

Strengthening Brand Identity: Embracing Local Wisdom through Character Education Management

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Abstract:

The focus of this study is to investigate the role and implementation of character education planning in Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in maintaining the institution's brand identity and strong local values. This study discusses the dynamics of communication in the pesantren environment and the application of attribution theory in understanding community perceptions. This study aims to explore how communication takes place in the context of pesantren and how attribution theory is used to understand the way people interpret messages and actions from pesantren. The research method used is a case study by analyzing communication interactions in certain pesantren and interviewing related community members. The results showed that communication in pesantren produces; self-awareness, optimization of communication, building a positive image, public education, and collaboration. Attribution theory helps understand how society assigns meaning and interpretation to information received from pesantren. These findings provide valuable insight into the importance of effective communication in building a positive image and increasing public understanding of pesantren. The implication of this study is to provide guidance for traditional Islamic educational institutions in strengthening brand identity and local values through a planned character education approach.

Key Words: Brand Identity, Communication Dynamics, Pesantren, Community Perception

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of globalization have placed new challenges for educational institutions, including Islamic boarding schools. Exposure to the rapidly growing global culture raises questions regarding the relevance of traditional institutions such as Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid without losing their local identity (Fakhrurrazi et al., 2021). The adoption of technology and social media provides broader access to global information, often ignoring local and traditional values (Torous et al., 2021; Bennett & Livingston, 2023). The influence of character damage also does not escape from the influence of the development of science and technology that is limitless even though in essence the development of this technology also has a positive impact where the positive impact is in the form of more open and dissemination of information and knowledge from and throughout the world through the boundaries of time and space (Beck et al.,

2022). The negative impact is in the form of changes in behavior, ethics, norms, rules, or morals of life that are contrary to life in society. In addition, the use of information and communication technology in Indonesia causes aspects of community culture that gradually shift due to the rise of Cybercrime, and not socially intelligent (Wahid & Sa'diyah, 2020).

In addition, the increasing number of educational institutions is increasingly becoming a big challenge for education providers (Khamim, 2022). Managers of educational institutions are required to continue to take initiative and think critically in finding new ideas to maintain excellence and develop educational institutions according to the demands of the times in order to compete in the fight for the label of institution based on educational goals and educational customer satisfaction (Giesenbauer & Müller-Christ, 2020).

An important component in character education management is the intervention of a kyai where a kyai is a driving force in the formation of the character of boarding school residents or often referred to as santri (Zaini et al., 2022). So, a Kyai is the center of leadership and characterization in a pesantren and community environment and is the main figure of the kyai's existence as a pioneer of pesantren, caregiver and who determines management and curriculum and colors the mechanism of life in pesantren with his various expertise.

Character education in pesantren here has advantages, especially in instilling noble values to students. Santri considers the teacher (ulama) as a figure, who has excellence, and feels that he is small and lacking in front of his teacher. In addition, students are accustomed to carrying out traditions in the form of activities that can build their good character such as compulsory congregational prayers, recitation, fasting, studying the yellow book, carrying out other sunnah worships, as well as entrepreneurial activities of pesantren, as well as organizational activities (Malihah et al., 2022). Such phenomena is found in almost every pesantren, although some pesantren change their paradigm due to the demands of circumstances (Hidayah, 2021).

Brand identity certainly needs to be considered in building brand loyalty (Dada, 2021). Where Brand Identity is one of the many aspects of brand management and can be used to maintain the branding of an institution. Because of brand identity (Brand Identity) which will later become the basis for forming public opinion, whether the brand is well known or not (Liao et al., 2021). While Brand Identity from the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school is known for its local wisdom in the form of five and trilogy of students where local wisdom is embedded and realized in the daily lives of students so as to create a person with character.

Similar research was conducted by Mukhlisin and resulted in the results showed that the planning of student character education was carried out by Kyai, ustad, and administrators related to determining needs, reasons for the program, subjects and objects, time, place, and method of program realization (Zaini et al.,

2022). The same research was also conducted by Ahmad Sulhan, and explained that the concept of quality education with character is: (a) quality of education with excellent academic character and religious awareness, (b) excellent academic values, values: honesty, discipline, responsibility, communicative, self-control, and religious values awareness, values: religious, sincerity, example, loving kindness, (c) using the principles of moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action through Exemplary approach and systems approach (Confente & Kucharska, 2021). Similar research was also conducted by Leetari, this study resulted in research showing that the implementation of character education management is integrated in school activities (Zulela et al., 2022). The update in this study that distinguishes it from previous research is to examine character education based on local wisdom at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School through the lens of management.

This research offers something new by combining the concept of brand identity management, which is generally associated with commercial organizations, with character education in religious educational environments. Through a focus on local wisdom as the main foundation in shaping individual character, this research shows how rich local values can be an indispensable part of an educational institution's brand identity strategy.

The dynamics of globalization present novel challenges for educational institutions, particularly Islamic boarding schools like Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid, amidst the rapid spread of global culture while preserving local identity. The integration of technology and social media, although facilitating access to global information, also poses risks of diluting traditional values and character formation. Moreover, the proliferation of educational institutions intensifies the competition, compelling managers to innovate and adapt to evolving educational demands. Crucially, the intervention of a kyai, or spiritual leader, plays a pivotal role in character education within pesantren, serving as the cornerstone of leadership and character development. Character education in pesantren capitalizes on traditions and rituals to instill noble values, with students revering teachers and actively participating in religious and entrepreneurial activities. Despite some paradigm shifts, brand identity remains vital in fostering loyalty and public perception. Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school, known for its adherence to local wisdom, embeds these values into its brand identity, distinguishing it from others. This study diverges from previous research by examining character education management at Nurul Jadid through the lens of brand identity, offering a fresh perspective on the integration of local values into educational branding strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study aims to explain the efforts of Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school in maintaining through character education based on local wisdom. The approach used in this research is to use qualitative research using the type of case

study research. Where, through case study research, it allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon of Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school efforts in maintaining through character education based on local wisdom (Chuanchen & Zaini, 2023).

The data collection used in the study used in-depth interviews with various key informants who have a vital role in pesantren, such as the secretary of the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School foundation, the Central BKWA administrator, Religious Teachers, the Head of the Putri area, and related central staff. This interview is intended to gain in-depth insight into how character education management is planned, implemented, and evaluated in order to maintain the identity of pesantren. In addition to interviews, the use of document analysis becomes another important technique. Documents such as pesantren strategic plans, character education planning documents, activity reports, as well as related policies are used to gain a more complete understanding of the steps taken and decisions made in character education management. Non-participant observations were also conducted, where researchers made objective observations of daily activities in pesantren without being directly involved. These observations help in understanding directly how character education is implemented in real activities in the pesantren environment (Diana & Zaini, 2023).

The data analysis approach is carried out through data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is done by sorting through relevant information (Wijaya et al., 2022). The conclusion is reached by looking at the importance of information about the community's view of communication carried out by Islamic boarding schools. Data validity techniques involve triangulation of sources, especially by asking the same questions about the communication carried out by Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in understanding community perceptions of administrators, guardians and the community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the face of increasingly complex character education dynamics, Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School has an important role in maintaining the identity of the institution and strong local values. Through planned planning and integrated implementation, this study explores strategies and evaluations in strengthening character education in these pesantren, becoming a valuable contribution to the understanding and practice of character education in other educational institutions. The stages of implementing character education at Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school are as follows:

Stages of implementing character education at the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school

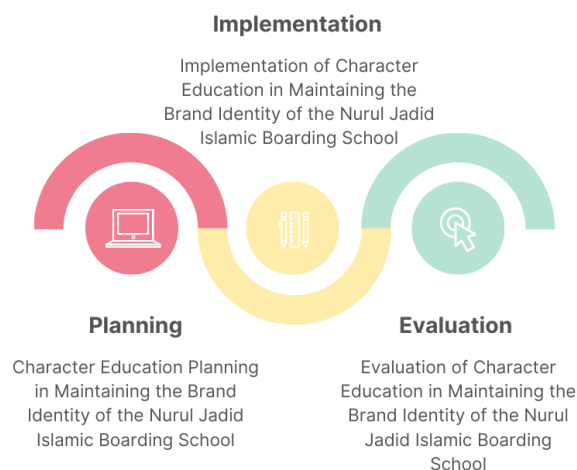


Figure 1. Stages of Implementing Character Education in Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School

Character Education Planning in Maintaining the Brand Identity

According to George R. Terry, planning is a thought process to determine future activities to achieve goals. Visualization skills are needed to formulate patterns of action to achieve these goals. In the context of management, planning is preparation in determining steps to solve problems or achieve goals. Simply put, planning is a thought before the implementation of a task. In character education management, planning involves the process of planning, implementation, and evaluation to maintain the brand identity of Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in accordance with its objectives in meeting community expectations. As part of the education system, character education consists of elements that are managed through planning, implementation, and evaluation. Awareness of religion, science, nation, society, and organization is the main foundation in the formation of student character at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. They are taught to understand religious values broadly, master religious and worldly sciences, and love the homeland and contribute to building the nation. In addition, they are also encouraged not to be isolated from society, but to play an active role in their social life. The importance of effective and efficient organization is also emphasized as an integral part of building the character of students, showing that awareness of the importance of organizing is an aspect that should not be ignored.

Terry (1973) here suggests that there are three main elements in planning activities, namely: (1) Data collection, (2) Fact analysis and, (3) Preparation of concrete plans. Based on the above opinion, the planing referred to as follows: (a) Selecting and determining character values that are prioritized in accordance with the footing of the concept of a mutually recognized frame of mind, (b)

Preparing students' daily programs by integrating character values in all fields of activity, (c) Socializing related to character building to all school residents.

Based on this theory, the steps chosen by the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school are:

Setting Goals with The Annual Meeting of Pesantren

In character education planning, the first step is to hold a meeting at the beginning of the year, where at the level of madrasah management, the head of the foundation and his staff are responsible for planning education and the implementation process. Program planning carried out at the beginning of each year involves all components within the scope of pesantren and also involves guardians based on the vision and mission that refers to the trilogy and the five consciousness of the students. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that a series of planning carried out at the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school began from a foundation meeting based on the Pesantren Master Program (PIP) where then the leadership made AKUP (General Policy Direction of Pesantren) which was then socialized to harmonize understanding so that there was no confusion of information, so that the agreed program would be able to run according to its corridor.

Programming

As an Islamic boarding school that implements character education, the preparation of existing programs by carrying out the stages of management functions effectively. The effectiveness of character education planning here is based on a stage of the planning process carried out by Islamic boarding schools with the preparation of a character education work program plan based on local wisdom in accordance with a large program that refers to the trilogy and the five kesadran santri. Planning is a certain cycle where through this cycle the plan can be supervised at the beginning of the process of implementing the completion of the plan.

Budgeting

Education financing in the context of the education system is a strategic component that will determine the achievement or failure of the educational goals that have been set. In other words, the quality or failure of educational practices is strongly influenced by the education financing component. Speaking of education financing, this is a big responsibility for anyone concerned. That's why it is important for leaders to choose those who are competent in the field of financing, besides being competent must also have an honest nature, so that education financing in an Islamic boarding school will run effectively and efficiently. As the Holy Prophetsa said, which means: "If a business is handed over to those who are not experts, then wait for the period of its destruction" H.R. Bukhori, in Imam Muslimin While the funding process in the Nurul Jadid Islamic

Boarding School by submitting a RAB designed at the annual meeting so that when the process of implementing its activities the funding will be liquid in accordance with what has been agreed at the beginning.

Socialize policies

The process of planning character education at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School involves several important stages. The first step is to socialize the policy to all components of the pesantren, including guardians, to ensure optimal understanding and application of the policy. In addition, the budgeting stage is also considered crucial to avoid waste and ensure expenses as planned. In conclusion, the planning process is carried out systematically and integratively, with programs designed based on the Education Business Needs Analysis (AKUP), and disseminated by the leadership before being planned and ratified by the foundation.

Implementation of Character Education in Maintaining the Brand Identity

Browne and Wildavsky suggest that "implementation is the expansion of mutually adapting activities". Where implementation is an activity or effort carried out to implement all plans and policies that have been established and determined equipped with all needs, necessary tools, who carries out, where the implementation begins and how to be implemented, a process of a series of follow-up activities after the program or policy. In this case, as in the findings of the Nuru Jadid Islamic boarding school, the approach used in the process of implementing character education uses four approaches, including: First, integrating the character education content that has been formulated into all subjects. Second, integrate character education into daily activities at school. Third, integrate character education into programmed or planned activities. Fourth, build cooperative communication between schools and parents of students.

The forms applied in Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school based on this theory are:

Integrate Character Education into Formal Institution Curricula

One of the applications of character education is by integrating character education into the existing curriculum in formal institutions, Integrating character education into all curricula of formal institutions is carried out in order to develop intervention activities. Where character education that will be integrated into all subjects, must be related to the noble values that characterize the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school. Thus, learning character values is not only at the cognitive level but also related to internalization and real experiences in the daily lives of students in pesantren.

Integrate Character Education into Daily Activities

The integration of character education in Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School involves several key aspects. First, modeling and example by pesantren administrators and all components are the main foundation in shaping the morals of students. Second, the importance of discipline as a foundation for good behavior, not only obeying the rules, but also being responsible and behaving according to the values of the pesantren. Third, the creation of a conducive environment that involves all components of pesantren to support character building. Finally, habituation of values through routine and spontaneous activities, as well as examples from pesantren administrators as reinforcement of student character. All of these approaches synergize with each other and have proven effective in shaping the character of students in accordance with the values of pesantren.

Integrate Character Education Into Planned or Programmed Activities

This activity is categorized as a routine activity, which is an activity carried out by students continuously and consistently. Forms of routine activities such as ISTIKBAR, PHBI, National Santri Day Ceremony, as well as student development activities. It is routinely carried out and is mandatory for students. The integration of character education in routine activities and coaching activities is in accordance with the supplement model theory, namely the implementation of character education through activities outside school hours. The advantages of this model are in the form of concrete experiences experienced by students and developing students' affective abilities.

Building Communication between Pesantren and Guardians

Communication is important so that the implementation of planning runs smoothly. Activities carried out to build school communication and cooperation with parents at Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school are carried out through new guardian meetings and FKS (Santri Communication Forum). So from the results of the data collected by the researchers, it can be concluded that the planning and implementation of character education here many parties must be involved in it, starting from the leaders of the foundation, astidz, foster guardians, staff and also guardians of bhakan santri

The implementation of character education in the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school is more directed to the formation of cottage culture, namely the values that underlie the behavior, traditions and daily habits practiced by all components in the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school. The culture in the Islamic boarding school is characteristic of the character and image of the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school. Implementation is an activity to realize real actions in order to achieve an effective goal, so that it will have its own value.

Thus, the implementation carried out by the Nurul Jadid Islamic boarding school is very important in management. The lodge leader as a manager who is

able to move his subordinates in implementation must have their own strategy in generating the work spirit of their subordinates.

Managerial wrapped in efforts to generate the work spirit of his subordinates will cause positive energy and be able to provide positive energy to his subordinates naturally. In the implementation function, the leadership emphasizes efforts to generate *ghiroh* to work and provide directions to their employees so that the planned program runs according to their respective corridors.

Evaluation of Character Education in Maintaining the Brand Identity

Program evaluation here means a process of discovering the extent to which the goals and objectives of a program or project have been realized, providing information for decision making, comparing performance with standards or benchmarks to determine gaps, assessing price and quality and systematic investigation of the value or quality of an object. Program evaluation according to Tyler is a process to find out whether the goals can be realized.

Form of evaluation carried out by Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School Internal evaluation and external evaluation. Internal evaluation is in the form of *harrian* assessment which is carried out every day using the student *muhasabah* book and also in the form of guardian supervision of the students' daily lives. From the results of the supervision, it will be seen the development of student character education that has been achieved and that has not been achieved, so that foster guardians can know what actions to take. And the integration of *pesantren* evaluation with formal schools where character education evaluation integrated with formal schools is a continuous effort to immerse noble values, customs, and existing culture. Likewise, in the assessment, a process and time are needed in coaching, so that what values have been achieved and what have not.

External evaluation, which is in the form of an evaluation conducted by BANWASIH and the deputy head who controls performance, is the evaluation material where usually the evaluation is carried out first at the end of every year which is carried out in July because Nurul Jadid uses leap months, this evaluation is carried out to find out whether the AKUK planning is going according to plan or not, and to design the AKUK program for next year. Second monthly Monthly evaluation is done at the beginning of every month and this evaluation is done to determine the power of the one-month plan. And Third, leadership evaluation: Leadership evaluation is carried out every two months, at least this evaluation is carried out to discuss the achievement of the process.

Thus, it can be concluded that character education assessments must be carried out continuously in order to determine the development of student character that is adapted to existing local wisdom. Where all human actions or actions of any form should be intended to achieve happiness, while to achieve happiness according to the moral system or morals that are decreed can be achieved by obeying Allah's commands, namely by avoiding all His prohibitions

and doing all His commandments, in accordance with the trilogy of santri as stated in the guidelines of life for every Muslim, namely the Quran and al-hadith.

This research makes an important contribution in the understanding and implementation of character education in Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. With a planned management approach, character education planning is well integrated in the daily activities of pesantren. It is shown that systematic and targeted planning is necessary to achieve the established character education goals, with careful data collection, in-depth fact analysis, and concrete planning. The implementation of character education is carried out through the integration of character values into the formal curriculum, daily activities, and planned activities, enabling students to apply these values practically in their daily lives. Good communication between pesantren and guardians also supports the formation of student character, with meetings and communication forums as a means of exchanging information and input. Internal and external evaluation of character education helps assess the extent to which goals have been achieved, as well as provides a foundation for continuous improvement and improvement. Thus, this research becomes an important reference for other educational institutions in implementing effective and targeted character education.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study shows that the planning, implementation, and evaluation of character education in Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School runs in a planned and integrated manner. A systematic management approach in character education planning ensures that character values are well integrated in the daily activities of pesantren. The integration of character values into the formal curriculum, daily activities, and planned activities allows students to internalize and apply these values practically. In addition, good communication between pesantren and guardians as well as internal and external evaluations provide a strong foundation for continuous improvement in the formation of student character. Thus, this research makes an important contribution in the understanding and implementation of character education in Islamic boarding schools, as well as being a valuable reference for other educational institutions in an effort to strengthen character education.

The recommendation for future research is to conduct a more in-depth study on the effectiveness of learning methods used in the implementation of character education at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. This research can involve direct observation of the learning process, interviews with boarding school administrators and students, and analysis of evaluation results. In addition, further research can focus on developing strategies to increase participation and active involvement of all pesantren components in the implementation of character education. Thus, further research is expected to provide deeper insights and more concrete solutions in optimizing character education in the pesantren environment.

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