The Implementation of Character Education Design through Integrated Curriculum at Islamic University

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aimed to determine the design of character education implementation through an integrated curriculum at a state Islamic university in Medan. This research conducted a qualitative case study method. The research informants are eight people, consisting of 4 main informants and 4 supporting informants. The data is collected through observation and focus group discussion. Data objectivity is achieved through the triangulation of data sources. The data is analysed using ATLAS.Ti 22 software version 8. The data is presented in the form of images, tables, and descriptions. The research results show that character development begins with the implementation of character education in the educational environment so that it becomes a habit that shapes character. The strength of the factors that helped or held someone back had an effect on how they grew and changed. It can be said that lecturers can be the most important role models on campus when it comes to character education. *This is an open-access article under the license.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Character education is currently a very interesting topic among teachers and parents. Rapid technological advancements make it easier for everyone to access an infinite amount of information. The impact of technological advancements is the dissemination of negative information, which leads to juvenile delinquency. Oktawati's (2017) research on five junior high school student informants aged 14-16 years for delinquency committed such as stealing, consuming the drug, fighting, and free sex. The social environment, family issues, psychological pressure, and social media all contribute to this deviant social behaviour. Maulana's previous research (Maulana, 2019) examining juvenile delinquency cases in schools revealed that junior high school students committed criminal acts such as stealing, fighting among students, driving a vehicle without a permit, joining a motorcycle gang, and driving recklessly on the road endangering the community, among others. The delinquency factor is further explained as the personality of teenagers who seek identity through the behaviour of trying new things.

According to data from the National Anti-Narcotics Agency of North Sumatra, 1.5 million people in the North Sumatra use drugs. This case is no exception for students and alumni at one of the universities in North Sumatra. The National Anti-Narcotics Agency of North Sumatra in October 2021 investigated 31 students and alumni who were involved in consuming drugs (Moris, 2021). The results of a survey conducted by the University of Indonesia through the "centre for health research" institution stated that drug abuse was higher in private schools than in public and religious schools. This phenomenon demonstrates the individual character, students, or students who exhibit deviant social behaviour. Character education in schools is important for developing positive characters and reducing acquaintances and deviant behaviour (Research, 2021).

Character education, according to Setiawan, is an effort to shape individual character through a process realised and organised by educational institutions. Character education results in character formation, which occurs as a result of repeated habits and actions and eventually becomes the character (Setiawan et al., 2021). Character education aims to shape children's maturity in order for them to become good individuals with noble moral ethics and a sense of tolerance in society so that they become human beings with good character and strong. Students obtain character education through the educational environment, which includes primary, secondary, and higher education. According to other researchers, character education in schools through the application of rules that must be obeyed so that it becomes a habit in schools can shape students' attitudes and social behaviour. Character values instilled in students are integrated into each subject, such as applying honest character, giving assignments, and others (Siswati, Utomo, & Muntholib, 2018).

One of the methods of implementing character education is through the boarding system learning model, such as boarding school. Previous researchers mentioned that one character education model is learning in Islamic boarding schools where students are disciplined. The learning model in Islamic boarding schools applies Islamic rules, the application of discipline through the provision of punishment, and is implemented directly, giving rewards and punishments (Baehaqi & Murdiono, 2020). Thus, character education in boarding school is the starting point for character formation and development. Although the implementation has faced many difficulties, one of which is a lack of parental support in enforcing discipline.

The preliminary survey was conducted at the research location at one of the Islamic universities in Medan. In interviews with three lecturers, one lecturer stated that the character of students in communicating with lecturers was not polite, whether in direct communication, communication by telephone, or speaking in class. Another lecturer stated that the student's character was diametrically opposed to the academic ethical values of the Islamic university. The clothes worn on campus did not indicate a Muslim woman. Another lecturer said there is still disharmony in student relations between faculties and student organisations.

In line with the survey results, several relevant research findings show that students' interpersonal ethics when communicating with lecturers via smartphones are mostly regarded as unethical and impolite because they do not follow good and ethical speech rules (Mannan, 2019). Communication in revolution 4.0 experienced a significant change in behaviour and language, giving rise to a culture that was frequently not in accordance with an academic identity that prioritised ethics and manners, so in the academic world, it was necessary to have rules and examples in communicating between lecturers and students, so that the concept of education, identity, and the character of the Indonesian are maintained with good manners (Wartoyo, 2019). In addition, a hedonic lifestyle is a positive and significant influence on how students dress (Maida, 2022). It can be seen in terms of self-representation, which shows the existence of social class as a high social class, and personality, which shows self-image as an intellectual and good person, as well as modern aspects with trendy and stylish clothing styles as a form of progress and mobility of the times and ideology, which shows religious symbols and feelings of affection for the Indonesian (Jihut, Dewi, & Qorib, 2021). There are 4 (four) factors influence how students dress style, including factors from themselves, family, campus organisations and peers (Pusparani, 2020). As a result, in this case, the lecturer becomes the main role in the formation and development of the character of the

students by example, where a lecturer carries out the process of internalising noble values while carrying out the main tasks of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, such as teaching, research, and community service, which eventually became campus culture (Bali, 2013).

Based on the explanation above, it is necessary to conduct research related to the design of the implementation of character education through an integrated curriculum in learning activities at Islamic universities with the goal of identifying supporting factors and inhibiting character education implementation in Islamic universities so that this research benefits stakeholders to design the implementation of character education in an Islamic university environment.

2. METHODS

This research conducted qualitative research using a case study design. According to Creswell, qualitative research develops in the field of education research, aiming to see research phenomena, and understand social conditions, interactions, and situations from an event (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted at a state Islamic University in Medan. The study was conducted for 6 months, from August to December 2021. Informants were chosen by purposive sampling technique. There were 9 research informants consisting of 5 lecturers as the main informants. Supporting informants consist of 1 person in charge of the curriculum, 1 person in charge of the educational study program laboratory, 1 Dean from the Faculty of Education, and 1 resource person.

The following techniques were used to collect data: 1) Observation, the researcher observed the learning process to determine how the lecturer applied the educational character in the learning process. 2) Discussions in focus groups. Data collection tools include a list of topics covered in focus group discussions, recording devices, cameras, stationery, and notebooks. The subjectivity of qualitative research results is very likely to occur because the objectivity of research data is achieved through the triangulation of data sources using the qualitative software ATLAS.Ti version 22. Verification and objectivity of the truth of research data are important to obtain the truth so that it is not measured by traditional validity based on the meaning of the word from the data source. (Creswell, 2014).

The following are the stages of analysis: 1) The study's findings are presented in the form of transcripts of interview recordings from focus group discussion activities. 2) Read the transcript data and group the same data in one theme. 3) Each informant's data is labelled 1,2,3, and so on until the last data. 4) Perform data input on the ATLAS tool for each document. 5) Assign the code to the conversation transcript.) Analyse the closeness of the theme. 7) Read and study the results of the next analysis in the last stage. 8) Present the analysis findings in the form of descriptions, figures, and tables. Observation data is shown in the description to complete the data from the discussion.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Character Education Through an Integrated Curriculum at UIN SU Medan

Based on the questionnaires distributed to lecturers and students in several faculties, it was discovered that character education was sometimes implemented with a percentage of 45.98 and 32.01. Character education is already being implemented in several faculties, from the Dean level down to the lecturers and students. However, in some other faculties, the application is not as important; some lecturers have never emphasised the importance of character education in the classroom. This can be seen from the absence of discussions that lead to it and the absence of character education listed by the lecturer in RPS. Furthermore, this is due to the fact that several lecturers of specific subjects have never attended seminars and so on with the theme of character education.

Nonetheless, some faculties continue to conceptualise character education. In the faculty of science and technology, for example. Lecturers have traditionally asked their students to read the Qur'an before starting the lecture with 5 minutes. Of the 17 character values developed in previous research, the main character values that are routinely applied in lectures are religious. For example, lecturers always emphasise the importance of male students praying in congregation at the mosque, fasting Monday and

Thursday, and other forms of worship that aim to shape religious personalities and noble character. Furthermore, it creates a disciplined attitude in students because it begins with self-discipline when you wake up in the morning. And it is expected that this will have a positive impact on student activity in lectures. The results of the questionnaire are shown in the table below.

Table 1.

The results of a questionnaire on the implementation of character education taken from lecturers in five faculties

No.	Faculty	Scale (%)			
		4	3	2	1
1	FITK	25,6	46,02	47,7	5,6
2	SAINTEK	32,9	46,02	36,9	7,9
3	DAKWAH	15,3	46,02	48,8	14,7
4	KESMAS	19,8	43,75	47,7	13,6
5	FIS	13,6	42,04	48,8	20,45
	AVERAGE	21,44	44,77	45,98	12,45

The application of religious character values applied includes praying in congregation at the mosque, reciting the Qur'an, and praying before starting lectures. This characteristic value in reading the Qur'an, although not all faculties apply it, one of the faculties has implemented this. The importance of these religious characteristics is intended to make students rely on the religious teachings contained in the Qur'an at all times. So that every action is based on the Qur'an, with the hope that graduates will produce professionals who always recite the Qur'an.

The next religious value is praying before starting lectures. Almost all faculties, in general, exhibit this personality. Before starting learning activities, students and lecturers are aware that good communication to ask for approval in all campus activities is to pray. This routine is maintained to provide positive energy for students' efforts to form a good personality.

From the observations, it was found that sometimes the students did not see a special assessment in assessing the achievement of the character values emphasised on campus. According to the lecturer's statement, character assessment exists and has been incorporated into the student attitude assessment. It's just that not all lecturers conduct this assessment thoroughly. Lecturers always include character assessment in attitude assessment, particularly ethical and moral values. The character education assessment will later determine student graduation for one semester. The data interpretation results revealed that lecturers had no difficulty assessing character education for their students. It's just that the standard of graduation from each lecturer's attitude is different. This is due to the fact that no institutionalised policy exists on the campus, so that decision autonomy is retained by the lecturers of each subject.

Furthermore, the implementation of character education by lecturers to students can be seen in the form of giving students assignments. Giving students individual or group assignments allows them to develop character values such as responsibility, discipline, honesty, and teamwork. It is hoped that these character traits will be instilled in students. The results of data acquisition were extracted using ATLAS.Ti version 22 regarding the implementation of character education is presented below.
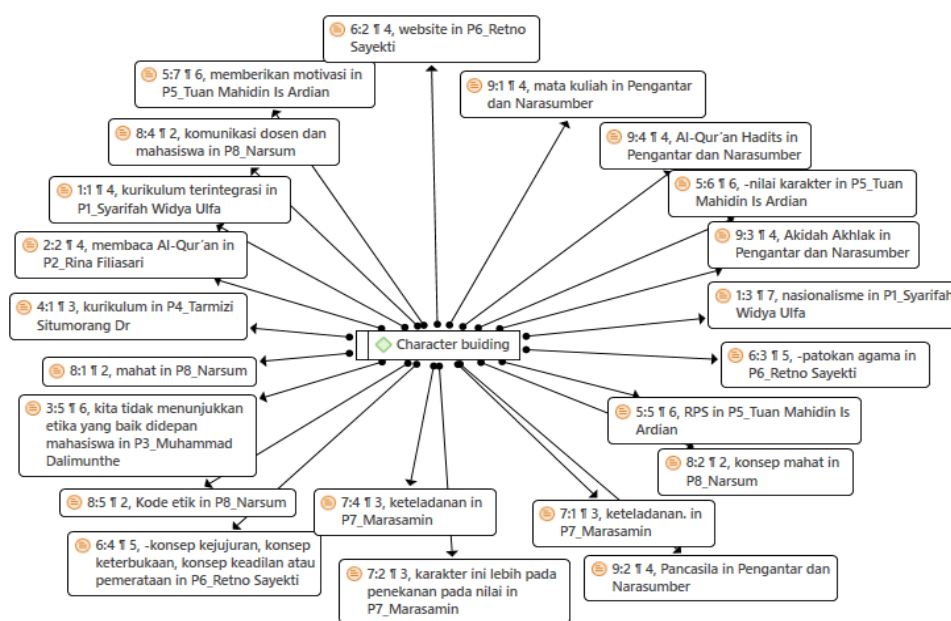
Figure 1. Character Education Analysis

Twenty-two quotes in Figure 1 support character education. A total of 9 informants argued that character education could be implemented at university by doing the following: curriculum integration, role models through lecturer and student communication, face-to-face reading of the Qur'an or prayer, socialising commendable morals through the media (web), and the concept of ma'had (dormitory).
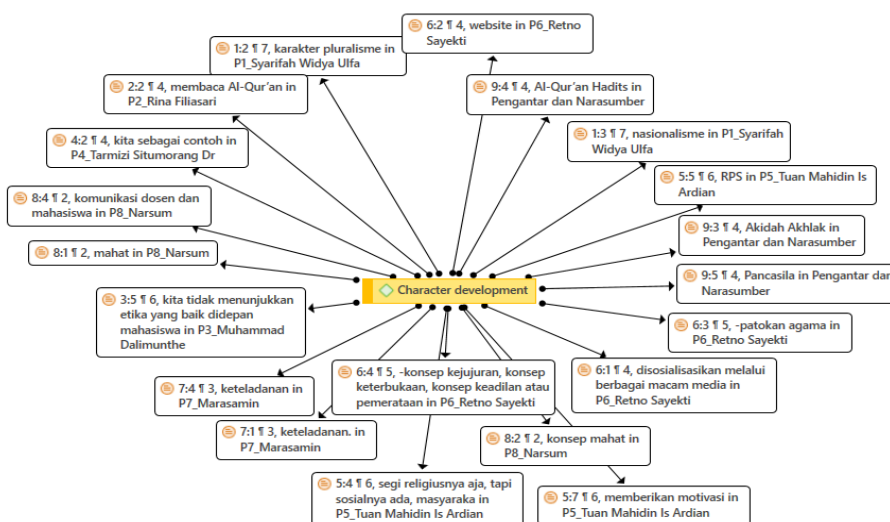

Figure 2. Character Development

Figure 2 shows an analysis of the theme of character development, which 20 quotes provided by seven informants support. Students' character development is based on the following characteristics: nationalist, pluralist, religious, and social. Several quotes that support the theme of character development are also supportive of the theme of character education. This demonstrates the closeness of character development, starting with character formation.

Inhibiting Factors in the implementation of Character Education Through an Integrated Curriculum

The inhibiting factor in implementing character education in the classroom is the lack of time so that monitoring and evaluation are hampered. Character education does exist in certain subjects, but many other lecturers also use it in the classroom. It's just that the implementation hasn't been evenly distributed across all lecturers, and some lecturers have received different treatment regarding character education. According to the Academic Advisor lecturer, there should be clear rules from the faculty that are displayed in the academic guidance book so that the Academic Advisor lecturer knows what to do consistently. The standard for evaluating character education is also unclear. The hope is that it will be standardised, written, and distributed to lecturers so that, in the future, the character of university students will become students with good character, and the university will become the best.

The second obstacle found is the availability of classrooms which is directly proportional to the availability of time. When set to 70 minutes for 2 credits, the student will finish at 8:15 or 8:20 at night. This means that it is not yet possible in the current university context. Then implement the 50-minute rule. If it is set to 50 minutes for class needs, the students will be home before 6 p.m. So, in this case, reducing time for several faculties remains a dilemma. However, with conditions that are 50 minutes or 70 minutes, this becomes an inhibiting factor so that the achievement target has not been achieved optimally. This means that a lack of class becomes one of the factors in character development. As a result, the lecturers need to be re-characterised.

The next problem is that some lay lecturers find it hard to understand and use character education in RPS. In other words, not all lecturers can use their RPS to teach about character. Also, a number of students who were not Muslim were found to be a problem. This goes against lecturers' main values, which are religious values. For students who are not Muslims, religious values are not taken into account. This is because character education at universities doesn't take into account any religious standards other than Islam. Not only that, but the student himself found problems because he had been following the campus culture he had felt from the beginning of college until now. One example is that a student's religious beliefs can make it hard for a teacher to tell them to be honest on an exam. Many students continue to defend different ways to pass the test. This is clear because the problem with character education in students is that there aren't enough courses teaching the same values, and teachers aren't using the best methods to help students develop their personalities. There are also unclear institutional rules and imbalances in how character education is used with the right facilities and infrastructure.

On the basis of the findings, it is possible to conclude that there are four obstacles to character education, as articulated by two research informants: character education is not regarded as important, is not institutionalised, and is not integrated into the teaching and learning process in the classroom and the e-learning learning system, so that the process of delivering material and Lecturer discussions cannot provide and measure students' character.
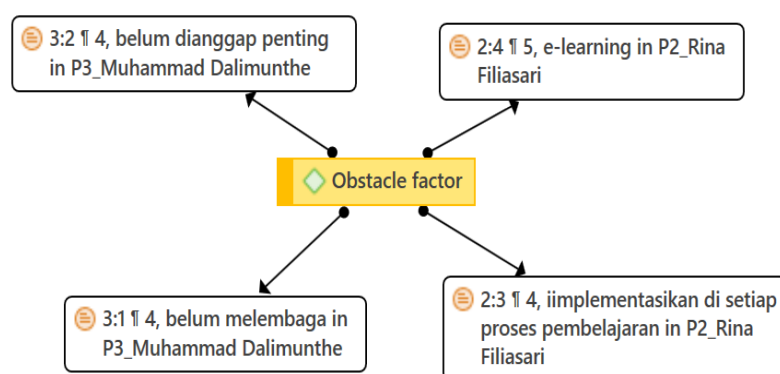

Figure 3. Inhibiting Factors for Character Education

In addition to the factors listed above, eight informants expressed support for the implementation of character education at UIN SU Medan: leadership policies, integration into the learning system, instruction in study programs, and use of the ma'had system. Character education's supporting factors will be discussed further below.
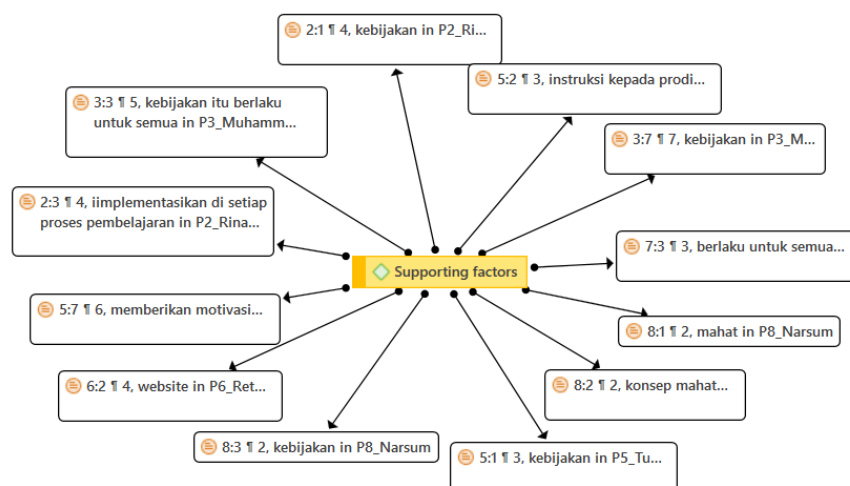

Image 4. Supporting Factors for Character Education

Discussion

Character education and character development have a strong relationship; character development begins with implementing character education so that habit patterns in student behaviour are formed. The design of character education in Islamic religious colleges of received character education must be applied in the design of learning programs, supported by the availability of facilities, and it will strengthen the formed and developed characters. Lecturers must set a good example for students' education and character development. Learning can be accomplished through the use of technology and information, but the application and intensity, as well as guidance from teachers and lecturers, will result in positive character education.

The results of this analysis show that the findings of the informants supporting the implementation of character education are policies that are implemented in each learning process in each study program. A meta-analysis study found a significant relationship between character education and student learning outcomes, which was relevant to previous research. (Jeynes, 2019), (Singh, 2019). Another supporting factor is the lecturer's role as a campus role model when interacting with students in class, as well as guidance on-field practice and daily communication so that students become acquainted with the campus environment. According to the findings of the study, the social environment has an impact on character education. According to Oktawati's research (Oktawati, 2017), juvenile delinquency is on the rise due to a lack of parental supervision and attention and a negative social environment.

Character education barriers have not yet been institutionalised; there are still study programs that have not followed faculty leadership regulations, implying that it does not apply to all. Lighting is still an issue in class, and communication ethics between students and lecturers are poor. One of the challenges is that students cannot interact directly with lecturers and cannot observe and imitate their behaviour.

4. CONCLUSION

Character education has not been implemented optimally at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra through an integrated curriculum. This is indicated by the lecturer's questionnaire score of 45.98% on a scale of 2, which means that it is still sometimes applied. Likewise, the FITK student questionnaire showed 36.77%, Science and Technology 37.36%, Da'wah 37.32%, FKM 39.05%, and FIS 39.22%, with the highest scores, all on a scale of 2. Its application is still limited to character planting in the first five minutes of the lecture process. However, it has not been incorporated into the RPS lecture material. Inhibiting

factors in the application of character education through this integrated curriculum include the availability of less time in the classroom to explore character education, the lack of a standard format for character education that is integrated into the RPS, making monitoring and evaluation challenges, and exemplary from lecturers and employees who are assessed as still necessary. Improvements and the possibility of the need for adequate lecture rooms to meet the needs of lectures.

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