



TEACHERS' ROLE IN FOSTERING A MODERATE, NATIONALIST GENERATION THROUGH HABITUATION AT SMP ISLAM MANBA'UL ULUM BUARAN JEPARA

Muhammad Dhiyaul Haq¹, Subaidi², Sukarman³

^{1,2,3} Islamic University of Nahdlatul Ulama Jepara, Central Java, Indonesia
Email; Auljepara86@gmail.com¹, subaidi@unisnu.ac.id², pakar@unisnu.ac.id³

Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the strategic role of teachers in shaping a moderate and nationalist generation through school culture habituation programs at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara. Utilizing a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation, and then validated using data triangulation. The results indicate that the teachers' role has transformed from merely instructors into role models and embedded supervisors. Teachers systematically integrate moderate (*wasathiyyah*) *Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah* Islamic religiosity and nationalistic spirit (*nasionalisme*) into school culture management through two main pillars: 1) School Culture-Based Routine Habituation Program: Facilitated by direct teacher guidance during the recitation of *Nadham Aqidatul Awam & Asmaul Husna*, congregational *dhuha* prayer, the tradition of handshaking, and post-dawn *murojaah* of the Qur'an to strengthen a tolerant (*tawasuth*) faith, the character of respect (*ta'dzim*), and a *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing to all creation) mentality; 2) Value Internalization through Extracurricular Activities: Functioning as a social laboratory to balance students' intelligence through the dimension of Islamic cultural arts adaptive to local wisdom (*Qiro'ah*, *Nasyid*, *Rebana*, *Calligraphy*), the physical-sporting dimension of state defense (*Volleyball*, *Scouts*, *Pencak Silat*), and the digital literacy dimension (*Computer*). This integrative synergy is proven effective in breaking down the dichotomy between religious and national values, while simultaneously safeguarding students from the negative impacts of globalization and radicalism.

Keywords: *Internal Quality Assurance System, Pesantren, Education*

INTRODUCTION

Education holds a strategic role in shaping a moderate, nationalist, and noble-charactered generation amidst the challenges of globalization and digitalization. The phenomena of intolerance, bullying, and the declining sense of patriotism among some of today's youth demand concrete responses through sustainable character education. In this context, teachers occupy a central position—not merely as instructors, but as role models who consistently internalize moral and national values through daily habits at school (Lickona,

1991).

The habituation approach is considered highly effective because it provides space for students to directly practice positive values, such as discipline, tolerance, and routine worship, which serve as the primary foundation for realizing the Pancasila Student Profile (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Previous studies confirm that strengthening character through structured habituation by teachers is proven effective in shielding students' mindsets from exposure to extreme and individualistic digital information flows (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). The government has also positioned this synergy between teachers and school culture as a priority for developing human resources with strong character (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

However, in reality, the implementation of character education in the field still faces major obstacles. Many schools remain trapped in fulfilling academic targets and have not yet made the culture of character habituation a top priority. Furthermore, not all teachers possess mature integrative strategies to align the values of moderation and nationalism into daily activities, resulting in a gap between the values taught and the actual behavior of the students (Nucci & Narvaez, 2008). These obstacles underlie the importance of an in-depth study regarding the formulation of teacher strategies in effectively designing, implementing, and evaluating character habituation programs.

Unlike previous studies, which mostly focus on formal classroom learning, this research is unique because it examines the continuous habituation process within an Islamic-based school environment (Banks, 2008). Therefore, this study aims to analyze and describe in depth the strategic role of teachers in shaping a moderate and nationalist generation through school culture habituation programs at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilizes a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected to enable the researcher to obtain data within a natural setting, corresponding to the real conditions in the field without any manipulation of variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Meanwhile, the case study design is applied to explore in-depth and in detail the systemic boundaries of the actual role of teachers and how the mechanism of the habituation program operates holistically within the school environment.

The object of this research centers on the phenomena of classroom management and school culture, specifically regarding the implementation of the strategic role of teachers and the actualization of daily habituation programs in internalizing character values. To ensure this research is well-directed, the description of the research focus is defined into several key indicators: The teacher's role, described as the teacher's activities as an educator, mentor, role model, and primary driver in school activities; A moderate generation, defined as the cultivation of attitudes of *tawasuth* (moderation), tolerance (*tasamuh*), anti-violence, and adaptability to diversity; A nationalist generation, defined as national commitment, discipline, patriotism, and respect for state symbols; Habituation, described as a series of routine religious and national activities, both structured (such as the recitation of *Nadham Aqidatul Awam*, *Asmaul Husna*, congregational *Dhuha* prayer, the tradition of handshaking, *murojaah*) and supporting extracurricular activities.

The setting and location of this research were conducted at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara. The informants in this study were determined

using a purposive sampling technique, namely the selection of informants based on certain criteria and considerations because they are deemed to understand, master, and be directly involved in the object being studied (Sugiyono, 2022). Based on this technique, the parties designated as key informants in this study include the Principal, Islamic Religious Education Teachers, General Subject Teachers, and several student representatives.

The data collection techniques used are combined through three methods: Direct observation, used to observe in detail the implementation of daily character habituation activities, interactions between teachers and students, and the atmosphere of school culture at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum; In-depth interviews, conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to gather profound information from the principal, teachers, and students regarding the dynamics of the teacher's role and the obstacles faced in instilling the values of moderation and nationalism; Documentation, used to collect complementary data in the form of school profiles, draft work programs, school regulations, curriculum documents, photos of habituation activities, and other relevant supporting archives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Furthermore, the data analysis technique applied in this study refers to the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three simultaneous stages: Data Reduction: The researcher summarizes, selects, focuses, and sorts the raw data obtained from the interviews, observations, and documentation in the field, then discards data irrelevant to the focus of the teacher's role and student character; Data Display: The reduced data is then presented systematically in the form of expository text narratives, tables, or flowcharts, making it easier for the researcher to see patterns and understand the correlations between the aspects studied; Conclusion Drawing: The final stage where the researcher searches for meaning, patterns, explanations, and causal pathways from the displayed data to formulate credible final conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the teacher's role in shaping student character at the site.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The character formation of a moderate and nationalist generation at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara is actualized systematically and structurally through habituation programs and the optimization of extracurricular activities. This tactical measure is integrated into the management of the school culture to shield students from the negative impacts of globalization and the infiltration of radical ideologies. Based on the analysis of field data, the research findings are categorized into two main pillars: (1) routine habituation programs based on school culture, and (2) value internalization programs through extracurricular activities.

Routine Habituation Programs Based on School Culture

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with the Principal, Mr. Yusuf, the school consciously integrates the religious values of Islamic Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) characterized by tawasuth (moderation) with a national spirit from an early age. This habituation practice is designed so that character values do not merely remain academic theories, but instead manifest as concrete daily behaviors.

In detail, there are four main pillars of habituation implemented

consistently within the environment of SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara:

- a. Reciting Nadham Aqidatul Awam and Asmaul Husna Every Morning: This activity is conducted classically before teaching and learning activities begin. The purpose is to strengthen the foundation of a moderate Islamic creed (aqidah), instill love for Allah SWT and His Messenger, and condition the students' mental readiness to start the day with positive spiritual stimulation.
- b. Congregational Dhuha Prayer Every Morning: This habituation of sunnah worship serves as an important instrument for teachers to train spiritual discipline, peace of mind, punctuality, and consistency (istiqamah) among students in practicing religious laws.
- c. The Tradition of Handshaking with Teachers Every Morning: The cultural practice of greeting and shaking hands at the school gate functions as a medium to instill the character of ta'dzim (profound respect and reverence) toward educators. This tradition is proven effective in fostering mutual affection between teachers and students while simultaneously eroding arrogant traits in adolescents.
- d. Murojaah of the Al-Qur'an Every Day After Subuh: This activity is specifically designated for students residing in the Islamic boarding school (pesantren/dormitory) environment. This routine activity of maintaining and repeating the memorization of the Al-Qur'an serves to sharpen spirituality and shape a mindset based on Al-Qur'an principles that are rahmatan lil 'alamin (blessing for the universe/peaceful and compassionate).

Through these four pillars of habituation, the role of teachers at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum transforms from merely instructors (transfer of knowledge) into primary drivers, role models, and inherent supervisors. Teachers actively provide concrete examples at the forefront and oversee the course of habituation to ensure that the values of religious moderation and patriotism are strongly internalized (Yusuf, June 2, 2026).

Internalization of Character Values Through Extracurricular Activities

To expand the space for student character actualization, SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara maximizes the function of extracurricular activities. The results of an interview with the Student Affairs Coordinator, Mrs. Indri Maulida, confirm that the school applies a balancing approach between intellectual, spiritual, and social intelligence. Extracurricular activities serve as a social laboratory for students to practice religious, social, and national values in an enjoyable yet well-directed manner (Maulida, personal communication, 2025).

From the gathered data, there are various extracurricular clusters specifically optimized by the instructing teachers to shape moderate and nationalist characters:

- a. Qiro'ah (Al-Qur'an Recital) Extracurricular, Instructor: Baidowi: Focuses on improving competence in reading the Al-Qur'an according to tajwid rules. Alongside the cognitive-religious aspects, the instructor inserts the internalization of religious, tolerant, and diversity-respecting attitudes. Through an inclusive understanding of the verses, students are guided to hold a moderate perspective on religion within a pluralistic society.

- b. Volleyball Extracurricular, Instructor: Sugiono: Serves as a medium for character cultivation through physical sports activities. Students are habituated to upholding the values of sportsmanship, group loyalty, teamwork, discipline, and responsibility. This experience of healthy competition builds a solid nationalist spirit, where students learn to value unity above differences in ethnic backgrounds or social status.
- c. Nasyid and Rebana Extracurricular, Instructor: Khafilul Ula: Plays an important role in fostering a love for Islamic arts and culture that carry positive values. Through training in religious musical aesthetics, students are taught to express Islamic values that are peaceful, polite, and adaptive to local culture (local wisdom). This activity successfully builds self-confidence and teamwork that support a moderate disposition.
- d. Calligraphy Art Extracurricular, Instructor: Surya Wijaya: Provides a space for developing creative Islamic arts. The process of writing with the calligraphy pen (kalam) demands high levels of precision, patience, and perseverance from the students. This habituation forms a disciplined student character and fosters a sense of pride in Islamic cultural heritage as part of the rich identity of the Indonesian nation.
- e. Computer Extracurricular, Instructor: M. Fikri: Introduced as a response to the challenges of the digital era. Under the instructor's guidance, students are not only trained in technical information technology skills but are also equipped with critical digital literacy. The primary emphasis is directed toward the habit of using the internet wisely, healthily, and responsibly for the benefit of education and national progress.
- f. Scout Extracurricular, Instructors: Dimas and Pencak Silat (Martial Arts), Instructor: Edi Siswanto: These two activities hold the most strategic role in shaping the physical and mental character of nationalism. Through physical training schemes, scouting, camping, and martial arts, students are forged to possess leadership skills, independence, obedience to rules, mental resilience, and a national defense spirit based on Pancasila.

In general, all analyzed data regarding the habituation programs and the variety of supporting extracurricular activities in shaping student character at SMP Islam Manba'ul Ulum Buaran Jepara can be summarized in Table 1 below:

Based on the qualitative data presentation and the findings in Table 1, the analysis accurately demonstrates that teachers at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School Buaran Jepara have successfully positioned themselves as driving pillars. The strong synergy between daily ritual habituation in the classroom/school and talent cultivation through extracurricular activities has proven effective in fostering a balanced generation of students: moderately religious, while simultaneously possessing a nationalist commitment to the nation.

Table 1. Mapping of Habituation Programs, Extracurricular Activities, and Their

No	Activity	Impact on Student Character		
		Instructor	Character Values Cultivated	Impact on Students

1.	Reciting <i>Nadha</i> and <i>Asmaul Husna</i>	All Faculty Members	Moderate, Religious	Strengthening the peaceful and tolerant <i>Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah</i> creed (<i>aqidah</i>) Characterized by moderation (<i>tawasuth</i>).
2.	Congregational Dhuha Prayer	Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Teachers & Instructors	Discipline, Consistency (Istiqamah)	Cultivating peace of mind and obedience in practicing routine worship consistently.
3.	The Handshaking Cultural Tradition	All Faculty Members	Ta'dzim (Profound Respect), Politeness	Fostering respect toward teachers and eroding adolescent arrogance among students.
4.	Murojaah of the Al-Qur'an After Subuh	Dormitory Wardens / Boarding School Teachers	Spirituality, Inclusivity	Shaping a mentality rooted in the Al-Qur'an principles of rahmatan lil 'alamin (a blessing for the universe).
5.	Qiro'ah (Al-Qur'an Recital)	Ust. Baidowi	Tolerance, Mutual Respect	Fostering an attitude of respecting differences within a pluralistic society.
6.	Volleyball	Ust. Sugiono	Sportsmanship, Nationalism	Fostering a sense of unity, togetherness, and seamless collaboration without social barriers.
7.	Nasheed & Rebana (Islamic Devotional Music)	Ust. Khafilul Ula	Love for Local Culture, Peacefulness	Expressing a gentle Islamic dawah through the acculturation of artistic culture.
8.	Islamic Calligraphy Art	Ust. Surya Wijaya	Patience, Perseverance, Discipline	Appreciating Islamic artistic heritage as an integral part of the

					nation's identity.	cultural
9.	Computer Skills	Ust. M. Fikri	Wisdom, Critical Thinking		Fostering digital intelligence to utilize technology for the benefit of the nation.	
10.	Scouting & Pencak Silat	Kak Dimas & Ust. Edi Siswanto	Leadership, National Defense		Cultivating an independent, nationalist, courageous spirit committed to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia NKRI	

Source: Primary Data Processed (Interview and Observation Results at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School, 2026)

DISCUSSION

The actualization of character education that marries moderate religious values (wasathiyyah) with a spirit of nationhood (nationalism) at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School Buaran Jepara manifests a highly relevant cultural defense strategy. In the era of digital disruption, educational institutions are no longer merely spaces for the transfer of knowledge; instead, they serve as ideological fortresses to counter radical polarization and moral decadence resulting from globalization.

Through the lens of school culture management, teachers at this locus have shifted the conventional teaching paradigm toward a structured habituation strategy (habituasi/ta'wid). The following is a comprehensive analysis and discussion that integrates real field data with theoretical frameworks and comparative works from various academic authorities.

Analysis of School Culture-Based Routine Habituation Program Components

The habituation approach implemented daily at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School reflects the theory of permanent character formation initiated by Al-Ghazali (2015). The human soul is inherently dynamic; when its behavior is practiced repetitively and consistently (istiqamah), it becomes internalized into an established character (malakah).

Real data regarding the effectiveness of these daily habituation pillars are discussed particularly below:

Internalization of Wasathiyyah through Nadham Aqidatul Awam and Asmaul Husna

The classical activity of reciting Nadham Aqidatul Awam and Asmaul Husna every morning serves as the upstream source of students' spiritual conditioning. This data aligns with the principle of Wasathiyyah in Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab (2002) regarding the interpretation of QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 143. It states that the characteristics of ummatan wasathan (a middle community) are formed when the foundation of a person's creed (aqidah) is proportionally solid.

Reading the moderate theological draft through the lyrics of Aqidatul Awam (the basic creed of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah) equips students' reasoning so that they do not easily slip into far-left extremes (liberalism) or far-right extremes (radicalism/takfiri). This argument is reinforced by a document from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2019), which emphasizes that religious moderation must begin with the early strengthening of an inclusive and just religious mindset.

Spiritual Discipline through Congregational Dhuha Prayer

The habituation of congregational dhuha prayer confirms Lickona's (2013) thesis regarding the importance of touching upon the aspect of moral action, rather than merely moral knowing. From a theoretical-pedagogical standpoint, teachers at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School do not merely instruct students to be obedient, but instead condition an ecosystem in which obedience to Islamic law (sharia) is carried out together regularly. Nata (2016) adds that the repetition of ritual worship tightly supervised by teachers as murabbi (educators) will generate emotional stability (peace of mind) and punctuality (discipline), which serve as anchors for students' morality in social interactions.

Reconstruction of Ta'dzim Character through the Handshaking Cultural Tradition

Data concerning the tradition of handshaking between students and teachers every morning at the school gate is a concrete form of character education based on social habituation. In the sociology of Islamic education, handshaking is not merely a kinesthetic formality, but rather a transfer of ta'dzim values (sacred respect toward knowledge and educators).

This argument is supported by Tafsir (2017), who states that exemplary leadership combined with the habituation of warm physical contact (such as a handshake) is capable of eroding the egocentrism and arrogance typical of the adolescent phase. This tradition instills the ethics of politeness, which is the root of forming noble character (akhlakul karimah).

Al-Qur'an Murojaah and the Actualization of Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin

The murojaah (revision/review) activity after subuh for students living in the dormitory/boarding school represents a form of revelation-based spiritual deepening. Referring to M. Quraish Shihab's interpretation of QS. Al-Hujurat [49]: 13, the Al-Qur'an was revealed with the spirit of lita'arafu (getting to know one another and respecting diversity) (Shihab, 2002).

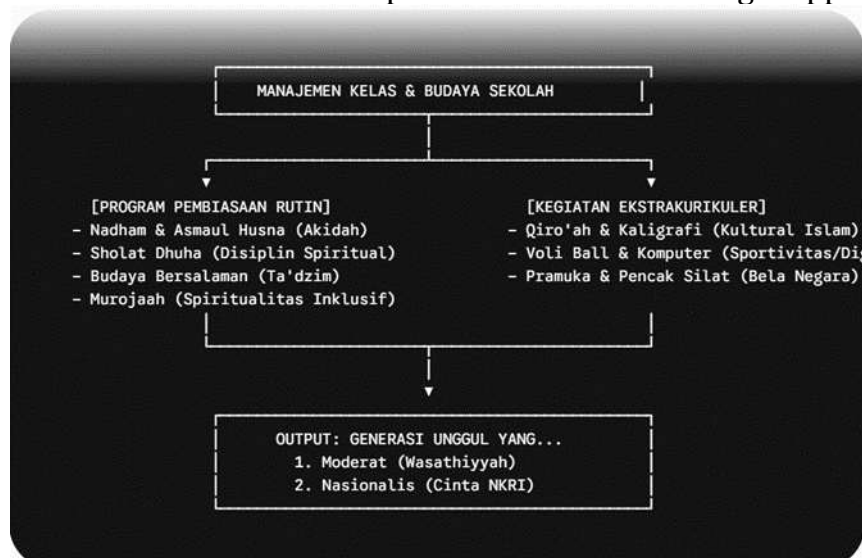
The supervising teachers here utilize the momentum of murojaah to direct students' mentality toward viewing their memorization as a blessing for the universe (rahmatan lil 'alamin), rather than as a tool for judgment or a self-righteous truth claim. This structure aligns with Abdullah's (2020) study, which posits that students' emotional closeness to sacred texts taught in a moderate manner will give rise to tolerant (tasamuh) and non-violent individuals.

Analysis of Character Value Internalization Through Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School are strategically positioned as a dynamic "social laboratory." While routine habituation at school is vertical-ritualistic in nature, extracurricular activities

bridge it in a horizontal-social manner. This student curriculum structure was designed by the Coordinator of Student Affairs, Mrs. Indri Maulida, to simultaneously balance intellectual, spiritual, and social intelligence (Maulida, 2025).

A critical analysis of the correlation between extracurricular data and Nationalistic and Moderation values is presented in the following mapping:



The Dimension of Islamic Cultural Arts (Qiro'ah, Nasheed, Rebana, and Calligraphy)

Field data indicates that the existence of Islamic art-based extracurriculars (Qiro'ah led by Ust. Baidowi; Nasheed-Rebana led by Ust. Khafilul Ula; Calligraphy led by Ust. Surya Wijaya) plays a crucial role as a medium for cultural moderation. Through these religious aesthetic exercises, students are not taught a rigid form of Islam, but rather an Islam that is adaptive to local cultural arts (local wisdom).

This aligns with Heriyudanta's (2022) premise that the integration of Islamic values with local cultural expressions is the primary key to shielding students from radical, transnational religious ideologies that are antipathetic toward Nusantara culture. The emphasis on precision and patience in calligraphy also trains a disciplined character and an appreciation for the nation's historical identity (Suyadi, 2018).

The Dimension of Physicality, Sportsmanship, and National Spirit (Volleyball, Scouting, and Pencak Silat)

Physical activities such as Volleyball (Ust. Sugiono), Scouting (Pramuka led by Kak Dimas), and Pencak Silat (Ust. Edi Siswanto) are analyzed as the primary pillars for instilling Nationalism from a Pancasila Education perspective. Referring to the thoughts of Winataputra (2012) and Miftahuddin (2013), true nationalism does not manifest merely from memorizing state texts, but rather from the habituation of mutual cooperation (gotong royong), sportsmanship, and a commitment to maintaining unity (the 3rd Principle of Pancasila).

In pencak silat and scouting training, students are mentally and physically forged to respect legal rules, remain loyal to the country, courageously defend the truth, and possess solidarity regardless of socio-economic backgrounds

(Sutrisno & Samsuri, 2023). This proves that the national commitment (hubbul wathan) at this school is positioned as an inherent part of the manifestation of faith (Astutik & Hadi, 2024).

The Dimension of Digital Literacy (Computer Extracurricular)

The findings regarding the computer extracurricular managed by Ust. M. Fikri demonstrate the school's managerial responsiveness toward 21st-century challenges. Instilling nationalism and moderation in the modern era must address the digital realm. Nurhailiah et al. (2024) assert that the rapid wave of digitalization is highly prone to triggering national disintegration through hoaxes and radical propaganda.

The critical digital literacy habituation implemented by the computer instructor at this locus guides students to use technology wisely, critically, and responsibly (Cantika et al., 2021). Students are trained to utilize the internet for educational welfare and national unity, rather than for generating hatred.

Synthesis: The Strategic Role of Teachers as "Driving Pillars"

The common thread of the entire data analysis at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School Buaran Jepara culminates in the transformation of the teacher's role. Based on personal communication with the Principal, Mr. Yusuf (2026), the active involvement of teachers at the forefront acts as a decisive catalyst for the success of habituation. Teachers at this locus have played multi-dimensional roles in accordance with modern educational management concepts (Mulyasa, 2022):

- a. As Role Models: Teachers stand at the forefront of the handshaking tradition, leading dhuha prayers, and guiding morning routine habituations. Gunawan's (2017) thesis confirms that the effectiveness of the habituation method (ta'wid) amounts to absolutely nothing if it is not accompanied by visual role modeling (uswah hasanah) from the educators.
- b. As Mentors and Inherent Supervisors: Teachers direct the course of extracurricular activities to ensure they remain within the corridors of inclusive Islam and Pancasila, preventing behavioral deviations or group exclusivism among students.

This integrative synergy successfully dismantles the false dichotomy between religious values and national values. This study validates the theories of Mansur et al. (2023) and Lartutul & Fahrany (2024), demonstrating that within a moderately managed Islamic educational ecosystem, nationalism is not viewed as a secular ideology detached from divinity, but is instead recognized as part of a moral-religious obligation to maintain peace on the land where they prostrate (sujud).

Through consistent habituation supervised by a healthy school culture management, Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School Buaran Jepara has accurately succeeded in nurturing an ideal profile of the student generation: firmly rooted in moderate religious spirituality (wasathiyyah), yet simultaneously militant in safeguarding the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the strategic role of teachers in shaping a moderate and nationalist generation at Manba'ul Ulum Islamic Junior High School Buaran Jepara is

optimally actualized through the transformation of their roles from mere instructors into role models and inherent supervisors. Teachers have successfully integrated moderate Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah religious values (wasathiyyah) and national spirit (nationalism) into the school culture management through two tactical pillars: 1) School Culture-Based Routine Habituation Program: Through direct supervision by teachers in activities such as reciting Nadham Aqidatul Awam & Asmaul Husna, congregational dhuha prayer, the handshaking cultural tradition, and Al-Qur'an murojaah after subuh, teachers have successfully cultivated a tolerant theological foundation (tawasuth), spiritual discipline, ta'dzim (respectful) character, and a rahmatan lil 'alamin perspective; 2) Value Internalization through Extracurricular Activities: Supervising teachers utilize extracurriculars as social laboratories that balance students' intellectual, spiritual, and social intelligence. This actualization manifests through the dimension of Islamic cultural arts (Qiro'ah, Nasheed, Rebana, Calligraphy) which are adaptive to local wisdom; the physical-sportsmanship dimension (Volleyball, Scouting, Pencak Silat) which instills a national defense spirit and Pancasila unity; and the digital literacy dimension (Computers) to foster critical attitudes in the era of globalization. The integrative synergy driven by these teachers has proven effective in dismantling the dichotomy between religious and national values, while simultaneously safeguarding students against the negative impacts of globalization and the infiltration of radical ideologies.

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