



# The Role of the Islamic Boarding School Environment in the Internalisation of *Akhlāqul karīmah* Values: A Study at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School through the Book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*

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## ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of moral degradation among youth, particularly female students, has become a serious challenge for Islamic education. This condition demands the strengthening of moral education through classical texts and the *pesantren* environment. This study aims to analyze the values of *akhlāqul karīmah* in the book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*, their internalization in students' daily lives, and the role of Ibnul Qoyyim Islamic Boarding School in supporting the internalization of these values. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed using interviews, observations, and documentation, involving the kitab instructor, students, and the caretaking division. The findings reveal that *akhlāqul karīmah* values include morality towards Allah, parents, teachers, siblings, peers, and society. These values are practiced through worship, discipline, manners of speech, and social interaction. The *pesantren* environment, both physical aspects (dormitory, mosque, classrooms, library) and non-physical aspects (boarding culture, caretaking, teacher role models, and religious atmosphere), plays a crucial role in shaping students' morality. Thus, the internalization of moral values depends not only on kitab learning but also on a supportive *pesantren* environment.

**Keywords:** *Akhlāqul karīmah*, *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*, *Environment*, *Islamic Boarding School*.

## ABSTRAK

Fenomena degradasi akhlak remaja, khususnya di kalangan *santri* putri, menjadi tantangan serius bagi pendidikan Islam. Kondisi ini menuntut adanya penguatan pendidikan akhlak melalui kitab klasik dan lingkungan *pesantren*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis nilai-nilai *akhlāqul karīmah* dalam Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*, internalisasinya dalam kehidupan *santri*, serta peran lingkungan Pondok *Pesantren* Ibnul Qoyyim Putri dalam menunjang proses internalisasi nilai tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, melibatkan ustadzah pengampu kitab, *santri*, serta bagian pengasuhan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai *akhlāqul karīmah* meliputi akhlak terhadap Allah, orang tua, guru, saudara, teman, dan masyarakat. Nilai-nilai tersebut diinternalisasikan melalui ibadah, kedisiplinan, adab berbicara, dan interaksi sosial. Lingkungan *pesantren*, baik aspek fisik (asrama, masjid, ruang belajar, perpustakaan) maupun non-fisik (budaya pondok, pengasuhan, keteladanan ustadzah, dan suasana religius), berperan penting dalam membentuk *akhlāqul karīmah santri*. Dengan

demikian, keberhasilan internalisasi akhlak tidak hanya ditentukan oleh pembelajaran kitab, tetapi juga didukung oleh lingkungan *pesantren* yang kondusif.

**Kata Kunci:** *Akhlāqul karīmah, Akhlāq Lil Banāt, Lingkungan, Pondok Pesantren.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Character education is a fundamental aspect in shaping individuals who have noble character, are responsible, and are able to behave ethically in their daily lives. Along with the increasingly advanced technological era, society faces many problems, including moral degradation (Haerunnisa et al., 2022). Morality is important in Islamic teachings; morality ranks second after faith. Therefore, Islamic teachings consider morality to be an important aspect (Ihsan, Huringiin and Indah, 2023). In the context of Islamic education, the values of *akhlāqul karīmah* are not only taught theoretically through books but also applied in daily practice in the educational environment. The Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School emphasises the integration of theoretical learning from the book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* with the daily practices of the students. Akhlak learning in *pesantren* begins with an introduction to akhlak towards Allah, akhlak towards parents, and then continues with ethics towards siblings, friends, and society (Mujahid, 2021). This makes the *pesantren* an effective place to instil moral values from Islamic teachings (Toyiba et al., 2024).

One of the important books that is a reference in moral education among female students is the book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* by Sheikh Umar bin Ahmad Baradja', which has been distributed to almost all Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Sheikh Umar Ahmad Baradja was a scholar from Surabaya who was born in 1900 and died in 1986. He was known as a prolific educator and writer who focused on teaching morals and moral values in Islam, especially for teenagers. Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* is one of his famous works, written around the 1950s in Surabaya (Asseggaf, 1995). This book systematically explains the *akhlāqul karīmah* values that Muslim women should have, such as morals towards Allah, parents, teachers, friends, and society (Itiqotul et al., 2024). These values are not only relevant for shaping individual personalities but also support the creation of social harmony. The Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School in Yogyakarta is one of the Islamic educational institutions that has consistently studied this book for over a decade. This makes the boarding school important for instilling moral values in students through integrating book learning and daily life practices (Azra, 2013).

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of classical books and the role of Islamic boarding schools in character building. The study of *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* contributes to shaping the religious character of students, although the study focuses more on classroom learning (Khofifah et al., 2022). Other studies emphasise the importance of the *pesantren* environment in supporting character building, but do not

specifically link it to the internalisation of certain texts (Muslimah & Latifah, 2022). On the other hand, there is research that examines the relevance of character education values in *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* to millennial *santri*, but it does not highlight the role of the *pesantren* environment as a whole (A'yun et al., 2023). From these studies, there appears to be a gap, namely the lack of studies that place the study of classical texts directly in the context of *pesantren* culture and environment.

From the Islamic perspective, morals occupy a fundamental position after faith and worship. According to Imam Al-Ghazālī in *Ihyā' Ulumuddīn*, quoted by Ach. Barocky, morals are characteristics that grow in the soul, causing actions to occur easily without consideration, until they become habits (Zaimina et al., 2014). If the action is good, then the morals are considered good, but if it is bad, they are considered bad, emphasising that morals are the fruit of knowledge and deeds reflected in daily behaviour (Ahmad & Suryadarma, 2015). Morals are not merely normative rules, but rather a continuous habit that becomes an inherent character trait of a person. Therefore, moral education in Islam is directed at forming a balanced personality between one's relationship with Allah (*hablun minallāh*), fellow human beings (*hablun minannās*), and the environment (Haerunnisa et al., 2022). With this foundation, moral education is understood as an integral process that does not stop at the cognitive realm but extends to the affective and psychomotor realms (Salaeh et al., 2023).

In the context of Islamic education, morals are often equated with character education, as both emphasise the habit of good behaviour derived from moral and religious values (Dani, 2023). Islamic religious education has a strategic role in character building because moral values are not enough to be taught as knowledge, but must be instilled through habit formation, role modelling, and practical application in daily life (Ferihana & Rahmatullah, 2023). Therefore, Islamic boarding schools, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, are considered effective in integrating classical teachings with internalising *akhlāqul karīmah* in students (Fu'ad, 2017).

This study is based on Kurt Lewin's field theory, which explains that individual behaviour is the result of interactions between personal and environmental factors (Lewin, 1951). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, students' behaviour is not only determined by their mastery of the material in the books, but also by the influence of culture, parenting, the example set by teachers, and the religious atmosphere in the boarding school environment. In addition, this study also uses Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasises that behaviour is learned through observation, imitation, and habituation (Bandura, 1977). This theory is in line with the practice of moral education in Islamic boarding schools, where students emulate the behaviour of teachers and seniors as role models. These two theories reinforce the understanding that the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values must be analysed

holistically, covering cognitive (book material), affective (attitude), and environmental (boarding school culture) aspects.

Based on this background and theoretical framework, this study aims to analyse the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values contained in the Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* and the role of the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School environment in supporting the internalisation of these values. The research questions focus on three main aspects: 1) what are the *akhlāqul karīmah* values contained in the Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*; 2) how are these values manifested in the daily lives of students; and 3) what is the role of the *pesantren* environment, both physical and non-physical, in supporting the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values.

Thus, this study is expected to contribute both academically and practically. Theoretically, this study enriches Islamic education literature by integrating classical texts and *pesantren* cultural practices. Practically, the results of this study can be used as evaluation material for *pesantren* leaders and administrators in designing more effective akhlak development strategies. The novelty of this research lies in its holistic analysis, which combines the study of classical texts, the daily practices of *santri*, and the role of the *pesantren* environment as a supporting ecosystem in forming *akhlāqul karīmah*.

## METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with field research to gain an in-depth understanding of the social phenomena occurring in the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School environment. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to directly explore students' and caregivers' meanings, experiences, and interactions in their natural context (Patton, 2015). The research location was at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School, Jl. Gandu, Sendangtirto, Berbah, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta, which has consistently studied the Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* for more than ten years as the main reference for moral education. The research was conducted from March to April 2025, with the researcher's direct involvement in observing the students' daily lives, so that the data obtained was more representative of the reality in the field (Sugiyono, 2017).

The research subjects were determined by purposive sampling, which was selected based on considerations of knowledge and direct involvement with the research object (Sugiyono, 2017). The subjects included: 1) female teachers who taught the Kitab *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* and played a role in conveying moral values through the study of the book. 2) female teachers in charge of fostering discipline, manners, and habits among students. 3) Fourth-year KMI students as active participants in the book study, totalling 7 out of 45 students, including three students who are members of the *ta'lim* rayon and four regular students, to obtain diverse perspectives. 4) Community leaders,

namely the *takmir* of the Al-Huda Mosque, as well as community leaders, to obtain external views regarding the impact of *pesantren* moral education on the social interactions of students in the community.

Research data was collected through three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made by observing the daily activities of students to see the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values and the role of the *pesantren* environment, both physical and non-physical, in supporting the internalisation of these values (Moleong, 2017). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with female teachers who teach religious texts, female teachers who provide guidance, students, and community leaders to explore their experiences and views in greater depth (Kvale, 1996). Documentation was used to supplement field data through photos of activities, weekly schedules, and boarding school rules that showed the student guidance system in writing (Arikunto, 2010). These three techniques were chosen to make the data obtained rich, layered, and complementary.

Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2020). The analysis process took place simultaneously from the beginning of data collection to the final conclusion, focusing on finding patterns, themes, and relationships that describe the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values. To ensure data validity, source triangulation and technique triangulation were used. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information from students, female teachers in charge of the book, female teachers in charge of childcare, and community leaders (Moleong, 2017). Meanwhile, technique triangulation was carried out by verifying the data obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation to ensure that they supported each other (Creswell & Creswell, 2014). With this combination of analysis and validity techniques, the research results are expected to be credible, objective, and truly reflect the conditions in the field.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Values of *Akhlāqul karīmah* in the Book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*

A study of the book *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* Volume 2 shows that the values of *akhlāqul karīmah* taught include morals towards Allah, parents, teachers, siblings, neighbours, and friends. These values serve as the main moral guidelines for students at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School. Volume 2 focuses on obligations to Allah SWT and manners towards friends. Quotes from the book reinforce this explanation, for example, emphasising the importance of fear (*khauf*) of Allah, sincerity, and *tawakal*.

Conceptually, morals towards Allah are the main foundation for forming a Muslim woman's personality, which is reflected in obedience in worship and maintaining self-respect. The value of *birrul walidain* is emphasised through obedience and respect for parents, and is even considered more important than *sunnah* worship. Morals towards teachers are described as respect for the mediators of knowledge, who have a position after parents. Meanwhile, morals towards siblings, neighbours, and friends foster social harmony, compassion, and *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Baradja, 1953).

This finding aligns with al-Ghazali's view in *Ihyā' Ulumuddīn*, that morals are the fruit of knowledge and deeds evident in daily behaviour (Zaimina et al., 2014). The values taught in *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* do not stop at the cognitive aspect, but are directed to become ingrained as the students' character. Thus, *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* not only functions as teaching material but also as a normative tool that shapes the overall personality of *santri* (Syaehotin, 2023).

## 2. Internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* Values in the Lives of *Santri*

The observations and interviews show that the values in *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* have been internalised in students' daily lives at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School. This internalisation can be seen in several main aspects. *First*, *akhlak* towards Allah is manifested through the five daily prayers in congregation, collective *zikir*, *sunnah* prayers, and regular worship. Some *santri* said that the regularity of the *pesantren* made them more consistent in their worship, so prayer no longer felt like a burden, but rather a necessity. This shows that the *pesantren* routine is a mechanism for internalising spiritual values (Nata, 2020).

*Second*, girls are taught to be devoted to their parents with love and respect. This includes obeying their commands as long as they do not conflict with Islamic law, speaking gently, and not preceding them in anything (Jannah, 2018). Morality towards parents is evident in the students' habit of praying for and asking for their blessing, even though they live far from home. The students emphasise that physical separation actually strengthens their devotion to their parents.

*Third*, good character towards teachers is reflected in the students' humility towards their teachers. Students greet them politely, kiss their hands, listen attentively to lessons, and accept advice without arguing. The boarding school rules that emphasise respect for teachers further reinforce this behaviour. This is in line with the *ustadzah*'s explanation that the students' obedience to teachers is one of the indicators of successful character building.

*Fourth*, maintaining harmonious relationships with siblings, showing affection, helping each other, loving the younger ones, respecting the older ones, and avoiding disputes. This attitude reflects harmony within the family and strengthens the bonds of brotherhood (Pipit, 2021). Morality towards siblings is



manifested through solidarity among students who have lived together for years. This relationship often resembles brotherhood, characterised by mutual assistance, forgiveness, and concern for the emotional condition of friends.

*Fifth*, morals towards neighbours are very important in social life. Islam teaches that every Muslim should maintain good relations with their neighbours, provide assistance when needed, and not do anything that could hurt or disturb their comfort (Hayati et al., 2024). Morality towards neighbours and the community is internalised through social interactions between *santri* and residents around the *pesantren*. The Mubaligh Hijrah program is a concrete example of how *santri* are assigned to teach at TPA, assist with mosque activities, and participate in community service. Community leaders stated that the presence of *santri* brought a calm and polite atmosphere and inspired children to be enthusiastic about studying the Qur'an. This shows that the values of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), tolerance, and social concern taught in *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* truly manifest in community life.

*Sixth*, good character towards friends is evident in dormitory life. Students live together for years, so friendships are considered a "second family." Students help each other, care for friends who are sick, comfort each other when sad, and avoid open conflict. Maintaining good manners, not offending others, and helping each other are part of their daily lives. The values of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *ta'awun* (mutual assistance) taught in the scriptures are truly internalised through practical application in the dormitory and student organisations.

This internalisation confirms Albert Bandura's view in social learning theory that behaviour is learned through observation, imitation, and habituation (Bandura, 1977). The moral values in the book do not stop at the conceptual level, but are truly brought to life through collective practice in the daily lives of the *santri*. This finding also expands on other studies, highlighting the relevance of *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* values for millennial *santri*, but fails to describe the practice of internalisation in the *pesantren* environment.

### 3. The Role of the *Pesantren* Environment in the Internalization of *Akhlāqul karīmah* Values

The *pesantren* environment plays a very important role in supporting the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values taught through *Akhlāq Lil Banāt*. Moral values are not enough to be understood in theory, but require a space for actualisation through habits, role models, and consistent practice. In this case, Islamic boarding schools function as an educational ecosystem that integrates physical aspects such as mosques, classrooms, dormitories, and learning facilities

with non-physical aspects such as culture, coaching systems, social interactions, role models, and a religious atmosphere.

The role of the environment is the main support in instilling *akhlāqul karīmah* in the students, so that the values learned from the books can truly shape their daily character. In other words, the internalisation of morals at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School takes place holistically: the scriptures provide a normative foundation, while the boarding school environment provides a real platform for bringing these values to life in the daily practices of the students.

a. Physical Environment

The physical environment of the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School plays an important role in supporting the internalisation of moral values. Facilities such as mosques, classrooms, dormitories, libraries, and sanitation facilities provide a practical setting for habit formation. The mosque functions as a centre for spiritual guidance, classrooms instil learning etiquette, dormitories shape attitudes of tolerance and responsibility, while the library educates students to love knowledge and value discussion (Arsyad, 2011).

Observations show that each facility is designed to accustom students to behave according to *akhlāqul karīmah* values. For example, the cleaning roster trains students in responsibility, and the rules of politeness in the classroom foster an attitude of humility. This aligns with Kurt Lewin's field theory, which states that the interaction between personal and environmental factors shapes individual behaviour. The physical environment of the *pesantren* has been proven to create conducive conditions that reinforce the internalisation of moral values (Lewin, 1951).

b. Non-Physical Environment

In addition to physical aspects, non-physical environments such as boarding school culture, social interaction, parenting systems, religious atmosphere, and role models also contribute greatly. Boarding school culture shapes collective habits such as discipline, politeness, and responsibility. Social interaction fosters *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), compassion, and empathy (Soemanto, 1990). The care system ensures that guidance is carried out with an educational approach, not merely punishment. The *pesantren*'s religious atmosphere, characterised by routine worship and a regular schedule, fosters spiritual awareness and discipline in life. The role models of the female teachers and administrators are the most powerful factor, because students learn directly through the real examples they demonstrate every day. This finding aligns with Bandura's theory that role models are an effective means of social learning.



Overall, the results of this study show that the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School is not only based on the teaching of the *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* book, but is also reinforced by the role of the physical and non-physical environment of the boarding school. These findings emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to moral education, which integrates cognitive, affective, and environmental aspects.

The implications of this study include two aspects. First, theoretically, this study enriches the literature on Islamic education by emphasising the close relationship between classical texts and *pesantren* cultural practices. Second, practically, this study provides input for *pesantren* administrators to continue optimising the role of the environment as a medium for character building. The novelty of this study lies in its holistic analysis, which combines the study of classical texts with the daily practices of *santri* and the role of the *pesantren* environment. This differs from previous studies, which tended to separate text and context.

Future research can expand its focus by examining the effectiveness of other classical texts in shaping the character of *santri*, or comparing the internalisation of moral education in *salafiyah* and modern *pesantren*. Thus, this study emphasises the importance of the *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* text and provides a foundation for further study in developing *pesantren*-based moral education.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalisation of *akhlāqul karīmah* values at the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School in Yogyakarta is realised through the study of *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* by Sheikh Umar bin Ahmad Baradja', combined with the habit of living in a boarding school environment. The identified *akhlāqul karīmah* values include morals towards Allah, parents, teachers, siblings, neighbours, and friends. These values are internalised in students' lives through regular worship practices, respect for parents and teachers, solidarity with fellow students, social concern for the community, and attitudes of mutual assistance and tolerance among friends.

The results of the study also confirm that the success of internalising values depends not only on the transfer of knowledge from books but also on the role of the *pesantren* environment. The physical environment, such as the mosque, classrooms, dormitories, and library, provides a concrete space for *santri* to accustom themselves to behaving according to the teachings of *akhlāqul karīmah*. Meanwhile, the non-physical environment in the form of *pesantren* culture, the care system, the religious atmosphere, and the exemplary behaviour of the *ustadzah* and administrators reinforce the formation of *santri* character. Thus, *pesantren* play a role as an educational ecosystem that integrates cognitive, affective, and practical aspects comprehensively.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic education literature by emphasising the integration of classical text studies and *pesantren* cultural practices in shaping *akhlāqul karīmah*. Practically, the results of this study can be used as evaluation material for *pesantren* caregivers and administrators to optimise the role of both the physical and non-physical environments as effective media in fostering the students' morals.

For further research, it is recommended that there be a comparative study between *Salafiyah* and modern Islamic boarding schools, or an in-depth analysis of other classical texts in the context of shaping students' character. Thus, this study emphasises the relevance of *Akhlāq Lil Banāt* and provides a basis for developing a more holistic, adaptive, and contextual model of Islamic boarding school moral education in line with the needs of the times.

## DECLARATIONS

### Author contribution statement

Azzahra Nurul Azzizah played a role in developing the research framework, collecting field data through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analysing the data. Mujahid contributed to the development of the theoretical framework, supervised the research methodology, and refined the article manuscript. Both authors collaborated in the process of writing, revising, and finalising the article.

### Additional information

This article is part of the first author's thesis, which was written under the guidance of the second author in the Islamic Education Study Program. The entire research process, from instrument development and data collection to analysis, was conducted per research ethics, including obtaining permission from the Ibnul Qoyyim Putri Islamic Boarding School in Yogyakarta and the consent of the informants. The authors would like to express their appreciation to all respondents, the *ustadzah* in charge of the book, the *ustadzah* in charge of childcare, the *santri*, and community leaders for their willingness to provide their time and valuable information. This article is expected to provide practical contributions to *pesantren* administrators and serve as an academic reference for further research in the field of Islamic education.

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