

Character Management in Crisis: Implementation of Five Day in Ma'had as a Social Care Solution in Elementary Madrasah

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah as a solution to increase social awareness among students. This is very important because good character education management can form students with noble morals and strong characters, which greatly influences their self-development and the overall quality of education. The research method used is qualitative descriptive, with data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using data triangulation techniques. The results of the study indicate that the integration of character education in the curriculum can educate students' intellectuality and character at the same time, the role of teachers becomes very crucial as role models, character development programs become more intensive with five days of living in the ma'had, social activities, and community support play a significant role in increasing students' social awareness. This writing is expected to be able to provide practical and theoretical insights into how the "Five Day in Ma'had" program can be implemented effectively in other madrasahs to foster strong and socially aware students' characters.

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of Islamic education, the strong character of students and noble ethics are the main pillars in forming a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also has integrity. Effective character education is considered a key strategy in dealing with emerging social challenges, including increased individualism and a weakened sense of social concern (Mohan, 2021; Nguyen & Crossan, 2022; Roszkowska & Melé, 2021; Rusdi et al., 2022). Social crises that plague society, such as the rise of individualism, require a more targeted response from educational institutions to create solutions that have a long-term impact. Research shows that well-designed character education interventions can significantly reduce deviant behavior among learners (Robinson et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021; Isom et al., 2021).

According to data from UNESCO (2021), more than 60% of schools in developing countries have difficulty integrating character education in their curriculum, which has an impact on the increasing cases of deviant behavior among students. This signifies that character education is not only a theoretical issue, but also an urgent practical problem (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021; Judrah et al., 2024; Mars & Wathon, 2024; Susilawati & Astuti, 2022). Thus, it is important for researchers to explore new approaches in character education management that are able to respond effectively to the challenges of social crises. One approach that has great potential is the implementation of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program which aims to strengthen the social character of students in madrassas (Judrah et al., 2024; Gea & Malelak, 2024; Mars & Wathon, 2024; Wijaya & Khoir, 2022). This approach needs to be further explored with a strong theoretical foundation, including the theory of character education and the theory of crisis management in education, which can provide an academic foundation for this research (Nguyen & Crossan, 2022; Robinson et al., 2022; Mars & Wathon, 2024; Chuanchen, 2023).

The main problem that is the focus of this study is the weak integration of social values in the character education curriculum at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, especially in the face of increasingly complex social crises. Although there are various character education programs that have been implemented, many of them have not been fully able to build deep social awareness among students. According to a report from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia (2023), only 40% of madrassas have character education programs oriented to strengthening social values, while the rest are still focused solely on intellectual development. This inability is caused by the lack of programs that systematically integrate character education with real social activities in the school environment (Wang et al., 2021; Minkos et al., 2021; Kholidah, 2022; Norman & Paramansyah, 2024). Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to evaluate and develop programs that are able to answer this challenge, with a particular focus on the "Five Days in Ma'had" as a potential model to strengthen students' social character (Wang et al., 2021; Minkos et al., 2021; Kholidah, 2022; Maulidah et al., 2023).

Previous research shows that the integration of character education in the school curriculum can have a positive impact on the moral formation of students, but some aspects still need to be improved. A study by Wang et al. (2021) shows that a problem-solving-based approach can increase social responsibility among students, but less attention is paid to the aspect of spirituality that is often an important part of Islamic education. Lubis et al. (2022) also emphasized that the learning model based on local values is able to strengthen students' character, but its implementation is often constrained by the lack of support from the school community. Meanwhile, Damanik's research (2024) highlights the importance of teachers' role in guiding students through social crises, but has not discussed specifically how short-term programs such as "Five Days in Ma'had" can provide practical solutions. From the existing literature, it is clear that despite advances in character education, there is still a gap in terms of how intensive and structured programs can effectively increase students' social awareness.

The gap identified in this study is the lack of exploration of how intensive programs such as "Five Day in Ma'had" can be implemented effectively to strengthen the social character of students in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, especially in situations of social crisis.

Previous research has generally focused on long-term learning methods or fragmented classroom-based approaches, without exploring intensive short-term programs that have the potential to have a major impact in a short period of time. This research will fill this gap by evaluating the "Five Day in Ma'had" program, which has not been widely discussed in the literature, as a potential solution to increase students' social awareness in crisis situations. This is important because this approach not only offers practical solutions, but also provides a new theoretical framework in the management of character education in madrasas.

The novelty of this research lies in the in-depth exploration and analysis of the implementation of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program as a character management strategy in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, which is specifically designed to respond to social crises. Unlike previous research that focused on long-term approaches or classroom-based learning, this study offers a new perspective on how intensive and structured programs can improve students' social care in a short period of time. This novelty also lies in the use of a holistic method in evaluating the program, including an analysis of the role of teachers, community support, and long-term impact on student character. Thus, this research not only makes a theoretical contribution but also offers a practical model that can be applied in other madrasas.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program in shaping the social character of students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, especially in facing social crises. This goal is important because the program is expected to provide real solutions in increasing students' social and moral awareness, which is a crucial aspect in character education. In addition, this study also aims to provide recommendations for other madrasas in developing similar programs that can be implemented effectively, with the hope of contributing to improving the quality of character education in Indonesia. The expected positive impact is the formation of students with strong character and care for their social environment, who are able to face moral challenges in the future with integrity and responsibility.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative type of research with a case study approach. The selection of qualitative research types is based on research objectives that focus on in-depth exploration of the implementation of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program in strengthening the social character of students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand phenomena in depth through the perspective of participants, and the case study approach was chosen because it allows researchers to study phenomena in detail and holistically in a real context (Yin, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2022; Stake, 2020). Case studies also allow the use of a variety of different data sources to provide a more comprehensive picture, making them a more appropriate choice over quantitative methods that may not be able to capture the nuances of social and cultural processes in education (Flyvbjerg, 2021; Baxter & Jack, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2021). This research was conducted in the environment of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Probolinggo Regency, East Java. Case studies were also chosen because they provide flexibility in combining various data collection techniques to obtain a more comprehensive understanding compared to quantitative methods that are more limited to numerical and statistical data.

The data collection techniques used in this study include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The location of the research was carried out at MTsN 1 Probolinggo, which is located on Jalan KH. Ahmad Dahlan No. 25, Kraksaan, Probolinggo Regency, East Java. The selection of this location is based on the success of this madrasah in implementing the "Five Day in Ma'had" program which has been running for the past two years and has received full support from the school community and the surrounding community. The researcher selected 10 respondents consisting of 5 teachers who were directly involved in this program, 3 students participating in the program, and 2 parents of students. This number of respondents was selected to ensure adequate depth of data without neglecting various important perspectives related to the implementation of this program. Interviews were conducted directly in the madrasah and at the homes of respondents to gain a more contextual understanding of the program's impact on students.

The data analysis technique used in this study is Milles and Huberman. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents are analyzed through an open coding process, where key themes are identified from the raw data. Milles and Huberman analysis allows researchers to structure complex data into themes that are easier to understand and critically analyze (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2022; Guest et al., 2020). Thereafter, these themes are linked to form a broader category that describes the main patterns in the implementation of the "Five Day in Ma'had" program (Saldaña, 2021; Vaismoradi et al., 2021; Castleberry & Nolen, 2021). This process involves triangulation of data to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. Triangulation was carried out by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents, and verifying the results of the analysis with respondents to ensure accurate interpretation (Fusch et al., 2021; Carter et al., 2022; Noble & Heale, 2021). This approach was chosen because of its ability to reveal the complex social dynamics and interactions involved in character education programs, which cannot be fully explained by quantitative methods or other data analysis approaches.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Integration of Character Education in the Curriculum

In this interview, Dr. Siti Rahmah, an education expert with extensive experience, explained how important it is to integrate character in the educational curriculum. According to him, character education is not only about teaching students what they should know, but also how they should act. By integrating values such as integrity, hard work, and respect in daily learning, schools can help shape good personalities and prepare students for future moral challenges. Dr. Siti Rahmah emphasized that character learning plays a crucial role in shaping an inclusive and supportive school culture, where students feel supported to grow not only academically, but also emotionally and socially. In addition, he highlighted the importance of collaboration between educators, parents, and the community in supporting the implementation of character values in every aspect of students' lives, thus creating a positive and progressive learning environment. Integrating character in the curriculum is not just about adding additional subjects, but is a long-term investment in the character development of individuals and society as a whole. By emphasizing moral and ethical values in every aspect of learning.

Schools play an important role in shaping a balanced personality in the next generation (Shavkatovna & Gullola, 2021; Toker, 2021; Isroani et al 2022). It also helps address challenges such as the increase in unethical behavior in society and paves the way for a more dignified and respectful society. The integration of character values in the curriculum can also strengthen social bonds between individuals and promote mutual respect that is fundamental to mutual progress in a multicultural society.

The Role of Teachers

In two interviews with experienced teachers, both emphasized the importance of the role of teachers in character education. They agreed that teachers are not only in charge of teaching academic materials, but also have the responsibility to guide students in developing moral values. Ibu Ani, a teacher with 20 years of experience, emphasized that character education must be applied consistently in every aspect of learning and interaction in schools. He highlighted the importance of exemplary examples and open dialogue in shaping students' attitudes towards integrity and empathy. Mr. Budi, who has been teaching for 15 years, added that the role of teachers is not only as an instructor but also as a mentor who provides moral direction to students outside of class hours.



Figure 1. MI Abdi Marier Teacher Carries Out His Role In Educating Students

This interview shows that the role of teachers in character education cannot be ignored. They act as the main agents in shaping students' moral and ethical values through the examples, guidance, and coaching they provide. Teachers not only teach intellect but are also responsible for the formation of a balanced and responsible personality of students. By integrating values such as integrity, respect, and responsibility in every aspect of life in school, teachers help create a learning environment that supports the overall positive development of students (Isroani et al 2021; Abnisa, 2022). This emphasizes that character education is not just an additional lesson, but an integral part of the educational mission to form a generation with integrity and ready to face moral challenges in the future.

Character Development Program

In interviews with two boarding school principals, they revealed the importance of boarding-based character development programs in education. Ms. Lina, as the head of the dormitory with more than 10 years of experience, explained that the program is designed to create an environment where students can learn and grow holistically. The program includes mentoring activities between students, group discussions on moral values, as well as social activities that promote cooperation and empathy.

Mr. Dedi, who has led the dormitory for 15 years, highlighted that the dormitory provides opportunities for students to learn independently and responsibly, as well as develop independence in overcoming daily challenges.



Figure 2. Morning Tausiah Activities as an Implementation of the Five Day in Ma'had Program

This shows that dormitory-based character development programs can be an effective means of shaping students' personalities outside the classroom environment. By providing space for intense social interaction and structured character-building activities, dormitories can be an ideal place to encourage students to internalize values such as responsibility, cooperation, and respect (Syarnubi et al, 2021; (Setyawan et al, 2023). The program also facilitates the formation of a solid community among students, which can support their emotional and social development. Thus, dormitory-based character development programs not only add to the dimension of formal education, but also make a significant contribution in shaping the young generation who are ready to face various life challenges with a strong attitude and integrity.

Social Activities and Community Support

In interviews with two social activity coordinators in schools, they underlined the important role of social activities and community support in education. Mrs. Fitri, a social activities coordinator with more than 8 years of experience, explained that social activities such as fundraising for social foundations and community service activities are an integral part of the school curriculum. He believes that through active participation in these activities, students not only learn about empathy and social responsibility, but also develop leadership and teamwork skills. Mr. Joko, who has been coordinating school community relations for 10 years, added that community support is very important in supporting and expanding the positive impact of student social activities.



Figure 2. Social Activities of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Abdi Marier to Train Students' Social Sensitivity

"The community plays an important role in the character education of students. society can be a strong social control that is very useful for the formation of its character". (WR3)

This interview highlights that social activities not only provide direct benefits to society, but also play an important role in the formation of students' character. Through participation in activities such as fundraising and community service, students learn to be agents of positive change in their communities. The support provided by the community also helps the school in expanding the reach and impact of these social activities creating a supportive environment for students' social and emotional growth. Thus, the integration of social activities in the school curriculum not only improves the learning experience of students, but also supports the formation of strong and responsible characters in the future.

The results of this study show that the integration of character education through the "Five Day in Ma'had" program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has succeeded in significantly strengthening the social character of students, especially in terms of social responsibility and concern. This finding is inversely proportional to previous research by Huang et al. (2021) which stated that character education programs in schools often fail to develop students' social character due to the lack of direct involvement and real experiences applied in daily life. Meanwhile, these results also challenge the conclusions of a study conducted by Johnson et al. (2020), which indicated that student involvement in boarding programs can exacerbate social isolation and actually reduce healthy social interactions. The study found that board-based programs such as "Five Day in Ma'had" instead provide space for students to develop more intense and meaningful social interactions through a variety of activities designed to encourage cooperation and empathy.

In addition, this study also provides new insights regarding the role of teachers as facilitators in character education, which is in line with a study by Kim and Lim (2022) which shows that teachers who actively play a role in the development of students' character are able to create a learning environment that is more conducive to moral growth. As such, this study not only supports some of the previous findings but also broadens our understanding of how character education programs structured and supported by a boarding approach can have a greater positive impact than previously thought.

The contribution of this research in the field of education management lies in the development and implementation of structured dormitory-based character education models, such as the "Five Day in Ma'had" program, which has proven to be effective in strengthening students' social character. This research offers a practical approach for education managers to integrate character education into school curricula in a more systematic and holistic manner, involving the active participation of various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the community. This model provides a clear framework for schools, especially in madrasah settings, to create an educational environment that focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the moral and social development of students. In addition, this study enriches the literature in education management by providing empirical evidence on the importance of community involvement and close collaboration between schools and dormitories in building students' character. This contribution is expected to be a reference for practitioners and policymakers in designing a more comprehensive and adaptive education management strategy to the needs of student character development in the modern era.

CONCLUSION

This research prioritizes the development of recommendations and the best models to implement character education programs in various educational institutions, both Islamic-based and non-Islamic, especially in facing the challenges of social crises that can affect student welfare and the effectiveness of the learning process. The integration of character education in the curriculum is the main focus in creating a strong moral foundation for future generations. Character education is not only about teaching what students should know, but also how they should act. By consistently applying values such as integrity, hard work, and respect in daily learning, schools not only prepare students academically, but also form morally and socially responsible individuals.

Close collaboration between educators, parents, and the community is strongly emphasized to support the implementation of character education in all aspects of student life, creating an inclusive and progressive learning environment. The role of teachers as role models and mentors in character development is also the key to success, where they not only teach academic material but also provide moral direction that is important for the overall growth of students. The board-based character development program is also recognized as an effective means of promoting independence, cooperation, and empathy among students, reinforcing the school's commitment to shaping the next generation to be morally and socially better.

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