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The Implementation of the Islamic Personal Development Program in Cultivating Students' Noble Character at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah

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Abstract

Modern education faces the challenge of moral degradation, which demands character interventions beyond classical approaches. This study aims to examine the managerial mechanisms of the Islamic Personal Development Program at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah, which serves as a holistic ecosystem for moral cultivation. Employing a qualitative case-study design, data were extracted from multi-actor interviews, small-group participatory observations, and evaluation documentation and subsequently analyzed using an interactive reduction scheme. The findings confirm that stable character formation is realized through three managerial reconfigurations. In the planning phase, the curriculum is centrally controlled by the foundation, which tactically restructures the class into small groups of up to ten 10 students. During the implementation phase, the program shifts away from cognitive transmission orientation to prioritize emotional bonding and exemplary imitation through varied educative methods. In the evaluation phase, the school exclusively uses observation-based qualitative assessments and daily track records, followed by educational disciplinary measures. The conclusion of this study asserts that internal governance reconfigurations are proven effective in instilling discipline in daily worship. However, the ultimate manifestation of social morality strictly requires the reinforcement of supervisory synergy from parents to sustain behavioral habits outside school hours. Consequently, these findings recommend a more binding model of family involvement within the governance of character education.

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Introduction

Education in the modern era faces a fundamental challenge in the form of a severe gap between students' intellectual achievements and moral maturity. An educational orientation overly focused in fulfilling cognitive targets has marginalised the essence of instilling *adab* (ethics and good manners), as evidenced in an empathy crisis and behavioural degradation among adolescents. Junior high school students are in a highly fragile psychological transition phase and are extremely vulnerable to external social environmental influences (Barus & Sunyi, 2023; Utami & Harmanto, 2022). This vulnerability is evidenced by various child protection agency reports that consistently

highlight high rates of bullying, verbal abuse, and antisocial behaviour occurring in educational institutions (Abubakar et al., 2021). This crisis condition is further exacerbated by the lack of direct social interaction habits stemming from the excesses of past distance learning, which have significantly contributed to character distortions, such as individualistic attitudes and a blunting of empathy towards others (Afriansyah, 2024).

The systemic failure to stem this moral degradation is rooted in the discontinuity of instilling good values outside formal school hours. Various social diagnoses indicate that today's students are exposed to a digital ecosystem and associations that undermine the basic moral order (Kuswanto, 2021; Anwar, 2021; Anwidrus & Mubaraq, 2023). At the school operational level, educators encounter real problems in including students' use of harsh language, being easily carried away by negative external associations, and a lack of behavioural control and supervision from parents when children are at home (Abubakar et al., 2021). Therefore, schools now bear a very heavy burden to create an internal ecosystem capable of neutralising these destructive influences, while simultaneously taking over the role of holistic character building that family institutions cannot fully fulfil.

Ironically, in facing this multidimensional moral crisis, educational institutions often still rely on classical approaches that are mass-oriented and centralised on the transmission of theory. Islamic Religious Education subjects inherently carry a curricular mandate that demands the holistic achievement of competencies, ranging from moral knowledge and moral feeling to moral action (Maulidi et al., 2022). However, the reality of implementing classical learning in large classes makes it difficult for educators to condition the atmosphere and reach the students' personal domains deeply. Classical learning creates a communication gap, preventing the heart-to-heart approach, a primary prerequisite for moral cultivation, from materialising. Consequently, religious education risks being paralysed, trapped in the realm of cognitive knowledge, and failing in cultivate affective awareness, let alone culminating in real behavioural improvement (Kusumadewi & Wijanarko, 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2023).

Fundamental character building requires more than just information transfer; it demands a space for habituation, consistent role modelling, and authentic emotional bonds. Research on pedagogical innovation affirms that experiential and collaborative approaches are far superior to one-way lecture models in improving character outcomes (Addawiyah & Rahmayanti, 2026). Realising the limitations of the classical approach, schools require an intensive, exclusive alternative cultivation platform. Interestingly, the Islamic Personal Development Program, which was initially designed to build teachers' spiritual capacity, was ultimately repurposed to cultivate students' character. This strategic decision was made to address the need for a more intimate, directed approach, in which large classes are broken down into small units that enable personal moral dialogue.

In response to various conventional pedagogical limitations, the Integrated Islamic School network has begun to position mentoring and *balaqah* (Islamic study circles) programs at the forefront of the character education agenda. By design, this cultivation program operates in a small-group format that enables much more intensive, transparent, and close interaction between educators as mentors and students (Casma et al., 2022). The existence of an independent intracurricular program managed in small groups is proven to be a living instrument for moral cultivation because it successfully integrates Islamic value materials with the fostering of brotherhood bonds and strict social control (Afriansyah, 2024). Various previous studies have documented the positive impacts of mentoring implementation on improving worship discipline,

social care attitudes, and the refinement of students' spoken language in the school environment (Barus & Sunyi, 2023; Yulia et al., 2023).

The success of religious mentoring programs is generally supported by the operationalisation of periodic evaluations and role modelling that is deeply rooted in the institutional culture. Previous literature explains that character mentoring at the secondary school level relies heavily on non-cognitive instruments and prioritises the personal approach of mentors in facilitating behavioural change (Hendriana & Herman, 2021; Abubakar et al., 2021). Furthermore, recent studies published in the *Istifham* journal underscore that character education grounded in Islamic values necessitates discipline, emotional closeness, and exemplary role modelling from educators to effectively form civilised and moral students (Amin, 2024). Although there are many reports on the significance of this program, the degree to which mentoring contributes to the manifestation of specific characters is often not singular or absolute. Data show that successful moral change does not stand alone but is highly dependent on a series of other operational ecosystem variables, such as the quality of planning modules, school leadership commitment, and monitoring continuity (Yulia et al., 2023). This affirms that mentoring is not merely a gathering method, but a complete managerial cycle.

Although prior literature has widely affirmed the success of small-group-based character-building programs, the existing analytical framework still leaves a crucial gap in the literature. Most previous studies are trapped in study designs that examine only the final impact or partially evaluate program outputs, without precisely dissecting the configuration of its managerial ecosystem from upstream to downstream (Barus & Sunyi, 2023; Utami & Harmanto, 2022). Empirical studies have not been able to present a comprehensive analysis that details how *balaqah* governance is engineered, starting from centralised planning integration, field execution strategies that prioritise emotional bonds, and qualitative evaluation methods that measure non-academic behaviour. The incompleteness of the managerial variable anatomy in previous literature makes it difficult for other educational institutions to systematically replicate the keys to the program's success (Armayani & Bahri, 2023; Kusumadewi & Wijanarko, 2022).

In addition to this literature gap, preliminary factual findings at the research location, SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah, reveal a significant paradox related to the implementation of the Islamic Personal Development Program. While the program runs regularly and emotional closeness between mentors and students is evident, the students' actual behavioural manifestations remain unaligned with the program's core objectives. Field observations indicate high fluctuations in students' focus and a tendency for peer interactions to dominate the mentoring sessions, signifying that the instilled values have not yet translated into stable behavioural habits. Given the stark contrast between the ideal claims in the existing literature, which posit small groups as highly effective, and these dynamic factual findings on the ground, this study proposes an assumption: a small-group approach cannot stand alone to guarantee moral transformation. It requires a synergised managerial ecosystem that spans the entire cycle, from centralised planning to continuous qualitative evaluation.

Building upon these factual assumptions and the identified literature gap, this study aims to comprehensively identify and dissect the planning, implementation, and evaluation mechanisms of the Islamic Personal Development Program at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah. Consequently, rather than attempting to prove a proposition, the primary focus of this qualitative study is directed at exploring and analysing how student character cultivation can achieve its highest level of optimality when organised through a small-group structure supported by centralised planning, implementation anchored in an emotional bonding approach, and an evaluation system based on the observation of daily *mutabaah* (behavioural tracking). Through the involvement of subjects ranging from

policymakers and program implementers to students, the findings of this research are projected to provide a scientific contribution in the form of presenting a holistic, precise, and operational character education managerial ecosystem model.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to conduct an in-depth examination of the managerial ecosystem of the Islamic Personal Development (*Bina Pribadi Islami*/BPI) Program at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah. The selection of this design is grounded in the nature of the research, which focuses on uncovering the processes, dynamics, and inter-component linkages within the program's management, thereby necessitating a contextual and in-depth exploration. Examining the management of the BPI program requires not only identifying outcomes but also a comprehensive understanding of how planning is formulated, how implementation is executed in daily practice, and how evaluation is conducted as a program control mechanism. Therefore, a case study design was selected as it allows the researcher to comprehensively examine the phenomenon within a bounded system, namely, SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah as the institution and the BPI program as the specific unit of analysis (Casma et al., 2022). Through this design, the researcher can holistically map the management of the BPI program, ranging from design formulation in the planning stage and execution during implementation, to the control mechanisms employed during the evaluation stage (Armayani & Bahri, 2023). This approach consciously avoids evaluations solely oriented toward behavioural outcomes, focusing instead on understanding the character education management chain itself. Through qualitative investigation, this study explores the complex interactions between the foundation's principal policies and the dynamics of implementation within small groups (Barus & Sunyi, 2023). This methodological focus directly addresses gaps in the existing literature, which has frequently overlooked the comprehensive managerial anatomy of moral development programs.

The selection of research subjects was conducted using a purposive sampling technique to ensure that the designated group of informants accurately represents all dimensions of decision-making and program quality control. The involvement of diverse actors is a fundamental principle; thus, the informants in this study comprise managerial policymakers, mentoring teachers who specifically represent the dynamics of character building, and students as the recipients of these developmental services. A detailed profile of the informants involved in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Informant Profile

Informant Code	Position / Role in Program	Data Extraction Focus
INF-01	Vice Chairperson of Curriculum	Governance, curriculum integration, and program standardization.
INF-02	Grade 7 BPI Mentor Teacher	Initial psychological approach strategies and varied class methods.
INF-03	Grade 8 BPI Mentor Teacher	Discipline observation and handling adolescent character distractions.
INF-04	Grade 7 & 8 BPI Mentor Teacher	Implementation of brief religious lectures (<i>kultum</i>) and evaluation follow-ups.
INF-05	Grade 9 Male BPI Mentor Teacher	Method modification for male students and parental involvement.

INF-06	Grade 9 BPI Student Participant	Program interpretation, disciplinary experiences, and behavioral habits (<i>adab</i>).
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This multi-actor involvement pattern across roles is an essential methodological tactic for tracking alignment among top-level policy designers, operational managers, technical implementers in the field, and students' actual experiences (Abubakar et al., 2021). Without this diverse informant structure, the chain of command and the effectiveness of program management would be extremely difficult to map objectively and thoroughly. The determination of the number and representation of informants was concluded when the researcher observed data redundancy or saturation, indicating that managerial interpretation patterns had been consistently depicted (Casmana et al., 2022).

Field data collection was facilitated through an integrated process using three primary instruments: semi-structured interview guides, participatory observation sheets, and documentation study guidelines. To systematically transform the raw data obtained from these instruments, comprising interview transcripts, field observation notes, and institutional documents, into concrete research findings, the researcher applied rigorous coding techniques. This involved open coding to identify initial behavioural units, axial coding to interconnect these units into managerial categories, and selective coding to synthesise the core narrative. The data collection and analysis matrix is visually summarised in Table 2 to demonstrate the clarity of the research's operational foundation.

Table 2. Data Collection and Analysis Matrix

Problem Formulation	Primary Data Source	Extraction Instrument
Planning Phase	INF-01, JSIT Syllabus Documents	Interviews, Document Review
Implementation Phase	INF-02, INF-03, INF-04, INF-05, INF-06	Interviews, Participatory Observation
Evaluation Phase	INF-04, INF-05, Report Card Documents	Interviews, Document Review

The semi-structured interview guide was specifically formulated to capture affective dimensions, program interpretations, and operational barriers that are often unobservable within the daily routines of the school environment (Widat et al., 2021). Furthermore, a participant observation sheet was designed to directly monitor students' psychomotor manifestations and moral actions, necessitating the researcher's physical presence to observe a series of structured religious habituation activities (Kuswanto, 2021). This instrument contains observation indicators aligned with the school's behavioural targets. As a crucial complement, the document study instrument was designed to extract written managerial evidence, including a review of the curriculum guidebook from the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT) and physical copies of students' character evaluation reports. The utilisation of multiple instruments was based on the rationale that measuring the effectiveness of a character program must bridge informants' verbal claims with concrete behavioural evidence and valid administrative records (Barus & Sunyi, 2023).

Data validity testing in this research design was operationalised through the rigorous application of triangulation principles to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of all field findings. The initial step involved source triangulation, in which the researcher compared information from

various parties, beginning with interviews with the BPI program manager and the school's curriculum department to dissect program policies. The researcher subsequently posed identical queries to the mentors to observe how these plans were executed. Finally, interviews were conducted with the students as the subjects of the BPI program. By cross-referencing responses from the manager, mentors, and students, the researcher could assess top-down informational consistency regarding the same governance phenomenon (Abubakar et al., 2021). Furthermore, methodological triangulation was applied as the primary control mechanism. In addition to conducting interviews, direct observations were carried out to verify the alignment between field activities and the information provided by mentors and students. Specifically concerning the evaluation component, the researcher cross-checked the mentors' interview results with physical evidence in the form of BPI Report Cards. Data were deemed valid if what was spoken (interviews), what was done (observations), and what was written (documents) demonstrated consistent outcomes (Utami & Harmanto, 2022). This procedure effectively neutralised potential subjectivity bias from program implementers, as claims of success within the affective domain must consistently be substantiated by observed behavioural consistency and documented evaluative trails (Armayani & Bahri, 2023). Moreover, theoretical triangulation was incorporated to ensure that data interpretations did not deviate from the broader frameworks of character education management theory and its underlying social learning theories (Afriansyah, 2024). The entire data collection and verification process was conducted iteratively until data saturation was achieved, a state in which the acquired information became repetitive and no significant new findings emerged.

The operational field stages were executed through a systematic, chronological procedure while strictly adhering to all scientific research ethical protocols. The initial phase commenced with obtaining institutional permission and establishing baseline agreements with potential informants regarding research objectives, guarantees of identity confidentiality, and data collection procedures. Once the ethical foundation was secured, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with policymakers and field implementers in stages to construct an initial map of the developmental program's governance. The subsequent critical phase involved conducting participant observation directly for a full eighty to ninety minutes during mentoring group sessions in the school library. The researcher positioned themselves in such a manner that their physical presence in the mentoring room did not disrupt or distort the natural interactions, emotional proximity, or the sequence of habituation rituals between the mentoring teacher and the students. All conversational dynamics, body language, and activity sequences were meticulously documented in daily field notes, which subsequently served as the primary raw material for advanced managerial analysis.

The processing and examination of raw data were conducted interactively, adhering to Miles and Huberman's qualitative analysis framework, which cyclically integrates the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Barus & Sunyi, 2023). During the data condensation stage, the researcher selected interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents focused on the planning, implementation, and evaluation aspects of the program (Robby et al., 2022). The most significant analytical challenge in character studies is managing the repetitive behavioural data that frequently dominates field notes. Within this analysis, repetitive activities were not treated as redundant data to be discarded but rather transformed into concrete evidence demonstrating the strength of habituation and program consistency (Yulia et al., 2023). The condensed outcomes were then transformed into a data display in the form of a thematic matrix, precisely classified according to the problem formulation relating to centralised planning mechanisms, implementation execution, and evaluation standards, ensuring that the inter-

managerial relationship patterns of the program were visible in a holistic and structured manner (Afandi, 2011). Throughout this process, the researcher conducted verification through source triangulation to assess data validity by cross-referencing information from multiple informants prior to drawing final conclusions. The patterns identified within the matrix were subsequently elevated into research findings.

Findings

The results of the field research map the managerial anatomy of the Islamic Personal Development Program into three main, systemically interconnected operational phases. This data dissection was extracted from the triangulation of interview transcripts with policymakers, field implementers, and students, as well as participatory observation and evaluation document analysis. The findings sequentially present the centralised planning mechanism, the attachment-based field execution strategy, and the formulation of a non-cognitive evaluation system that measures students' psychomotor achievements.

Planning of the Islamic Personal Development Program

The holistic managerial operational cycle of this program is shown in Figure 1, which highlights the system's movement from policy upstream to evaluation downstream.

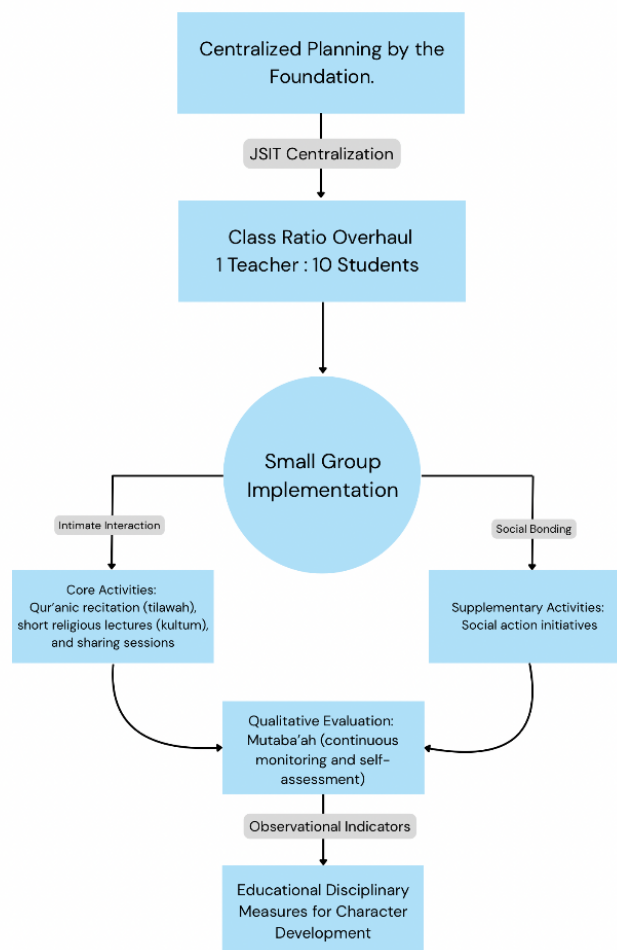


Figure 1. Managerial Ecosystem Scheme of the Islamic Personal Development Program

The governance design of the Islamic Personal Development Program (*Bina Pribadi Islami*/BPI) at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah is constructed through a centralised planning mechanism at the foundation level. Managerial policy positions this program not as a complementary extracurricular activity, but as an independent intracurricular subject with a separate curriculum structure from the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) subject. This centralised planning directly refers to the national-level integrated school network curriculum quality standards, which are then integrated with Fitrah Hanniah's nine local character pillars. This was explicitly confirmed by INF-01 as the Vice Chairperson of Curriculum, "Actually, from JSIT, BPI stands alone. But it's more like IRE is about the material, while BPI is about morals and *adab* (ethics)."

This centralised decision in curriculum formulation was taken by policymakers to ensure that all school units share a uniform standard of moral achievement. This system is designed to prevent operational bias or the partial running of the program in the hands of different educators. The appointment of mentor teachers is also not left to the junior high school unit; rather, they are directly selected and assigned by the central program manager to ensure that every mentor possesses a standardised spiritual capacity and ideological understanding.

The sharpest structural intervention in the planning phase lies in the engineering of the educator-to-student ratio. While conventional Islamic Religious Education subjects are taught through a classical approach, with thirty students in one large room, this program's planning radically breaks that population into small units. Field confessions prove this: "It's about our approach to the children, which is why the class is divided. IRE is one full class, whereas for BPI, one class can be divided. From thirty, it is divided into three. So actually, a teacher handles a maximum of ten students," explained INF-01. This class division is a managerial strategy specifically designed to break the rigidity of classical communication, which is often distant. The small-group ratio is designed to enable each educator to conduct precise character mapping, facilitate intimate personal dialogue, and build emotional bonds, which are absolute prerequisites for the successful transmission of affective values.

Implementation of the Islamic Personal Development Program

The field execution of this small group design is realised through regular face-to-face meetings every Friday, with operational durations ranging from eighty to ninety minutes. A more detailed structure of the cultivation activity sequence is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cultivation Activity Structure and Method Variations

Standard (Weekly Routine)	Agenda	Sequence	Varied & Methods	Experiential	Character Focus	Development
	Opening by MC (Student)		Faith and Piety Night	Building	Leadership	& Independence
	Recitation of <i>Istighfar</i> and Heart-Binding Prayer		Community Activities	Service	Empathy & Cohesion	Social
	Communal Quranic (<i>Tilawah</i>)	Recitation	Educational Screening	Film	Directed Moral Reflection	
	Short Lecture (<i>Kultum</i>) by Student		Video Project Assignment		Creativity & Communication	
	Core Material Mentor Teacher	Presentation by	Outing (<i>Rihlah</i>) / Activities	Sports	Sportsmanship & Bonding	

Participatory observation transcripts confirm the existence of a standard activity structure that all cultivation groups must adhere to. This sequence of rituals always begins with an opening by a student acting as the master of ceremonies (MC), followed by the communal recitation of *istighfar* and a heart-binding prayer, and the recitation of Holy Quran verses (*tilawah*) with specific achievement targets. The delegation of technical roles to students is acknowledged by the program participants, "Opening with the MC. And the MC is from us, taking turns. Prayer, then *dzikir* led by the MC. Then the *robitoh* prayer after *tilawah*, then *kultum*. Also taking turns," revealed INF-06. The next crucial phase provides a stage for students to deliver a *kultum* or short lecture in turns, before culminating in the mentor teacher's presentation of the main material and a session sharing daily life stories. Delegating technical roles to students is an execution tactic calibrated to directly train students' courage, leadership, and independence in the field.

Unlike regular class approaches strictly bound to theoretical modules and formal spatial arrangements, the implementation of this character cultivation applies highly varied and fluid pedagogical methods. INF-04, as a mentor, explained, "Usually the beginning is the same; there is an opening, then *istighfar*... *robitoh* prayer, there is *kultum*, *tausiyah* (advice), sharing, those are mandatory. Well, usually we also hold activities so it isn't monotonous, for example, watching a movie, taking them out, occasionally eating out, following the style of today's kids." Field findings document group activity modifications ranging from faith-and-piety-building nights culminating in direct community service to educational film screenings, video-making projects, and outdoor activities such as joint sports. All these tactical variations centre on one managerial focus: creating emotional bonds and habituating *adab*, rather than merely transferring cognitive religious knowledge.

The two-way closeness created through interactive activities has proven capable of breaking down the barriers of formal authority between educators and students. This constructed psychological condition facilitates mentor teachers in inserting moral messages regarding worship discipline and speech refinement, with minimal rejection from adolescents. This is recognised as highly effective, especially for male students (*ikhwan*), as emphasised by INF-05, "For the *ikhwan*, we discuss more than we give material, because if it's just material, they usually don't focus. Just a little material and then connecting it to real life."

Despite having a flexible and comprehensive activity design, the implementation of small-group cultivation realistically faces various field turbulences. Observation realities show that mentor teachers must consistently respond to early disciplinary issues and high levels of student distraction within the group. This condition becomes more complex when viewed from the group composition perspective, where the mentor-to-student ratio is not perfectly 1:10 but in the range of 1:12 to 1:13 as an adjustment to address the disproportionate number of students in class sizes. The variation in this ratio contributes to the intensity of group management required of the mentors, specifically in maintaining student focus and involvement. The psychological dynamics of the transition period often lead to situations in which students dominate the cultivation forum with inappropriate jokes or harsh language, reflecting residual infiltration from outside associations. Observation notes on the INF-03 group clearly recorded this phenomenon, noting that "the mentor acts firmly when the children chat; the activity is repeated from the beginning if the atmosphere is not yet conducive." In dealing with these behavioural anomalies, mentors apply a firm yet dignified two-way communication strategy: they instruct students to repeat activities from the start if the atmosphere is disruptive, or invite them to renew agreements on group interaction

norms. These corrective actions are executed precisely without destroying the bond of intimacy, ensuring the cultivation atmosphere continues to function optimally as a safe space for students.

Evaluation of the Islamic Personal Development Program

The quality control mechanism in this cultivation ecosystem deliberately rejects written cognitive test instruments as the sole measure of success. Pure character evaluation is conducted using a qualitative approach that integrates the mentor teacher's direct observations with the students' daily behavioural track records. Daily data collection is operationalised through a digitally managed independent worship monitoring sheet, strictly aligned with the homeroom teacher's supervision. The entire accumulation of behavioural and disciplinary records is then analysed and documented into a separate physical report published at the end of each semester. The operational scheme and instruments for this assessment are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Qualitative Evaluation Rubric and Educative Sanctions

Report Achievement Predicate	Card	Behavioral Manifestation Description	Examples of Educative Sanction Follow-up (Iqob)
Excellent (SB)		Consistently shows <i>mumashofat</i> (character attributes) arising from self-motivation, always appearing automatically.	Verbal appreciation and assignment as a role model.
Developing as Expected (BSH)		Accustomed to showing <i>mumashofat</i> arising from self-motivation, frequently appearing with or without a supportive environment.	Addition of light tasks as basic character enrichment.
Starting to Develop (MB)		Shows <i>mumashofat</i> when there is a supportive environment, and occasionally appears when the environment is unsupportive.	Obligation to lead impromptu <i>kultum</i> ; practical test on <i>wudu</i> (ablution).
Not Yet Developing (BB)		Requires a supportive environment to show <i>mumashofat</i> .	Additional mandatory Quranic recitation portion; parental discussion.

This special report utilises a tiered qualitative predicate scale designed to enable stakeholders and parents to obtain an accurate diagnostic track record of students' psychomotor and affective maturity stages. INF-04 affirmed this reporting flow, "If the follow-up, for instance, has not been achieved, there is usually communication; the report is conveyed to the parents." The follow-up management system for various student *abuse* violations is also engineered to represent an educational philosophy that builds, not destroys. Documentation findings and interview results with program implementers confirm that the institution has abandoned the paradigm of physical sanctions or repressive verbal reprimands that potentially breed mental resistance in adolescents.

As the foundation of cultivation, mentors design educative punishment schemes (*iqob*) that require students to directly practice moral actions as a form of redemption. Manifestations of these educative punishments include the obligation to deliver an impromptu *kultum* for undisciplined students, a mechanism that a student (INF-06) honestly acknowledged: "Yes, because being late means the punishment is a *kultum*." Increasing mandatory Quranic recitation portions, to conducting direct practical tests on correct *wudu* and prayer procedures are commonplace. This transformation in the form of sanctions is implemented to guarantee that every consequence of a

disciplinary violation always instantly leads to an increase in worship capacity and *adab* improvement.

Based on a cross-analysis of semester evaluation reports and informant confessions, an uneven level of program achievement is evident between the realm of ritual discipline and that of social character formation. The program has proven highly effective in conditioning worship compliance, characterised by orderly congregational prayers and complete daily recitations while students are within the school's fortress. However, the formation of fundamental social character, specifically regarding speech control and filtering associational influences, is assessed as not yet optimal. This behavioural achievement gap is identified as stemming from the broken chain of character supervision when students return to the home ecosystem. INF-05 critically highlighted this irony: "That's why what is actually needed is continuity between parents and teachers. So sometimes it's strict at school, but for some, it's still loose at home. Ultimately, I see the achievement isn't quite optimal yet." The successful habituation of *adab*, which has been strictly engineered by the school, often stagnates due to low synergy and a loss of continuity in parental control outside formal educational intervention hours.

Discussion

This study comprehensively dissects the managerial anatomy of the Islamic Personal Development Program, simultaneously proving the proposition that the optimisation of character formation demands ecosystem engineering from upstream to downstream. Field findings unequivocally challenge the assumption that character education can rely solely on normative subjects in large classes. Data triangulation demonstrates that the formation of stable moral behaviour can only be realised through the integration of three main pillars: curriculum centralisation accompanied by class ratio breakdown, field execution that prioritises emotional bonds and observational learning, and the transformation of the evaluation system that abandons cognitive measurement in favour of monitoring actual habituation. This analytical sequence fills a gap in previous literature, which often remained trapped in final impact evaluations, unable to explain how the operational engine of character programs works behind the scenes.

In the planning phase, findings regarding the centralisation of program governance at the foundation level provide empirical confirmation of the theoretical framework for curriculum implementation. The institution's decision to position this program as an independent intracurricular subject with guidelines derived directly from the centre is a highly crucial managerial mitigation strategy. Previous literature highlights that character education programs left entirely to teacher autonomy, without standardised guidelines, often result in partial implementation that relies heavily on the subjective interpretation of individual educators (Barus & Sunyi, 2023; Utami & Harmanto, 2022). Evidence from INF-01's assertion regarding foundation intervention confirms that by centrally locking the curriculum design, which integrates national-level integrated school network standards with nine local character pillars, policymakers successfully ensured quality coherence. This centralisation guarantees that every small group unit moves toward a uniform target of *adab* achievement, while simultaneously preventing policy overlap between the moral cultivation program and regular academic learning (Kuswantoro, 2021).

The most fundamental design intervention that distinguishes this ecosystem from conventional learning lies in the engineering of the educator-to-student ratio. The policy of breaking down one large class into three small groups, with a ratio of one mentor to ten students, is a tactical answer to the failure of the classical approach. Classical religious learning has inherent limitations because

it can only address the cognitive domain, whereas the affective domain demands intensive personal dialogue (Wahyuni et al., 2023). This small-group structure provides an intimate space for interaction that psychologically dismantles the hierarchical walls between teachers and students. This condition aligns with educational studies concluding that the depth of character mapping and the acceleration of value internalisation can only be facilitated within interaction spaces that allow educators to precisely recognise the behavioural anomalies and emotional histories of each individual (Casmana et al., 2022).

Entering the implementation phase, field realities demonstrate the dominance of Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory operating vividly within the small groups. The environmental engineering mechanism based on Social Learning Theory in this ecosystem is shown in Figure 2.

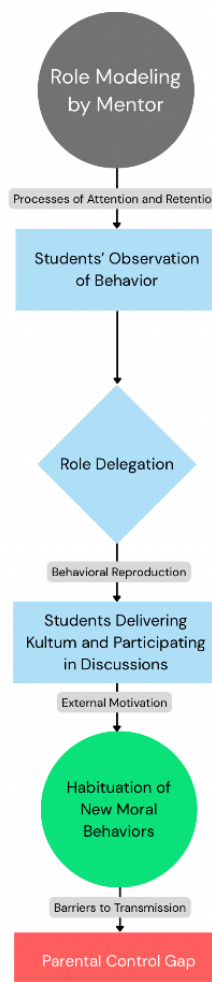


Figure 2. Social Learning Theory Modelling in the Halaqah Ecosystem

Program execution that mandates standard activity structures, such as communal Quranic recitation (*tilawah*) and the delegation of short lectures (*kulum*) to students, constitutes an instrument of social environment engineering. According to the social learning paradigm, students adopt new moral behaviours through the processes of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, which originate from observing models deemed significant (Irayanti & Sundawa, 2023). In this ecosystem, the mentor teacher is not merely a theoretical lecturer but a living model who

consistently demonstrates discipline, polite speech, and empathy. The physical and emotional closeness within the *halaqah* ensures that students' attention to the mentor's exemplary behaviour is at its maximum. Furthermore, assigning *kultum* in turns forces students to perform positive action reproduction, which instantly receives motivational reinforcement through affirmations from the mentor and peers (Warini et al., 2023).

Furthermore, findings regarding implementation preferences that emphasise the creation of emotional bonds over cognitive transmission affirm that *adab* is the manifestation of affective intelligence. INF-05's statement regarding modifying the lecture method into a communal eating-and-casual-discussion setting for male students demonstrates that emotional approaches are far more effective in penetrating adolescent psychological resistance. Developmental psychology studies assert that student compliance and *adab* are more easily cultivated when they feel accepted, heard, and have a secure attachment to their educators (Abubakar et al., 2021). This is strongly reflected in the students' enthusiasm for a range of outdoor activities, including community service, joint sports, and storytelling sessions. These kinetic and prosocial activities are not merely complementary recreation but serve as crucibles for social cohesion that directly train self-regulation, sportsmanship, and empathy in the field (Widat et al., 2021). This deeply rooted bond of brotherhood then becomes the foundation for mentors to offer moral guidance on worship and speech without triggering defensive rejection from students.

Although the operational design has been engineered in such a way, the program's implementation naturally still collides with obstacles in the form of high distraction levels and discipline fluctuations, which are innate characteristics of the adolescent phase. The use of harsh words and the dominance of jokes in the middle of spiritual sessions are manifestations of external exposure that the students' cognitive maturity has not fully been able to filter (Sibisi et al., 2024). However, the handling mechanisms demonstrated by the mentors through assertive dialogue and the renewal of group-norm agreements demonstrate the resilience of this system. Instead of responding with authoritarianism that deadens the space for expression, mentors facilitate conflict resolution and train students to take responsibility for their group's atmosphere. This finding asserts that behavioural turbulence within the group is not an indicator of program failure, but rather an essential dynamic that actually provides real case material for the direct cultivation of emotional intelligence (Karwadi & Indrawan, 2023).

Shifting to the quality control dimension, evaluation findings reveal a bold pedagogical revolution through the total elimination of cognitive written test instruments. The policy of measuring program success purely through direct observation and daily behavioural tracking (*mutabaah*) is a precise step that restores the essence of character assessment to its proper place. Modern educational evaluation literature consistently criticises the use of paper-based exams to assess morals, arguing that such formats only induce a bias towards pseudo-compliance, where students know the ideal answer but fail to practice it (Kusumadewi & Wijanarko, 2022). The transformation toward qualitative assessments documented in special semester report cards creates a high level of traceability regarding students' psychomotor and affective manifestations (Afriansyah, 2024). The use of tiered developmental predicates allows the school to provide authentic moral diagnostics, ensuring that corrective interventions are not conducted blindly, but are based on longitudinally recorded habituation data.

This evaluation reform is also reflected in the paradigm shift in punishment, from initially repressive to 100 percent educative. The fact that the school responds to *adab* violations not with meaningless verbal reprimands or physical sanctions, but with impromptu instructions on worship

practice, demonstrates the integration of evaluation and the cultivation of awareness. In the perspective of moral behaviour formation theory, educative punishment works far beyond a deterrent effect; it forces the violating subject to instantly reproduce moral actions while simultaneously reflecting on their mistakes (Afandi, 2011). The strategy of converting every interdisciplinary momentum into a space for repeating the practice of *wudu* (ablution), performing prayers, or delivering lectures ensures that the school ecosystem possesses no cultivation vacuum. All logical consequences are designed in such a way that they always culminate in increased worship repetition, strengthening character habituation.

Even though the school's internal managerial anatomy has shown high solidity in disciplining worship routines, this discussion reveals a primary inhibiting variable that culminates in an ecological gap. INF-05's complaint, stating that character formation has not reached its maximum point due to the broken continuity of control outside school hours, confirms how vulnerable character education programs are without the involvement of environmental triangulation. The sociology of education firmly posits that the successful socialisation of moral values requires uniform treatment across the school, family, and social environments (Rahmadani & Asy'ari, 2023). When students return home and face loose parental supervision, the social *adab* values and speech filtration strictly enforced by mentors at school will rapidly evaporate (Maulidina et al., 2021). This gap creates a dual personality in students, who can appear highly pious within the school walls but revert to their original behaviour when surfing social media or interacting in their home environment.

The empirical reality of weak parental supervision yields very sharp theoretical and practical implications for the future development of character education management. Theoretically, this study broadens the understanding that the operationalisation of Social Learning Theory within educational institutions cannot be confined to formal school hours; the effectiveness of character imitation and retention demands a continuity of complementary role models in the domestic space. In practice, these findings send a stern warning to policymakers that, no matter how great the resource investment in internal *balaqah* programs, it will always reach its absolute achievement limit if not balanced by the construction of a parental involvement architecture. Daily monitoring instruments must be elevated from mere one-way reporting tools into mediums of shared accountability, where schools are demanded not only to educate their students but also to proactively educate and compel parents to take over the baton of character cultivation when children are at home.

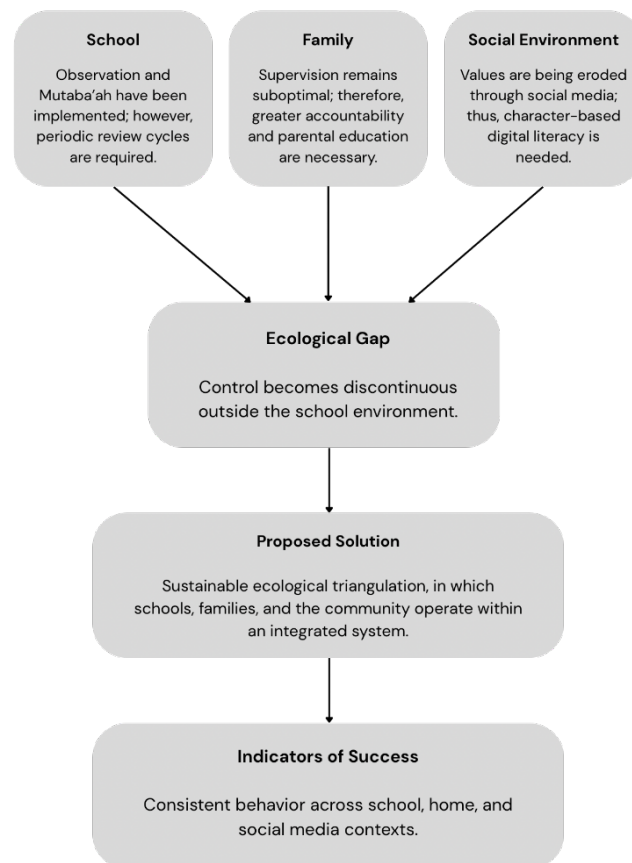


Figure 3. Concept Map of Proposed Program Evaluation

The concept map illustrates the proposed evaluation framework for the Islamic Personal Development (*Bina Pribadi Islami*/BPI) Program, designed to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency through an ecology-based systemic approach. This evaluation transcends a singular focus on school-based implementation, such as observations and *mutaba'ah* (behavioural tracking), emphasising instead the necessity of a structured, periodic evaluation cycle comprising monitoring, reflection, and follow-up. This ensures that acquired data is not merely recorded but actively utilised as an empirical basis for program refinement. Furthermore, within the familial domain, the evaluation is broadened to assess the degree of parental involvement and the quality of supervision. Consequently, this necessitates evaluation instruments that incorporate parental accountability, alongside the integration of parenting education initiatives as a constituent element of the BPI program. Regarding the social environment, the evaluation aims to assess the extent to which students can sustain character values in digital spaces; therefore, the indicators encompass character-based digital literacy. The intersection of these three domains highlights an 'ecological gap.' To address this, the proposed evaluation paradigm is a continuous ecological triangulation model defined as the simultaneous integration of data and assessments derived from the school, family, and community to mitigate partial bias. Consequently, the BPI program evaluation becomes comprehensively robust yet operationally efficient by focusing on key cross-contextual indicators, with the primary benchmark for program success being the consistency of student behaviour across these diverse environments.

Conclusion

This research demonstrates that successful character education does not stem from mere transmission of moral instruction in large classrooms, but rather is engineered through a comprehensive managerial ecosystem design from upstream to downstream. The Islamic Personal Development Program at SMP IT Fitrah Hanniah operates as a continuous cycle that integrates centralised planning from the foundation, small-group-based field execution heavily reliant on emotional bonding, and a non-cognitive evaluation system that purely monitors psychomotor and affective development through qualitative reporting. The transformation of the educator-to-student ratio and the boldness to discard written examination instruments enable this program to precisely touch the students' moral awareness (*adab*) on a personal level.

Although this internal operational framework has proven highly effective in establishing worship compliance and conditioning social role modelling within the school environment, its success rate still runs counter to an ecological gap in the domestic sphere. The school's efforts to filter spoken language and discipline students' social interaction habits often stagnate in the absence of consistent parental control at home. Consequently, the theoretical and practical implications of these findings demand a restructuring of parental involvement. To achieve holistic and permanent moral transformation, educational institutions are recommended to design behavioural tracking (*mutabaah*) supervision agreement instruments that directly bind parents. Schools can no longer act as the sole agents; rather, they must foster a tripartite synergy that positions the family as the primary extension in ensuring that students' *adab* habituation remains consistent outside formal educational hours.

Drawing upon these findings, several recommendations are proposed for practical implementation and future academic inquiry. First, it is highly recommended that educational institutions design and implement structured *mutabaah* (behavioural tracking) instruments that are seamlessly integrated into the school's reporting system. This integration will facilitate direct parental involvement in monitoring students' behavioural progression at home. Second, parents are expected to transcend the role of passive supervisors and actively participate in the value-internalisation process by maintaining consistent moral habituation (*adab*) within the familial environment. Third, future researchers are encouraged to empirically examine the effectiveness of this school-family collaborative model employing quantitative or mixed-methods approaches. Furthermore, expanding the research context to encompass different educational levels or diverse institutions is advised to attain broader generalizability of the findings. Ultimately, the synergistic collaboration among schools, families, and subsequent academic research is projected to systematically fortify the sustainability and long-term viability of character education.

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