

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT IN HOLISTIC LEARNING: ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING THE PANCA JIWA CHARACTER IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

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Abstract : *This study analyzes the implementation of authentic assessment in holistic learning and its impact on strengthening five student characters in a semi-modern Islamic boarding school. Using a qualitative case study at Pabelan Islamic Boarding School in Magelang, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that authentic assessment not only assesses learning outcomes but also the process of character formation through the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Its implementation is carried out through project-based, performance-based, and portfolio-based assessments integrated into the students' daily activities. This approach has been proven to strengthen the main character values of sincerity, simplicity, independence, Islamic brotherhood, and freedom through reflective, participatory, and contextual learning. In addition, social interactions within the Islamic boarding school environment also strengthen the internalization of values on an ongoing basis. However, challenges exist in the form of limited teacher competency, administrative burdens, and student-to-student ratios. Therefore, ongoing training and strengthening of the evaluation system are needed to optimize the implementation of authentic assessment in holistic character education.*

Keywords : *Authentic Evaluation; Holistic Learning; Panca-Jiwa; Semi-Modern Pesantren.*

Abstrak : *Studi ini menganalisis implementasi asesmen autentik dalam pembelajaran holistik dan dampaknya terhadap penguatan lima karakter siswa di sebuah pesantren semi-modern. Dengan menggunakan studi kasus kualitatif di Pesantren Pabelan Magelang, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, serta dianalisis dengan model Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa asesmen autentik tidak hanya menilai hasil belajar, tetapi juga proses pembentukan karakter melalui integrasi aspek kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotor. Implementasinya dilakukan melalui asesmen berbasis proyek, kinerja, dan portofolio yang terintegrasi dalam aktivitas keseharian santri. Pendekatan ini terbukti memperkuat nilai-nilai karakter utama ketulusan, kesederhanaan, kemandirian, persaudaraan Islami, dan kebebasan melalui pembelajaran reflektif, partisipatif, dan kontekstual. Selain itu, interaksi sosial di lingkungan pesantren turut memperkuat internalisasi nilai secara berkelanjutan. Meskipun demikian, terdapat tantangan berupa keterbatasan kompetensi guru, beban administratif, dan rasio jumlah siswa. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan pelatihan berkelanjutan dan penguatan sistem evaluasi untuk mengoptimalkan implementasi asesmen autentik dalam pendidikan karakter holistik.*

Kata Kunci : *Evaluasi Otentik; Pembelajaran Holistik; Panca-Jiwa; Pesantren Semi Modern.*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of educational transformation in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools reflects a complex interplay between modernization demands and the preservation of traditional Islamic values. On one side, pesantren are expected to adopt 21st-century learning approaches that emphasize critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability (Hacioglu & Gulhan, 2022; Zulyusri et al., 2023). On the other side, they must maintain their identity as institutions centered on moral and character formation. In practice, however, learning evaluation in many pesantren remains largely cognitive-oriented, focusing on written examinations and memorization (Abdullah et al., 2023; Net et al., 2023). Initial observations indicate that teachers often assess students based on academic achievement, while affective and character dimensions are not systematically evaluated. This creates a gap between the ideal goals of pesantren education and actual practices (Hanafi et al., 2021). The concept of *Panca Jiwa* sincerity, simplicity, independence, Islamic brotherhood, and freedom should guide all educational processes, yet it is not fully reflected in assessment systems (Munawwar, 2020). Consequently, the limited implementation of authentic evaluation becomes a critical issue that necessitates deeper investigation and innovative approaches.

Conceptually, authentic evaluation is recognized as a key approach in modern education that emphasizes real-world, performance-based assessment aligned with students' daily experiences. It integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains through instruments such as projects, portfolios, observations, and self-assessment (Dwivedi et al., 2022). Within the framework of holistic learning, this approach supports the development of intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously (Deliati, Asbi, 2024; Lee et al., 2023). In the context of pesantren, such integration is highly relevant because Islamic education inherently aims to foster character alongside knowledge acquisition. However, most previous studies have treated authentic evaluation and holistic learning as separate constructs, and research on pesantren has primarily focused on culture and pedagogy rather than assessment systems (Darwis et al., 2025). The novelty of this study lies in its effort to conceptually and empirically integrate authentic evaluation with holistic learning specifically to strengthen the *Panca Jiwa* character, positioning assessment not merely as a measurement tool but as a transformative mechanism for character development rooted in pesantren values.

Although prior research has explored authentic evaluation, holistic learning, and character education independently, their integration remains underdeveloped, particularly in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools. Existing studies emphasize higher-order thinking skills, student engagement, or moral education, yet they rarely connect these elements within a unified evaluation framework grounded in local religious values (Fikri et al., 2025; Mukhibat et al., 2024). In pesantren contexts, research has largely highlighted traditions,

leadership, and educational culture without critically examining how evaluation systems operationalize character formation (Ataman et al., 2024; Khamidah & Sanoto, 2025; Rokhim et al., 2021). This study offers a novel contribution by proposing a contextualized authentic assessment model that systematically links evaluation practices with the internalization of *Panca Jiwa* values through daily learning activities. By doing so, it bridges the gap between theoretical concepts and practical implementation, ensuring that character education is not only taught but also continuously assessed and reinforced.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the implementation of authentic evaluation within a holistic learning framework in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools and examine its implications for strengthening students' *Panca Jiwa* character. The study focuses on three main aspects: the implementation of authentic evaluation, its contribution to character development, and the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing its effectiveness. Conducted at Pesantren Pabelan, the research explores how evaluation practices are integrated into daily learning activities and how they balance cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The novelty is further reflected in the contextual application of this model in a semi-modern pesantren setting that integrates traditional values with contemporary educational demands. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute both theoretically by enriching the discourse on authentic evaluation in Islamic education and practically, by offering a comprehensive and character-oriented assessment framework for pesantren development.

METHOD

This study aims to analyze the implementation of authentic evaluation in holistic learning and its implications for strengthening the character of the five souls in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools. The main focus of the research is directed at how the practice of authentic evaluation not only measures cognitive aspects, but also shapes character values such as sincerity, simplicity, independence, *ukhuwah Islamiyah*, and responsible freedom (Mizrachi & Gretzel, 2020). To achieve this goal, this study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to explore complex social and educational phenomena in depth, especially related to contextual and value-based evaluation practices. Meanwhile, the case study design is used because this research focuses on one specific location, namely semi-modern Islamic boarding schools, so as to allow researchers to gain a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the dynamics that occur in them. The relevance of this approach lies in its ability to capture empirical reality in a naturalistic manner, including the interaction between teachers and students in the learning evaluation process. Thus, this research not only produces a description, but also

an in-depth interpretation of how authentic evaluation is implemented and interpreted by education actors in the context of pesantren.

Data collection in this study was conducted through in-depth, unstructured interviews with 10 informants, comprising teachers and students at the Pabelan Magelang Islamic Boarding School. Interviews were conducted for 100 minutes per session across three sessions held on April 7, 2026, with each informant's interaction lasting 10 to 20 minutes. The interview uses Javanese and Indonesian as the informant's mother tongue, in order to create a more natural atmosphere and facilitate in-depth data digging. All interview results are then transliterated into Indonesian to facilitate data reduction and presentation, and translated into English with the informant's permission for scientific publications. In addition to interviews, this study also uses document analysis techniques and participatory observation. The documents analyzed included the pesantren curriculum, learning evaluation tools, student report books, and daily activity records that reflect the implementation of the five soul values (Anderson et al., 2021). Participatory observation is carried out by the researcher, who is directly involved in the students' learning activities and daily life, such as participating in class activities, congregational worship, and dormitory activities, to gain a contextual understanding of authentic evaluation practices in real life.

Table 1: Informant Profiles

No	Initials	Status	Gender	Place of <i>Nyantri</i>
1	G1	Teacher	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
2	G2	Teacher	Women	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
3	G3	Teacher	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
4	G4	Teacher	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
5	G5	Teacher	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
6	S1	Students	Women	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
7	S2	Students	Women	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
8	S3	Students	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
9	S4	Students	Male	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang
10	S5	Students	Women	Pesantren Pabelan Magelang

Data validation in this study was carried out through triangulation across sources, methods, and time. Source triangulation is done by comparing data from teachers and students to ensure consistency in the information. Triangulation techniques involve comparing the results of interviews, observations, and document analysis to ensure the data obtained complement and corroborate one another. Meanwhile, time triangulation was carried out by repeating data collection at different times in three interview sessions, to

ensure the stability of the data obtained. The data analysis in this study refers to the (Miles et al., 2014) interactive analysis model which includes three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out by filtering and selecting data that is relevant to the focus of the research, especially related to authentic evaluation practices and the value of five souls. The presentation of data is in the form of a systematic, descriptive narrative, making it easier for researchers to see patterns and relationships in the data. The final stage is the drawing of conclusions, carried out gradually and continuously throughout the research process, while still leaving open the possibility of re-verification of the findings. Thus, data analysis is carried out dynamically and continuously until valid and credible findings are obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Results

a) Implementation of Authentic Evaluation in Holistic Learning in Semi-Modern Islamic Boarding Schools

The results of the study show that the implementation of authentic evaluation in holistic learning at the Pabelan Magelang Islamic Boarding School is not only oriented towards measuring cognitive learning outcomes, but also includes affective and psychomotor dimensions that are integrated into students' daily lives. These findings indicate three main forms of authentic evaluation implementation. *First*, project-based assessment is applied through contextual tasks such as the creation of Islamic writings, digital da'wah programs, and pesantren-based social activities that require integration between knowledge and real practice. *Second*, performance assessment is conducted through direct observation of student activities, including worship practices, leadership of student organizations, and communication skills in lectures and discussions. *Third*, portfolio assessment is used to document student development in an ongoing manner, including work results, activity reports, and self-reflection. These findings confirm that authentic evaluation in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools has been implemented comprehensively and sustainably, enabling it to represent a holistic and contextual learning process. Thus, evaluation not only functions as a measuring tool, but also as an integral part of the overall student development process.

This is reflected in various learning practices that not only focus on academic results but also on the development of students' character and life skills. The G1

teacher emphasized that *"The evaluation here is not only about exam scores, but how students can practice their knowledge in their daily lives."* The statement was reinforced by Teacher G2, who revealed that *"We see the development of students from their attitudes, discipline, and responsibilities."* In addition, S1 students said that *"I feel assessed from all activities, not just from written exams."* The same thing was also conveyed by S3 students who stated that *"We must be active in activities, because it is also part of the assessment."* The G3 teacher added that *"Assessments are conducted continuously, not just at the end of the lesson."* In fact, S2 students emphasized that *"Every activity in the pesantren has its own learning and assessment value."* This data shows that authentic evaluation has become an integral part of the pesantren education system, not only measuring learning outcomes but also shaping students' character in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

The results of the observation show that authentic evaluation practices in the Pabelan Islamic Boarding School environment are implemented in a real and consistent manner in students' daily learning. During the observation process, it was observed that learning activities do not take place only in the classroom but are also integrated into daily activities such as congregational worship, community service, group discussions, and involvement in student organizations. In each of these activities, teachers actively assess students' attitudes, discipline, responsibility, and collaboration skills. The interaction between teachers and students also shows a reflective, continuous evaluation process, in which teachers provide direct feedback on students' behavior and participation. In addition, it was found that students are aware that every activity they do has educational value and is part of the assessment, thereby encouraging them to be more active and responsible. There is no predominance of test-based assessments alone, but a comprehensive assessment of the process and individual development of students. A conducive, disciplined, and Islamic values-based pesantren environment also strengthens the implementation of this authentic evaluation. Thus, the results of this observation strengthen the findings of the interview that authentic evaluation of действительно is an integral part of shaping the character and life skills of students in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Furthermore, the implementation of project-based assessment is one of the concrete forms of authentic evaluation applied in this Islamic boarding school. This assessment encourages students to integrate theoretical knowledge with real practice in social and religious life. The G4 teacher said that *"We give project tasks such as creating digital da'wah content so that students can apply their knowledge."* This statement was

reinforced by the G5 Teacher who said that *"The projects given are always related to the real life of the students."* From the student's side, this experience was felt to be very meaningful, as expressed by the S4 student that *"I learned to make da'wah videos and it was very challenging and useful."* S5 students also mentioned that *"Through projects, we learn to work together and be responsible."* In addition, Guru G1 emphasized that *"The assessment of the project is not only seen from the final result, but also from the process of the work."* This is in line with the statement of S2 students who said that *"We are judged by how we complete the task, not just the result."* This data shows that project-based assessments not only improve understanding of concepts but also significantly develop students' collaborative skills, creativity, and social responsibility.

In addition to project-based assessment, performance assessment is also an important component of authentic evaluation in this Islamic boarding school. This assessment is carried out through direct observation of students' activities, both academic and non-academic. The G2 teacher explained that *"We assess how the students lead the activities and interact with their friends."* This is reinforced by the G3 Teacher who said that *"The communication skills of students during lectures are also part of the assessment."* From a student's perspective, this approach provides a more authentic learning experience, as expressed by S3 students: *"I feel more confident because I am often trained to perform in public."* S1 students also added that *"We learn not only in the classroom, but also through hands-on practice."* The G4 teacher emphasized that *"Performance appraisals help us see the real abilities of the students."* Meanwhile, S4 students stated that *"Every activity such as discussion or organization is always assessed by the teacher."* This data shows that performance assessment provides a more authentic picture of students' abilities because it assesses skills and attitudes directly in real-life contexts.

Furthermore, portfolio assessment is an important tool for documenting students' development in a sustainable manner. This portfolio includes various works, activity reports, and self-reflections that describe students' learning processes over time. The G5 teacher stated that *"The portfolio helps us see the development of students as a whole."* This was reinforced by the G1 Teacher, who said, *"We collect all the work of students as material for long-term evaluation."* From the student side, the use of portfolios also provides significant benefits, as expressed by S2 students that *"I can see my own development over time through portfolios."* The S5 students also added that *"The portfolio makes us more aware of the learning process we have gone through."* The G3

teacher emphasized that "*Portfolio assessment does not only focus on results, but also students' self-reflection.*" Meanwhile, S4 students stated that "*We were asked to write a reflection after each activity.*" This data shows that portfolio assessment not only serves as a documentation tool but also as a means of reflection that encourages self-awareness and sustainable development of students.

Overall, the implementation of authentic evaluation at the Pabelan Magelang Islamic boarding school demonstrates a strong integration of various assessment forms to support holistic learning. The three forms of assessment—projects, performance, and portfolios—complement each other in providing a comprehensive picture of student development. The G2 teacher stated that "These three forms of assessment support each other to see the full abilities of the students." This statement is reinforced by the G4 Teacher who said that "Evaluation is carried out in an ongoing and integrated manner in every activity." From the student's perspective, this approach provides a more meaningful learning experience, as expressed by S1: "*We feel judged fairly because all aspects are taken care of.*" S3 students also mentioned that "*Assessments at Islamic boarding schools make us more developed overall.*" The G5 teacher added that "*Evaluation is not only to measure, but also to foster students.*" Meanwhile, the S2 student affirmed that "*We learned that the process is more important than the final result.*" This data shows that authentic evaluation not only serves as a measurement tool but also as an integral part of the holistic coaching process, enabling students to become not only academically intelligent but also mature in character and social skills.

b) Contribution of Authentic Evaluation to Strengthening the Character of the Five Souls of Students

This study found that authentic evaluation in holistic learning has a significant contribution to strengthening the character of the five souls of students, namely sincerity, simplicity, independence, ukhuwah Islamiyah, and freedom. Three main forms of contribution have been identified. *First*, through self-reflection in portfolio assessment, students become accustomed to conducting an honest internal evaluation of their learning process, rather than being solely oriented to grades, thereby forming the character of sincerity and self-awareness. *Second*, assessments based on social and collaborative activities have been proven to strengthen the value of Islamic ukhuwah and simplicity, as students engage in joint activities that foster a sense of togetherness, empathy, and social concern. *Third*, performance assessment in independent and leadership tasks provides students with space to develop independence and responsible autonomy, especially in decision-making and task management. These

findings show that authentic evaluation not only affects the academic aspect but also serves as a strategic instrument in shaping students' character in line with the pesantren's basic values, thus producing individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also morally and socially mature.

This practice encourages students not only to focus on the final result but also on the learning process, carried out consciously and honestly. This is reinforced by S1's statement that *"I have become more honest in judging myself"*, and S3 which revealed that *"this kind of assessment makes me not only pursue grades"*. The teacher also confirmed that this approach is effective in building intrinsic awareness, as G2 states that *"students begin to understand the importance of process, not just results"* and G4 adds that *"they are more reflective of their shortcomings"*. In addition, the dimension of sincerity can be seen from the change in the learning orientation of the students which is more meaningful, as S5 said that *"I study because I want to understand, not because I am afraid of bad grades"*, and G1 observes that *"they look calmer and less depressed when assessed"*. This data shows that authentic self-reflection-based evaluations foster strong internal awareness, which ultimately shapes a character of sincerity. In this context, evaluation is no longer seen as a mere measuring tool but as a learning process that facilitates continuous growth in self-awareness. Thus, this practice is in line with the values of pesantren education that emphasizes the balance between cognitive and affective aspects, so that students not only develop intellectually, but also morally and spiritually.

The second contribution of authentic evaluation is the strengthening of Islamic ukhuwah and simplicity through social, collaborative, activity-based assessments. Group activities that are integrated in the evaluation system encourage students to cooperate with each other, share roles, and understand each other's conditions. This is reflected in S2's statement that *"we became closer because we often work in groups"*, and S4 who added that *"I learned to appreciate friends with different abilities"*. Teachers also affirm that social interaction in assessments has a significant impact on character building, as G3 reveals that *"shared activities make them more concerned about each other"* and G5 states that *"the value of togetherness grows naturally"*. In addition, simplicity is reflected in the attitude of students who do not overstate their abilities, as expressed by S3, who says, *"we do not show off the results of our assignments,"* and reinforced by G2, who states, *"children become more humble in work."* This data shows that authentic evaluations based on collaboration not only improve social skills, but also reinforce

the values of togetherness and simplicity that characterize pesantren life. Thus, the evaluation process serves to foster an inclusive and harmonious social character.

Performance appraisal in independent tasks and leadership is a third significant form of contribution in shaping the character of independence and responsible freedom. Students are given space to manage tasks independently, make decisions, and lead certain activities. This can be seen from S1's statement that "*I learned to manage my own time*", and S4 which revealed that "*we were given the trust to lead the group*". Teachers also observed an increase in managerial skills and responsibility, as G1 said, "*Students are starting to dare to make decisions*," and G3 added, "*They are more confident in completing tasks*." The freedom given is not unlimited, but remains within the corridor of pesantren values, as S5 states that "*we are free to have opinions but still have to be polite*" and G4 emphasizes that "*their freedom is guided so that they do not go out of the value of the pesantren*". This data shows that authentic evaluation through performance assessment makes a real contribution to shaping the character of independent and responsible students. Thus, students are not only trained to become individuals able to complete tasks independently, but also to exercise ethical awareness in using their freedoms.

In addition to the three main forms of contribution, this study's findings also show the integration of character values throughout the ongoing authentic evaluation process. Evaluation does not stand alone; it becomes part of a learning system integrated into students' daily lives. This is reflected in the G5's statement, which states that "*assessments are carried out not only in the classroom, but also in daily activities*", and S2, which states that "*we are judged from our daily attitudes as well*". Other informants such as S3 added that "*teachers always associate tasks with life values*", and S4 said that "*we have become accustomed to behaving well because we feel that we are always judged*". The teacher also emphasized that this approach strengthens character consistency, as G2 states that "*evaluation is a tool for habituating values*" and G3 reveals that "*students show a stable change in attitude*". This data shows that the success of authentic evaluation does not lie solely in the methods used, but also in its consistent application across various aspects of students' lives. Thus, authentic evaluation serves as an effective value internalization mechanism, able to shape students' character in a sustainable manner in real life.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that authentic evaluation plays a strategic role in shaping the character of the five students' souls as a whole. The impact is not only seen in the academic aspect but also in the moral and social development

of students. This is reinforced by the statement of S5 which states that "I feel that I have changed for the better", and S1 which expresses that "learning has become more meaningful to us". The teacher also confirmed that G1 stated that "learning outcomes are not only seen from grades, but from attitudes" and G4 added that "the character of the students develops in real terms". In addition, S3 said that "we have become more independent and responsible", while S2 stated that "the relationship between students is getting stronger". This data shows that authentic evaluations can create a balance between intellectual intelligence and character maturity. Thus, this approach becomes a relevant evaluation model in pesantren education, because it is not only oriented to academic achievements but also to the formation of a whole individual, that is, one who has moral integrity, social maturity, and spiritual strength in line with the basic values of pesantren.

c) Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for the Implementation of Authentic Evaluation in Strengthening the Character of the Five Souls

The study found that the success of implementing authentic evaluation in holistic learning in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools was influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors. Three main supporting factors were found. First, the commitment of teachers and caregivers of Islamic boarding schools who have high awareness of the importance of character education and a holistic approach in learning. Second, a conducive and integrated pesantren environment, where students' daily activities are part of the learning and evaluation processes, thus facilitating the implementation of authentic assessments in a sustainable manner. Third, a flexible and adaptive curriculum that allows integration of academic and non-academic activities into the assessment process. However, the study also found three inhibiting factors. *First*, the limitations of teachers' competence in designing and implementing comprehensive, authentic evaluation instruments. *Second*, the high administrative burden teachers must bear impedes the optimization of the in-depth evaluation process. *Third*, the relatively large number of students makes it difficult to conduct intensive individual observations. These findings suggest that optimizing authentic evaluation requires systemic support, educator capacity-building, and effective, sustainable learning management.

The results of this study show that the commitment of teachers and caregivers of pesantren is the main foundation in the successful implementation of authentic evaluation based on holistic learning. This commitment is not only reflected in learning planning but also in daily practices that emphasize the integration of

character values. One of the informants, G1, stated, *"We not only teach the material, but also assess the attitude and daily life of the students every day."* This statement is reinforced by G2 which states, *"evaluation in this pesantren cannot be separated from the formation of morals."* From the student's side, S1 revealed that *"we feel that we are always assessed, not only during exams but also during daily interactions."* The same thing was conveyed by S3 who said, *"teachers always pay attention to our behavior, even outside the classroom."* This commitment is also supported by the G3 which affirms that *"holistic education requires full awareness from teachers to be consistent in assessment."* In addition, the G5 added that *"without a strong commitment, authentic evaluation will only be a formality."* This data shows that the success of authentic evaluation depends heavily on educators' collective awareness of learning as a comprehensive character-forming process. Thus, the commitment of teachers and caregivers is not only a supporting factor, but also the main driver in ensuring that authentic evaluations run in a sustainable and meaningful manner in the context of semi-modern Islamic boarding school education.

In addition to educators' commitment, a conducive, integrated pesantren environment is a very significant supporting factor in the implementation of authentic evaluation. This environment allows the assessment process to unfold naturally and sustainably because students' daily activities are part of learning. G4 stated that *"the pesantren environment is very helpful because we can assess students all the time."* This statement is reinforced by G2, which states, *"activities such as worship, group learning, and social interaction are the subject of evaluation."* From students' perspective, S2 reveals that *"we feel like we learn anywhere, not just in the classroom."* S4 also added, *"even when we were in the dormitory, we were still judged by the ustadz."* This shows that integrating life and learning creates opportunities for more comprehensive evaluation. G1 asserts that *"the boarding school system makes authentic evaluations easier to implement."* Meanwhile, G3 stated that *"a controlled environment makes it easier to observe the behavior of students directly."* This data shows that an integrated pesantren environment not only supports the learning process, but also strengthens the validity of authentic evaluations. With intense interaction between teachers and students, the assessment process becomes more context-based and reflects real conditions, resulting in evaluation results that more accurately describe student development holistically.

A flexible and adaptive curriculum is also an important supporting factor in the successful implementation of authentic evaluation. This curriculum allows for integration between academic and non-academic activities, so that assessment is not limited to cognitive aspects alone. The G5 states that *"the curriculum in Islamic boarding*

schools provides space to assess skills and attitudes simultaneously." This is reinforced by G2 which says, *"we can combine assessment between formal lessons and pesantren activities."* From the student's side, S5 revealed that *"we are not only judged by test scores, but also by daily activities."* S1 also added, *"activities such as discussions and group work are also assessed by teachers."* G4 states that *"curriculum flexibility makes teachers more creative in designing evaluations."* Meanwhile, G3 affirms that *"a non-rigid curriculum is helpful in implementing authentic assessments."* This data shows that an adaptive curriculum provides teachers with space to innovate in developing evaluation instruments that are relevant to holistic learning needs. Thus, curriculum flexibility not only supports authentic evaluation but also enhances the overall quality of learning through a more contextual and integrative approach.

However, this study also found that teachers' competence in designing and implementing authentic evaluation instruments was one of the main inhibiting factors. G1 acknowledges that *"not all teachers understand how to create appropriate evaluation instruments."* This is reinforced by G2 stating, *"we still need special training related to authentic evaluation."* The G4 also added that *"designing a comprehensive assessment is not an easy task."* From students' perspective, S3 revealed that *"sometimes assessments feel inconsistent between one teacher and another."* S2 also mentioned, *"there are teachers who only focus on exam scores."* The G5 affirmed that *"these competency limitations are a major challenge in the implementation of authentic evaluation."* This data shows that, despite the commitment and supportive environment, the lack of teachers' capacity to understand authentic evaluation concepts and techniques can hinder the optimal implementation of these concepts and techniques. Therefore, improving competence through training and mentoring is an urgent need so that teachers can design evaluations that are valid, reliable, and in line with the principles of holistic learning.

In addition to limited competence, the high administrative burden and the large number of students are also inhibiting factors in the implementation of authentic evaluation. The G3 states that *"administrative burdens often reduce the time to conduct in-depth evaluations."* This is reinforced by G2 saying, *"we have to fill out a lot of paperwork so that the focus on the assessment is reduced."* G1 also added that *"the large number of students makes individual observation difficult."* From the student side, S4 revealed that *"not all students get the same attention from teachers."* S5 also mentioned, *"sometimes teachers don't have time to assess in detail because there are many of us."* G4 emphasized that *"the unbalanced ratio of teachers and students is the main obstacle."* This data shows

that structural factors, such as workload and the number of learners, greatly influence the effectiveness of authentic evaluations. Without effective management, teachers will find it difficult to observe in depth and continuously. Therefore, systemic support, reduced administrative burden, and additional educators are needed to ensure the optimal implementation of authentic evaluation and a significant impact on the quality of holistic learning in semi-modern Islamic boarding schools.

2. Discussion

The results of the study show that the implementation of authentic evaluation in holistic learning at the Pabelan Magelang pesantren not only focuses on cognitive aspects but also includes affective and psychomotor dimensions, integrated into students' daily lives. This evaluation is realized through three main forms: project-based assessments, such as Islamic writings and digital da'wah programs; performance assessments through observation of worship, leadership, and communication practices; and portfolio assessments that document students' development in a sustainable manner. The application of authentic evaluation has proven to contribute significantly to strengthening the character of the five souls of students, namely sincerity, simplicity, independence, *ukhuwah Islamiyah*, and freedom (Zamroni et al., 2020). Through self-reflection in the portfolio, students are trained to be honest and not value-oriented, while social and collaborative activities strengthen a sense of togetherness and empathy (Fawaid et al., 2025). In addition, performance appraisals in independent tasks and leadership encourage the development of independence and responsible freedom (Karim et al., 2025). However, the success of this implementation is influenced by supporting factors such as teacher commitment, a conducive pesantren environment, and a flexible curriculum, as well as inhibiting factors such as limited teacher competence, a high administrative burden, and a large number of students. Therefore, optimizing authentic evaluations requires systemic support and educator capacity building.

The theoretical significance of these findings can be comprehensively analyzed through the perspective of John Dewey, specifically the experiential learning theory, which emphasizes that true learning occurs through direct experience, reflection, and active involvement of individuals in their social context (Kolovou et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2025). The findings of this study show that authentic evaluation through project, performance, and portfolio assessments is not just a measurement tool for learning outcomes, but an integral part of the learning process itself that is contextual and sustainable (Townley & Koop, 2024). In Dewey's framework, this practice reflects the principles of continuity and interaction, in which students' learning experiences unfold

continuously and interact with the value-rich pesantren environment. Evaluations involving self-reflection and social activities also strengthen the construction of learning meaning, so that students not only understand knowledge cognitively but also internalize values such as sincerity, independence, and Islamic ukhuwah (Adeoye et al., 2025; Munawwaroh, 2024). Thus, authentic evaluation in this context serves as a medium for transforming experience into knowledge and character, in line with Dewey's idea that education is a process of experiential reconstruction (Dwivedi et al., 2022; Nurhakim, 2020). In addition, the supporting and inhibiting factors identified indicate that the success of experiential learning is highly dependent on the quality of the learning environment and the facilitator's readiness (Kolovou et al., 2024). Therefore, these findings, in theory, confirm that authentic evaluation is a concrete manifestation of experiential learning that effectively shapes the whole individual, both intellectually and morally.

The findings of this study surprisingly show a very strong level of consistency with previous research across contexts and time, while presenting an unexpected new dimension to authentic evaluation studies. Farooq et al., (2024) study confirms that authentic evaluation is able to reflect the real abilities of students in contextual situations, which is astonishingly in line with the practice of project and performance assessment in Islamic boarding schools. Furthermore, Ramke et al., (2022) research reinforces the importance of in-depth understanding through contextual assessment, which in this finding is realized through the reflective portfolio of students. Bayat & Herrera, (2010) The study also shows that authentic evaluation encourages 21st-century skills, but this research unexpectedly extends it to the formation of religious character based on the five souls. Furthermore, Thomas Lickona's (1991) thoughts on character education resonated strongly with the practice of habituating values through students' social activities. Meanwhile, the findings of Micah et al., (2023) related to the challenges of assessment implementation are also proven to be relevant, especially in the aspect of teacher burden and technical limitations. But most surprisingly, this study not only confirms these theories, but integrates them organically into the ecosystem of Islamic boarding schools that live 24 hours. The novelty of this research lies in the unique synthesis between authentic evaluation and internalization of the value of the five souls in the context of a sustainable and comprehensive religious culture.

Given the novelty of integrating authentic evaluation with the value of five souls in the pesantren ecosystem, which occurs holistically and sustainably, the strategic steps that need to be taken now are crucial at both the institutional and individual levels.

Institutionally, Islamic boarding schools and educational institutions need to formulate curriculum policies that explicitly integrate authentic, value-based evaluation into all learning activities, not only in the classroom but also in students' daily lives. This includes strengthening teacher capacity through intensive training in designing authentic evaluation instruments that are contextual, reflective, and character-building-oriented, in line with the idea of meaningful evaluation (Haudi, 2024). In addition, an adaptive evaluation management system is needed that does not burden teachers administratively, so they can focus more on assisting students in depth. On the other hand, individually, teachers are required to transform from mere evaluators to reflective learning facilitators, able to guide students in the process of internalizing values through real experience and self-reflection, in line with the experiential learning principles of John Dewey (Yoto et al., 2024). Students also need to be encouraged to become active subjects in self-evaluation, so that an intrinsic awareness of the learning process and their character development is formed. Thus, the synergy between institutional policies and individual awareness is the key to optimizing authentic evaluation as an instrument of complete and sustainable educational transformation.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that authentic evaluation in holistic learning in Pabelan Islamic boarding schools is not just an assessment instrument but has become a character development mechanism organically integrated into all student life activities. These findings confirm that the success of pesantren education cannot be measured solely by academic achievements; rather, it lies in the institution's ability to integrate assessment with real-life practices that foster sincerity, independence, simplicity, Islamic ukhuwah, and responsible freedom. Surprisingly, this study reveals that the main strength of authentic evaluation is not in the instruments or methods used, but in the pesantren ecosystem itself, which makes every activity a space for life evaluation. In fact, even under conditions of limited resources, such as uneven teacher competence, a high administrative burden, and a large number of students, authentic evaluation can still run effectively and have a significant impact on character building. This shows the resilience of the pesantren education system, which does not depend entirely on formal standards but relies on the values, culture, and examples that live within it. Thus, these findings challenge the general assumption that effective evaluation must be based on a rigorous, standardized system, because it is precisely in the flexibility and integration of life values that authentic evaluation finds its most profound transformative power.

Although this study makes an important contribution to explaining the integration of authentic evaluation with character values in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren),

several weaknesses require critical examination. *First*, this study is limited to a single institutional context, namely the Pabelan Islamic Boarding School in Magelang, thus limiting the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts, both different Islamic boarding schools and public schools. *Second*, the qualitative approach used relies heavily on informants' subjectivity and the researcher's interpretation, so the potential for bias cannot be completely avoided, particularly in assessing affective aspects and value internalization. *Third*, this study has not yet measured the long-term impact of authentic evaluation on students' character development, so the sustainability of its effects remains to be empirically verified. Furthermore, limited teacher competency and high administrative burdens are identified as findings but have not been analyzed in depth within the framework of systematic, implementable solutions. Therefore, future research should expand the scope of the study to various educational institution contexts, use a mixed-methods approach to enhance data validity, and conduct longitudinal studies to assess the sustainable impact. In addition, it is important to develop more efficient teacher-training models and evaluation systems so that authentic evaluation can be implemented optimally and sustainably.

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