation cannot run smoothly and will not produce optimal results.

#### *Evaluation (Controlling)*

Evaluation is a crucial stage in the management cycle to measure deviations between established plans and actual achievements on the ground. At Mush'ab Bin Umair Elementary School in Palembang, character education evaluation is implemented through a process-based approach carried out continuously (continuous observation). Field findings indicate that the school does not rely solely on cognitive assessments but rather prioritises the use of authentic instruments such as daily journals and attitude assessments. These evaluations are not merely aimed at administrative purposes for completing report cards but rather serve as diagnostic tools to map

individual students' moral development. The results are then discussed in depth in weekly teacher council coordination meetings.

Based on interviews with the principal and teachers, the assessment process is conducted authentically through direct observation of students' daily activities, from time discipline and adherence to religious observances to social etiquette. Observational data shows that teachers maintain records of student behaviour, which they use as a basis for providing appropriate interventions. This demonstrates that evaluations at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair serve as a means of behavioural improvement (assessment for learning), where any deviant behaviour or disciplinary issues identified in students are promptly addressed in coordination meetings before they become persistent.

Scientifically, the evaluation model implemented at this school aligns with the latest trends in character education assessment. As stated by Fitriani (2020), direct observation-based attitude assessment is the most valid instrument for measuring children's moral development because it captures students' authentic behavior in real-life situations. At SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair, the validity of this evaluation is maintained because teachers act as participant observers who interact directly with students daily, so the resulting data reflects the objective state of students' character development. Furthermore, the effectiveness of evaluation at this school is strengthened by the existence of a follow-up mechanism that involves synergy between the school and parents.

Research findings regarding the use of "Lembaran Amal Yaumi" (daily worship reports) are clear evidence of evaluation that reaches the family sphere. This aligns with Zainuddin's (2022) assertion that follow-up evaluation results in the form of regular communication with parents is a crucial form of formative evaluation. Through weekly teacher meetings and intensive communication with parents, schools can detect behavioral deviations early and provide appropriate, personalized interventions. Thus, the evaluation system at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair has successfully transformed from mere numbers on paper into a dynamic and solution-oriented character quality control tool.

### **Impact of Management on Character Formation in Schools**

The impact of character education management at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang has demonstrated significant success in transforming student behavior into more religious, disciplined, and independent individuals. Based on field findings, the integration of thorough planning and consistent implementation through the *uswah* (exemplary) method has triggered a strong internalization of values. This is evident from interviews with students, who stated that behavioral changes such as honesty, discipline, and orderly worship are no longer carried out out of coercion or fear of punishment but rather grow from intrinsic awareness. This phenomenon

indicates that school management has successfully moved beyond the compliance stage to the identification and internalization of values. Specifically, the most prominent impact is the formation of sustainable religious character. Data from interviews with parents confirms that religious habits developed at school, such as the dhuha prayer and murojaah, are carried over into the home environment.

This independence in worship is a result of organizing a conducive school environment. This aligns with research by Hidayat & Aziz (2021) in the *Journal of Character Education*, which emphasizes that school management that effectively creates a “religious school culture” ecosystem will accelerate student character formation down to the subconscious level so that character remains embedded even when students are outside of school supervision. Beyond the religious aspect, the impact of character management is also clearly evident in improving students’ discipline and social responsibility. Observations show that students actively adopt a culture of queuing and maintaining environmental cleanliness (sorting waste) without repeated instruction from teachers. Interpretation of these findings indicates that the use of control instruments such as daily journals and weekly evaluations has a psychological impact on students, encouraging them to continually self-reflect on their behavior.

Research by Suryanti (2022) found that character management using a continuous evaluation system and involving parental participation was 70% more effective in reducing disciplinary violations and increasing social empathy in elementary school children compared to conventional approaches. The success of this impact is also influenced by the synergy between schools and parents through the “Yaumi Amal Sheet” instrument. This synergy ensures that there is no “character break” when students change environments. According to the behavior management theory, reinforced by Zarkasyi (2023), consistency between a child’s two primary environments (school and home) is the most determining variable in the success of long-term character formation. Thus, the impact of management at SDIT Mush’ab Bin Umair is not merely superficial, affecting behavioral changes at school, but has touched upon fundamental aspects of student personality development, aligning with the vision of a “Quranic generation.”

### **Obstacles to Character Education Management**

Character education management at SDIT Mush’ab Bin Umair Palembang is inseparable from various complex challenges stemming from the dynamics of the external environment and the era of digital disruption. Based on interviews with teachers and the principal, the main obstacles faced are the massive influence of social media and variations in parenting styles at home, which often do not align with the values established at school. These differences in family backgrounds create gaps in consistency, where the moral values painstakingly established at school sometimes fade or become contradictory when students return to their home environment or

digital environments. Interpretation of these findings suggests that the biggest obstacle lies not in the school's internal curriculum, but rather in external ecosystem interventions that are difficult for teachers to directly control. In response, SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair implemented adaptive preventive and curative measures.

One of the leading solutions identified was strengthening partnerships through parenting programmes and programme outreach at the beginning of the school year. The school strives to align perceptions with parents so that the vision of a "Quranic Generation" extends beyond the school gates and extends into the family's living room. This aligns with research by Sutisna and Arisanti (2023) in the journal *Educational Management*, which suggests that schools in the modern era must transform into family education centres to overcome external environmental constraints. Synergy between schools and families is seen as an absolute solution to maintaining character continuity in the digital age. In addition to external constraints, teachers' limited time to personally monitor each student's behaviour at school also poses a technical challenge. Research data on character education management at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang reveals several major obstacles:

1. **Dominant External Environmental Influence**  
The biggest obstacle stems from external factors that are difficult to control, such as students' social environments at home and in the community. Peer influences and popular culture often align with the character values instilled in schools, hindering consistent student behaviour.
2. **Negative Impacts of Digitalisation and Gadget Use**  
Technological developments have led to a high dependence of students on gadgets, particularly for online games and social media. The digital content consumed by students often conflicts with moral and ethical values, requiring teachers to repeatedly reinforce character.
3. **Difficulty Translating a Values-Based Curriculum into Real-Life Practice**  
An idealised character-based curriculum is often difficult to implement concretely in school programmes. This presents a barrier for management in developing activities that are applicable and aligned with real-world conditions.
4. **Human Resource Limitations and Adaptation**  
The presence of new teachers who do not fully understand the school's culture and values leads to a lack of continuity in character development. Suboptimal adaptation and development processes can impact the quality of role models provided to students.
5. **Misalignment of Parenting Patterns between Schools and Families**  
Character values taught in schools are not always reinforced in the family environment. This difference in parenting patterns leads to value confusion in students and reduces the effectiveness of character education.
6. **Low Parental Participation**  
The lack of active parental involvement in school activities, such as parenting programs, is a serious obstacle. The limited presence of parents hinders the

alignment of perceptions between schools and families in educating children's character.

### **Solutions Developed to Overcome Barriers to Character Education Management**

To address these various obstacles, SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang developed a strategic solution that emphasized strengthening synergy between schools, families, and educators. One key step was optimizing communication with parents through digital media such as WhatsApp Groups and the use of contact books. This strategy has proven effective in building ongoing two-way communication. The policy of requiring parental attendance in parenting activities through a Memorandum of Understanding also demonstrates institutional commitment to aligning the vision of character education. This is supported by a study by Pohan et al. (2025) states that school-family partnerships based on intensive communication can increase the consistency of children's character development.

On the other hand, accelerating the development of teaching human resources is a crucial focus in improving the quality of character education implementation. Regular religious study programs and special training for new teachers are appropriate strategies to accelerate the process of internalizing values and adapting to school culture. Teachers function not only as instructors but also as moral role models who must reflect character values in everyday life. Research by Hidayat (2022) in the *Journal of Education* confirms that ongoing teacher development programs can improve integrity and consistency in instilling character values in students. Furthermore, psychological and educational approaches to students are important solutions to address the negative influence of technology. By providing a deep understanding of the meaning behind each character value, students are encouraged to develop intrinsic awareness (inner motivation), rather than simply external compliance. This strategy aligns with the constructivist approach to character education, which emphasizes the importance of self-awareness in shaping behavior. According to Huang et al. (2024), a values-based approach has proven to be more effective in shaping long-term character than authoritative instructional methods. Finally, implementing benchmarking combined with local adaptation is an innovative solution for improving the quality of character education management. By studying best practices from other schools while adapting them to the local context, schools are able to develop relevant and applicable programs.

Based on the research data above, several key solutions are identified to overcome obstacles in character education management at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang:

1. **Strengthening Synergy between Schools and Parents**

Schools need to build intensive and ongoing communication with parents through platforms such as WhatsApp Groups and contact books. Furthermore, implementing a policy of mandatory attendance at parenting activities through

a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) can increase parental commitment, thus creating harmony between education at school and at home.

2. Supervision and Education on Gadget Use

To address the negative impacts of digitalization, schools can provide digital literacy education to students and parents. Furthermore, providing structured and meaningful homework can help reduce students' dependence on gadgets and direct them toward more positive activities.

3. Developing and Adapting an Applicable Curriculum

Schools need to develop a character curriculum that is more contextual and easily implemented in daily activities. Programs must be tailored to students' real-life situations so that character values are not only theoretical but also practical and easily internalized.

4. Accelerating Development and Improving Human Resources Quality

Teachers, as role models, need to receive regular development through programs such as religious study groups (ta'lim), training, and mentoring, especially for new teachers. This aims to ensure that all educators have a shared understanding and are able to consistently implement character values.

5. Psychological Approach and Cultivating Self-Awareness in Students

Teachers can adopt a more personalized approach by providing a deeper understanding of the meaning behind each character value. This way, students will not only comply with the rules but also develop an internal awareness (inner motivation) for good behavior.

6. Increasing Active Parental Participation

Schools need to create engaging and flexible programs to increase parental involvement, such as parenting seminars, online discussions, or regular consultations. With increased parental participation, the character education process will be more optimal because it receives support from the family environment.

7. Benchmarking and Adapting Best Practices

Schools can conduct comparative studies with other schools that have successfully implemented character education. The benchmarking results can then be adapted to the school's local needs and conditions to make them more relevant and effective.

## **D. Conclusions**

Based on the research findings at SDIT Mush'ab Bin Umair Palembang, this study conclusively establishes that student character education management is implemented systematically through the POAC functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling with character values embedded as a hidden curriculum within the overall school ecosystem. Planning occurs collaboratively through annual work meetings integrating values into learning plans, teaching modules, and habituation programs. Organization is realized through clear collective responsibility distribution, where all school members serve as role models. Actuating is achieved

through consistent Islamic habituation, exemplary behavior, school culture, and appreciation-based approaches, while controlling is conducted continuously through authentic observation, attitude assessment, daily records, teacher coordination, and parent communication. This holistic approach has yielded significant character development: internalization of religious values, increased discipline and independence, strengthened social responsibility, and enhanced internal awareness. Religious practices such as prayer, Quranic recitation, and muroja'ah have evolved from externally directed routines into intrinsically motivated habits. Students demonstrate greater responsibility, discipline, politeness, respect, and care for the school environment, confirming that consistent management, habituation, exemplary behavior, and monitoring facilitate the transformation of character values from external compliance into internalized behavior. Practically, schools should institutionalize collaborative planning, clear role distribution, consistent habituation, and continuous monitoring as standard practices. Strengthening school-family communication, providing education on gadget use, developing contextual character programs, accelerating teacher development, and applying personalized psychological approaches are essential to address external environmental influences, differences in parenting patterns, excessive gadget exposure, limited parental participation, and human resource challenges. For future research, comparative studies across different Islamic schools and regions would enhance generalizability and reveal contextual variations. Longitudinal designs tracking character development over time, particularly during transition periods, are essential. Investigating the role of digital media literacy in shaping character outcomes and exploring the effectiveness of personalized psychological interventions could inform more targeted strategies, while qualitative case studies capturing student, parent, and teacher experiences would provide richer insights into character formation processes within integrated Islamic education settings.

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