

Toward an Integrative Framework of Santri Discipline Development in Pesantren Boarding Systems

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims to synthesise various strategies for student discipline coaching within the Islamic boarding school (pesantren) system. It addresses the gap between institutional regulations and the reality of student behavior by analysing how various pedagogical and managerial approaches, such as habituation, modeling, and persuasive communication, work together to form a holistic and sustainable disciplined character. This research employs a qualitative library research method. Data were systematically gathered from various scientific journal articles, academic documents, and previous case studies related to discipline coaching in pesantren. The data were analysed using descriptive-analytic techniques, involving thematic categorisation and synthesis to provide a comprehensive conceptual framework beyond localised case studies. The findings, derived descriptive qualitative analysis combined with thematic synthesis, identify three fundamental pillars of discipline coaching: First, the Strategic Role of Supervisors, who function as in loco parentis and uswatun hasanah (role models). Second Habituation and Integrated Regulation, encompassing 24-hour routine management and the implementation of educative ta'zir (reward and punishment). Third Institutional Synergy, particularly the empowerment of student organisations as agents of change. The triangulated synthesis demonstrates that these interconnected pillars collectively transform external compliance into intrinsic discipline and provide a holistic conceptual framework for discipline development in pesantren boarding systems. The study identifies significant challenges, including infrastructure limitations (e.g., sanitation facilities), varying competencies of supervisors, and the diverse socio-psychological backgrounds of students. However, the results imply that these can be mitigated through adaptive strategies, such as personalised-persuasive approaches and multilateral collaboration between the school and parents. It offers a systematic reference for pesantren administrators to implement an adaptive and humanistic discipline system that remains relevant in the modern educational context.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mensintesis berbagai strategi pembinaan kedisiplinan santri dalam sistem pondok pesantren. Penelitian ini berupaya menjembatani kesenjangan antara peraturan kelembagaan dan realitas perilaku santri dengan menganalisis bagaimana berbagai pendekatan pedagogis dan manajerial, seperti pembiasaan, keteladanan, dan komunikasi persuasif, saling berinteraksi dalam membentuk karakter disiplin yang

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holistik dan berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kepustakaan dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan secara sistematis dari berbagai artikel jurnal ilmiah, dokumen akademik, dan studi kasus terdahulu yang berkaitan dengan pembinaan kedisiplinan di pesantren. Data dianalisis menggunakan teknik deskriptif-analitis melalui proses kategorisasi tematik dan sintesis untuk menghasilkan kerangka konseptual yang komprehensif, melampaui temuan-temuan yang bersifat lokal pada masing-masing studi kasus. Hasil penelitian, yang diperoleh melalui sintesis tematik dan divalidasi menggunakan triangulasi sumber dari berbagai studi yang telah melalui proses *peer review*, mengidentifikasi tiga pilar utama pembinaan kedisiplinan, yaitu: *Pertama*, Peran Strategis Pembina, yang berfungsi sebagai *in loco parentis* (pengganti orang tua) sekaligus *uswatun hasanah* (teladan yang baik). *Kedua*, Pembiasaan dan Regulasi Terintegrasi, yang mencakup pengelolaan rutinitas selama 24 jam serta penerapan *ta'zir* yang bersifat edukatif melalui sistem penghargaan dan sanksi. *Ketiga*, Sinergi Kelembagaan, khususnya melalui pemberdayaan organisasi santri sebagai agen perubahan. Hasil sintesis yang telah ditriangulasi menunjukkan bahwa ketiga pilar yang saling berkaitan tersebut secara kolektif mampu mentransformasikan kepatuhan yang bersifat eksternal menjadi kedisiplinan yang tumbuh dari dalam diri (intrinsik), sekaligus menyediakan kerangka konseptual yang holistik bagi pengembangan kedisiplinan dalam sistem pesantren berasrama. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi berbagai tantangan yang signifikan, antara lain keterbatasan sarana dan prasarana (seperti fasilitas sanitasi), perbedaan kompetensi pembina, serta keberagaman latar belakang sosial dan psikologis santri. Meskipun demikian, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tantangan-tantangan tersebut dapat diminimalkan melalui strategi yang adaptif, seperti pendekatan persuasif yang disesuaikan dengan karakteristik individu serta kolaborasi yang erat antara pihak pesantren dan orang tua. Penelitian ini menawarkan acuan yang sistematis bagi pengelola pesantren dalam menerapkan sistem kedisiplinan yang adaptif dan humanis sehingga tetap relevan dengan konteks pendidikan modern.

Keywords: *Discipline, Pesantren Boarding System, Integrative Conceptual Framework, Character Education.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in developing individuals who possess not only intellectual competence but also moral integrity and responsible character (Megawati & Sulisworo, 2025). However, rapid globalisation, technological advancement, and socio-cultural transformation have intensified moral challenges among adolescents (Munawarsyah & Fakhurridha, 2024). Various forms of moral deviation, including declining discipline, weak self-control, disobedience to authority, and non-compliance with institutional regulations, have become growing concerns within educational institutions. These conditions indicate that educational success should not merely be measured by academic achievement but also by the ability to cultivate positive character and responsible behaviour (Delgado-galindo & García-jiménez, 2025).

These challenges are equally evident in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), institutions historically recognised for integrating religious education with character formation (Baihaqi, 2025). Despite their long-standing contribution to Islamic education in Indonesia, empirical studies reveal that disciplinary violations among santri remain common. Students continue to arrive late for congregational prayers, neglect compulsory religious activities, misuse mobile phones, violate dormitory regulations, and demonstrate inconsistent adherence to institutional rules (Cahya et al., 2024). Abror & Suud (2024) similarly reported that disciplinary violations remain one of the major managerial challenges faced by *pesantren* administrators, indicating that the existence of institutional regulations alone does not necessarily lead to disciplined behaviour.

Previous studies suggest that disciplinary problems arise from multiple interconnected factors. Institutionally, inconsistent supervision by dormitory mentors, ineffective communication, varying leadership styles, and weak implementation of educational sanctions often reduce the effectiveness of discipline programs (Hepriyanti et al., 2023). Individually, differences in family background, psychological development during adolescence, peer influence, and adaptation to boarding school life significantly affect students' willingness to internalise disciplinary values (Hidayah & Nordin, 2020). In addition, inadequate facilities and infrastructure frequently hinder the implementation of effective discipline within *pesantren* (Shahrol et al., 2023). These findings demonstrate that discipline should be viewed as a multidimensional educational process rather than merely compliance with institutional rules.

The urgency of this issue is closely related to the strategic role of *pesantren* in Indonesian education. As institutions responsible for preparing future Muslim generations, *pesantren* are expected to produce graduates with intellectual competence, spiritual maturity, social responsibility, and noble character. Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007 also recognises *pesantren* as strategic educational institutions responsible for integrating religious values with character education to develop holistic human resources (Nikmah et al., 2020). Therefore, strengthening discipline is not only essential for maintaining institutional order but also represents a fundamental indicator of successful Islamic character education.

From the perspective of Islamic education, discipline constitutes an integral component of moral education (*tarbiyah akhlaqiyyah*). Education is intended to direct individuals toward positive transformation through the integration of knowledge, values, and moral responsibility (Gamage, 2021). This principle is reflected in Surah An-Nahl verse 125, which emphasises wisdom, good instruction, and persuasive communication in guiding individuals toward righteous behaviour (Hatta et al., 2025). Likewise, Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System mandates that education should develop faithful learners, possess noble character, and demonstrate responsible citizenship (Yuliatin, 2023). Consequently, discipline should not merely represent external obedience but rather the internalisation of ethical values that encourage learners to regulate their own behaviour based on religious awareness.

Character education, therefore, becomes the primary foundation for developing disciplined individuals. Character education integrates moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, emphasising that good character develops through continuous interaction between knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (Rizky & Huda, 2026). Within Islamic education, this perspective is reinforced through the concept of *tarbiyah*, which promotes holistic human development by integrating intellectual, spiritual, emotional,

and social dimensions. Consequently, Islamic educational institutions are expected to cultivate discipline through continuous guidance, exemplary behaviour, and habituation rather than relying solely on formal (Astuti & Winarti, 2026). Self-discipline enables learners to manage responsibilities, control emotions, and consistently perform desirable behaviours without continuous supervision. In Islamic educational philosophy, this understanding corresponds to the concept of *mujahadah al-naafs*, whereby individuals continuously strive to control themselves according to Islamic teachings. Within the pesantren boarding system, discipline is developed through continuous interaction among educators, students, institutional culture, and the residential environment. Unlike conventional schools, pesantren provide twenty-four-hour educational experiences, allowing the consistent practice of religious values through structured daily routines encompassing worship, learning, communal service, and extracurricular activities (Hannang et al., 2022; Nengsih & Alimni, 2023; Lingga, 2024). This environment creates opportunities for discipline to develop not merely through regulations but also through sustained educational experiences that gradually transform repeated behaviours into enduring character.

The effectiveness of discipline development within pesantren is closely associated with the educational roles of *kyai*, *ustadz*, *musyrif*, and dormitory supervisors. Unlike teachers in formal schools, dormitory mentors function simultaneously as educators, counselors, substitute parents (*in loco parentis*), and role models (*uswatun hasanah*) responsible for students' daily development. Previous studies consistently indicate that students' disciplinary behaviour is strongly influenced by the consistency, commitment, and exemplary conduct demonstrated by these educational figures (Ahla & Robiah, 2024; Azmi et al., 2025; Hannang et al., 2022). This finding aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which explains that individuals acquire behavioural patterns through observation and imitation of significant role models. Consequently, exemplary leadership within pesantren becomes a fundamental mechanism for internalising disciplinary values (Bandura, 1991).

Besides role modelling, discipline development is strengthened through habituation, namely the continuous repetition of positive behaviours until they become part of students' daily character. Within pesantren, habituation is implemented through structured daily routines involving congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, religious learning, communal responsibilities, and extracurricular activities. Continuous participation in these activities gradually transforms externally imposed regulations into intrinsic behavioural habits (Nur, Kurniawaty, et al., 2025). Previous studies have shown that consistent habituation significantly enhances responsibility, punctuality, independence, and self-control among students. Therefore, habituation serves not merely as a disciplinary technique but as a sustainable strategy for character formation (Lestari et al., 2025).

Another essential component of discipline development is the implementation of institutional regulations supported by educational reward and punishment (*ta'zir*) systems (Yuniarti et al., 2025). Institutional rules establish behavioural standards, while rewards reinforce positive behaviour and *ta'zir* functions as an educational mechanism to correct misconduct. Unlike punitive approaches, educational sanctions in pesantren emphasise behavioural improvement (*ishlah*), self-reflection, and responsibility without degrading students' dignity (Damopolii & Shabirno, 2023). Consequently, discipline within pesantren integrates preventive, corrective, and developmental functions simultaneously.

Numerous previous studies have examined discipline development in pesantren from various perspectives. Existing literature generally concludes that discipline is strengthened through exemplary leadership, continuous supervision, habituation, persuasive communication, educational *ta'zir*, and student participation in organisational activities (Siregar & Fatonah, 2022). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that discipline should not be viewed as the outcome of a single intervention but rather as the result of interactions among educational management, institutional culture, and students' psychological development.

Despite these valuable contributions, several limitations remain apparent. First, most previous studies employed qualitative case-study designs focusing on individual pesantren, limiting the transferability of their findings to broader institutional contexts (Jayadi, 2026). Second, existing studies tend to examine discipline from isolated perspectives, such as the role of supervisors, habituation, *ta'zir*, or student organisations, without explaining how these elements interact within a comprehensive educational system (Renita et al., 2026). Consequently, the current literature remains fragmented and has yet to produce an integrative conceptual understanding of discipline development within pesantren boarding systems.

Furthermore, Mesny et al. (2026) primarily evaluated the effectiveness of discipline programs in particular institutions rather than synthesising empirical evidence capable of generating broader conceptual insights. As a result, pesantren administrators still lack a comprehensive framework explaining how pedagogical, managerial, organisational, and socio-psychological strategies collectively contribute to sustainable discipline development. This limitation highlights the need for an integrative synthesis capable of connecting diverse empirical findings into a unified conceptual perspective.

Rather than evaluating a single pesantren, this research identifies recurring discipline strategies across different institutional contexts. It examines their conceptual relationships to formulate a comprehensive understanding of discipline development within the pesantren boarding system. This study lies in the development of an integrative conceptual framework that synthesises previous empirical findings into three interconnected pillars of discipline development: *First*, the strategic role of supervisors as educators, role models, and substitute parents (*in loco parentis*); *Second* habituation and integrated institutional regulation through continuous daily routines and educational *ta'zir*; and *Third* institutional synergy involving pesantren leaders, dormitory supervisors, student organisations, and parents. Unlike previous studies that primarily describe discipline practices within individual institutions, this study conceptualises discipline as a holistic socio-psychological process through which these interconnected pillars transform externally imposed compliance into intrinsic self-discipline. Consequently, this framework contributes to the theoretical development of Islamic character education while providing practical guidance for implementing adaptive and sustainable discipline systems in contemporary pesantren.

Therefore, this study aims to synthesise previous empirical findings regarding discipline development within pesantren boarding systems, identify the principal pedagogical and managerial strategies implemented across different institutional contexts, and formulate an integrative conceptual framework that can serve as a theoretical and practical reference for strengthening discipline development and character education in Islamic boarding schools.

II. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative library research approach, which systematically examines, evaluates, and synthesises knowledge from published literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon without collecting primary field data (Adeniran & Oluwadamisi T., 2024). Library research enables researchers to identify conceptual patterns, compare previous findings, and formulate broader theoretical perspectives based on existing empirical evidence (Jamaluddin et al., 2025). This approach was considered appropriate because the present study aimed to synthesise previous research concerning strategies for developing santri discipline within the pesantren boarding system rather than investigating a single institution.

The study followed several stages of library research as proposed by Creswell, J. W., & Poth (2018), including literature identification, article selection, data extraction, thematic categorisation, synthesis, and interpretation. Literature searching was conducted systematically using several reputable academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, Crossref, Dimensions, and Garuda to ensure comprehensive coverage of both international and Indonesian scholarly publications. These databases were selected because they provide peer-reviewed literature relevant to Islamic education, character education, and pesantren studies (Creswell, J. W., & Poth, 2018). The search process employed Boolean operators (AND and OR) using keywords closely related to the research topic. The primary search terms included "santri discipline," "discipline development," "Islamic boarding school," "pesantren," "boarding school system," "character education," "dormitory supervisor," "*musyrif*," "habituation," "reward and punishment," "*ta'zir*," "Islamic character education," and "student discipline." To broaden the search coverage, equivalent Indonesian keywords were also used, including "kedisiplinan santri," "pembinaan kedisiplinan," "pondok pesantren," "pendidikan karakter," "pembina asrama," "*musyrif*," "pembiasaan," "*ta'zir*," and "sistem boarding pesantren".

The search primarily focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020 and 2026, while seminal references published before this period were included only when they provided essential theoretical foundations. The initial search identified a number of potentially relevant publications from the selected databases. Duplicate records were removed before the remaining articles were screened based on titles, abstracts, publication years, and relevance to the research objectives. Following the screening process, only peer-reviewed publications that met the predetermined inclusion criteria were retained for the final analysis. This systematic selection procedure ensured that only high-quality and relevant literature contributed to the thematic synthesis (Rethlefsen et al., 2024).

The primary data sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles retrieved from the selected academic databases. Supporting sources included books, government regulations, conference proceedings, and other scholarly documents relevant to Islamic education and discipline development. The inclusion criteria comprised publications discussing santri discipline, pesantren boarding systems, character education, dormitory supervision, habituation, educational *ta'zir*, and institutional management. During this process, each selected article was carefully examined to extract important information regarding discipline development strategies, supporting factors, inhibiting factors, and educational practices implemented within pesantren. Conversely, duplicate publications, opinion articles, non-scholarly sources, and literature unrelated to the

research focus were excluded to maintain the quality, credibility, and relevance of the synthesised findings (Faber et al., 2025)

Data were collected using the documentation technique, which involves identifying, selecting, reviewing, recording, and organising relevant scientific literature according to predetermined research objectives (Chand, 2025). The extracted information was subsequently organised into analytical matrices to facilitate systematic comparison across studies. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed source triangulation by comparing and cross-checking concepts, empirical findings, and theoretical perspectives obtained from multiple peer-reviewed publications discussing similar issues related to the santri discipline within the pesantren boarding system (Vivek, 2023). Rather than relying on a single source, evidence from different institutional contexts was systematically compared to identify consistent patterns, similarities, and discrepancies. In addition, a cross-study comparison was conducted to verify the consistency of discipline development strategies reported by different researchers. Only themes consistently supported by multiple independent studies were retained in the final synthesis, thereby minimising subjective interpretation and strengthening the credibility of the findings (Snyder, 2019). Throughout the research process, an analytical matrix documenting the characteristics of the articles, research objectives, methodology, and main findings was maintained with the aim of increasing the reliability of the analysis. The goal was to enhance the reliability of the analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative analysis combined with thematic synthesis, following the procedures proposed by Thomas & Harden (2008). The analytical process consisted of four stages: (1) familiarisation with the selected literature, (2) open coding of relevant findings, (3) grouping similar codes into descriptive themes, and (4) synthesising analytical themes into a comprehensive conceptual framework. Each emerging theme must go through source triangulation and comparison between studies to ensure consistency and credibility. The final synthesis generated three interconnected themes representing the principal strategies of santri discipline development within the pesantren boarding system: (1) the strategic role of supervisors, (2) habituation and integrated regulation, and (3) institutional synergy. These themes formed the basis for developing an integrative conceptual framework describing discipline development within contemporary boarding systems.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Relevance of Buya Hamka's Ethical Thought and Islamic Education Curriculum

The dormitory mentor, commonly referred to as *musyrif* (male dormitory supervisor) or *murabbi* (educator and character mentor), constitutes a central factor that bridges the ideals of pesantren regulations with the reality of student behavior. They perform a dual role as *in loco parentis*, providing emotional care while simultaneously acting as rule enforcers who guarantee the success of character education (Burhanuddin, 2026). Given that pesantren life operates within a 24-hour educational environment, the development of discipline can be implemented continuously, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Khoiruddin & Nasir, 2025). This finding indicates that discipline is not merely an institutional regulation but a comprehensive educational process that is integrated into every aspect of students' daily lives. Similar findings have been reported

by Kartiko et al. (2026), who concluded that continuous interaction between educators and students in Islamic boarding schools significantly strengthens character internalisation because learning occurs through both formal instruction and informal daily experiences.

The primary function of mentors includes supervision (*controlling*) of daily activities, ranging from *mahdhah* worship, such as congregational prayers, to general public order (Fuadi & Wuryandini, 2025). Discipline development is executed through periodic evaluations and direct supervision, where disciplinary violations are addressed through educational sanctions, including environmental cleaning, memorisation of Qur'anic verses, or other corrective activities intended to foster responsibility toward time and the surrounding environment (Indra et al., 2022). In practice, the *ustadzah* (female teachers) conduct intensive monitoring from the moment students wake up until they return to sleep to ensure that all activities comply with institutional regulations (Fuadi & Wuryandini, 2025). These findings strongly align with Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's educational concept in *Tarbiyatul Aulad fil Islam*, particularly the principle of *muraqabah* (continuous supervision). Ulwan argues that supervision is not intended to restrict children's freedom but to guide them toward self-awareness and responsibility. Within the pesantren environment, supervision functions as educational guidance rather than authoritarian control, gradually enabling students to regulate their own behavior even in the absence of direct observation (Amaliati, 2020).

Beyond the supervisory aspect, dormitory mentors serve as motivators who cultivate intrinsic awareness among students. A gentle personal approach and one-on-one dialogues are employed to understand the underlying causes of students' behavior so that discipline develops from personal understanding rather than coercion (Bandera & Dagdag, 2021). Moral encouragement from the *kyai* (Islamic boarding school leader) and *ustadz* (teachers) also plays a significant role in strengthening commitment toward worship and academic discipline (Burhanuddin, 2026). This practice corresponds to another educational principle proposed by Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, namely *mau'izhah* (constructive advice). According to Ulwan, sincere advice delivered with compassion is more effective than harsh punishment because it nurtures students' moral awareness and strengthens their spiritual commitment. Consequently, discipline becomes an internal value that is willingly embraced rather than an obligation imposed through fear (Lase & Hanafiah, 2025).

The harmonious relationship between caregivers and students, which reflects the concept of servant leadership, becomes a valuable asset in creating an environment where students feel comfortable discussing personal and academic challenges (Gultekin & Dougherty, 2021). By positioning themselves as "elder siblings" or trusted companions, mentors establish strong emotional bonds that facilitate guidance and counseling. This collaborative relationship supports holistic and humane character development. These findings are consistent with Bandura (1991), which explains that individuals acquire behavior through observation, imitation, and interaction with significant role models. Within the pesantren setting, students spend most of their time interacting with mentors, senior students, and religious teachers (Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022). Consequently, disciplined behavior is continuously reinforced through daily observation of respected figures whose actions serve as practical examples. This supports previous studies by Mubarak et al. (2024), which found that exemplary leadership significantly influences students' moral development because repeated observation gradually shapes behavioral norms.

The fundamental basis of discipline development in the pesantren is exemplary behavior or modeling. Educational figures do not merely teach academic content but also become living examples through their punctuality, consistency in worship, respectful communication, and adherence to institutional regulations (Mutsaqofah, 2025). A concrete example is demonstrated by the *kyais*, who consistently arrive punctually at religious gatherings, while administrators regularly perform congregational prayers and *wirid* before guiding students (Sartini, 2025). According to Bandura (1991), observational learning is most effective when role models possess credibility, authority, and emotional closeness to learners (Wang & Liao, 2023). Therefore, students are more likely to imitate disciplined behavior displayed by respected religious leaders than merely comply with written regulations. This perspective also aligns with Ulwan's concept of *uswah* (exemplary behavior), which emphasises that educators' actions have a greater influence than verbal instruction because children naturally imitate individuals whom they admire and trust.

The consistency of administrators in obeying institutional regulations is therefore an indispensable prerequisite for successful discipline formation. If administrators themselves neglect established rules, students are likely to replicate similar behaviors (Wang & Liao, 2023). This finding reinforces both Bandura's proposition that observed behavior becomes a model for future conduct and Ulwan's assertion that educators bear moral responsibility for embodying the values they seek to instill. Furthermore, Ulwan complements the concepts of *ta'wid* (habituation), *muraqabah* (supervision), *mau'izhah* (advice), and *uswah* (exemplary behavior) with *tarhib* (educational sanctions). Educational sanctions are implemented not to humiliate students but to remind them of their responsibilities and encourage behavioral improvement. This principle is reflected in pesantren practices where corrective sanctions are educational, proportional, and aimed at character development rather than punishment alone. Similarly, KH. Abdullah Zarkasyi emphasised that successful student leadership depends upon seven educational elements: direction, training, assignment, habituation, supervision, exemplary behavior (*uswatun hasanah*), and creative educational approaches (Qodari & Susanto, 2023). The integration of these principles demonstrates that discipline within the pesantren is cultivated through a balanced combination of habituation, supervision, exemplary leadership, moral guidance, and educational correction, resulting in sustainable character formation rather than temporary behavioral compliance.

Student Discipline Development Strategies within the Pesantren Boarding System

The totality of education within the pesantren encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, all of which are integrated into a 24-hour educational environment (Supriyanto, 2022). Unlike conventional educational institutions that primarily emphasise classroom learning, pesantren cultivate character through continuous interaction between students, teachers, and the surrounding environment. The boarding system enables moral values to be internalised not only through formal instruction but also through everyday practice, supervision, and communal living. This educational pattern reflects the holistic philosophy of Islamic education, where knowledge acquisition is inseparable from character formation. Consequently, discipline in the pesantren is viewed not merely as compliance with institutional regulations but as an integral part of students' moral and spiritual development.

The habituation method serves as the primary instrument in character formation, where students (*santri*) are conditioned to repeatedly perform positive actions until they

become an inherent part of their lifestyle (Intansari et al., 2026). This finding strongly supports Ibn Khaldun's Habituation Theory (*malakah*), which argues that good character is developed through continuous practice and repetition rather than through theoretical instruction alone. According to Ibn Khaldun, repeated actions gradually become stable dispositions (*malakah*), enabling individuals to perform virtuous behavior naturally and consistently. Therefore, disciplined behavior among students is not formed instantly but evolves through sustained exposure to structured educational routines. This perspective also aligns with the Aristotelian view that noble character is achieved through repeated virtuous actions accompanied by conscious reflection rather than passive obedience (Nur et al., 2025). The convergence of these theories indicates that consistent educational routines create enduring behavioral patterns that become embedded in students' personalities.

The implementation of this habituation manifests in rigorous time management, such as the obligation for *tahajjud* (night) prayers in the early hours, congregational prayers, *tadarus* (Qur'anic recitation), and scheduled extracurricular activities (Agustiah & Rahim, 2025). Administrators ensure that students participate in a series of programs ranging from *Diniyah* (religious) learning to *Tahfidz* (Qur'anic memorisation) in an orderly manner to train lifestyle regularity (Iza et al., 2026). This structured environment not only builds discipline but also creates a spiritual atmosphere that supports moral development through the daily repetition of moral experiences (Saidi, 2025). From the perspective of Character Education Theory, these activities represent the integration of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Students first understand the importance of discipline through religious instruction, then develop emotional commitment toward these values, and finally demonstrate them through consistent daily behavior. Thus, discipline becomes internalised as a personal virtue rather than remaining an externally imposed obligation.

The application of regulations in the pesantren serves as a guideline to control student behavior so that it aligns with the institution's vision and mission (Nashihin et al., 2025). As implemented in Pondok Modern Gontor with the term "*Teng Komando*", comprehensive regulations cover aspects of etiquette, security, and health to produce a disciplined and resilient generation (Nisa & Aimah, 2024). These regulations are effective when supported by educational-repressive instruments, namely, rewards and punishments. The findings correspond closely with B.F. Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory, which proposes that behavior is shaped by its consequences. According to Skinner, behaviors followed by positive reinforcement are likely to be repeated, whereas behaviors followed by corrective consequences gradually decrease in frequency. Within the pesantren context, institutional rules function not merely as restrictive regulations but as behavioral frameworks reinforced through systematic consequences that encourage students to display disciplined conduct consistently.

Rewards are given as positive reinforcement for students who demonstrate discipline, such as the Student of the Month program, which effectively builds self-confidence and intrinsic motivation (Zhaffar et al., 2026). Conversely, punishment or *ta'zir* is applied as a curative and preventive effort to correct behavior without demeaning the student's dignity (Rahmatullah & Baharun, 2023). Sanctions are administered progressively, ranging from verbal reprimands to educational physical sanctions such as cleaning ponds or memorising specific verses (Hardianty, 2023). The primary objective of *ta'zir* is not merely to deter students from violating rules but to facilitate self-improvement (*ishlah*) through educational correction rather than fear-based compliance (Rahmatullah

& Baharun, 2023). These findings reinforce Skinner's assertion that reinforcement and punishment are effective behavioral modification strategies when implemented consistently and fairly. Moreover, because sanctions are educational rather than punitive, students gradually develop intrinsic self-regulation, transforming externally reinforced discipline into internalised responsibility.

The success of discipline internalisation is also strategically supported by student organisations, such as OPPM, ORSADA, or OSKA, which function as collaborative forums for implementing ethical values (Irianto et al., 2022). These organisations act as an extension of the caregivers' reach in monitoring daily activities and enforcing discipline through social control mechanisms (Irianto et al., 2022). These organisations provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, responsibility, peer supervision, and collaborative learning. Research shows that peer influence often has a stronger impact on behavioral development than formal authority because students continuously interact with one another in the dormitory environment (Dewanti et al., 2025). Therefore, organisational participation complements the educational role of teachers and dormitory supervisors in fostering disciplined behavior. Through these organisations, students are empowered to become agents of change who take the initiative in guarding the pesantren programs (Muhammad, 2021). Inspiring organisational leaders have a positive impact on the religiosity of their peers, creating an environment conducive to spiritual development and independence (Cahyono, 2025). This finding is also consistent with Bandura (1991) on Social Learning Theory, which emphasises that individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and interaction with significant role models. Student leaders serve as behavioral models whose disciplined conduct is observed and emulated by other students, thereby strengthening the collective culture of discipline within the boarding school environment.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that discipline formation in the pesantren is a multidimensional educational process resulting from the interaction of habituation, behavioral reinforcement, institutional regulations, exemplary leadership, and social interaction. The integration of Ibn Khaldun's Habituation Theory, Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory, Lickona's Character Education Theory, and Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides a comprehensive explanation of how disciplined behavior is gradually internalised among students (Bandura, 1991; Lickona, 1991). Rather than relying solely on sanctions or formal instruction, pesantren successfully cultivate discipline by creating an educational ecosystem in which repeated practice, positive reinforcement, moral understanding, and exemplary role models continuously reinforce one another. This holistic approach enables discipline to evolve from externally regulated behavior into a stable personal character that guides students both within and beyond the pesantren environment.

Inhibiting Factors and Efforts to Overcome Challenges in Student Discipline Development

The development of discipline within the pesantren boarding system is a multidimensional process influenced by institutional management, educational leadership, students' psychological development, and the surrounding environment. Therefore, disciplinary challenges arise from the interaction of managerial, psychological, and environmental factors rather than from a single cause (Suhartini, 2021). This finding supports Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which

explains that behaviour develops through reciprocal interactions between individuals and multiple environmental systems, including family, school, peers, and society. Accordingly, discipline in pesantren depends not only on institutional regulations but also on leadership quality, interpersonal relationships, and students' previous experiences

First, one of the main obstacles identified in previous studies is the inconsistency of dormitory supervisors (*musyrif* and *musyrifah*) in implementing disciplinary guidance. Supervisors frequently face excessive workloads because they simultaneously manage administrative, academic, and supervisory responsibilities, limiting opportunities for direct interaction with students (Rahma et al., 2025). In addition, supervisors who are not continuously present in the dormitory provide weaker monitoring, while inconsistent enforcement of sanctions causes students to perceive institutional regulations as negotiable (Usifa & Satrial, 2026). These findings support Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasises that students imitate behaviours demonstrated by significant role models (Bandura, 1991). Consequently, consistent supervision and exemplary leadership are essential for fostering intrinsic discipline.

Second, students' psychological characteristics also influence discipline development. Adolescence represents Erikson's stage of Identity versus Role Confusion, during which individuals naturally seek autonomy, explore identity, and question existing rules (Vogel & Machizawa, 2004). Therefore, resistance toward regulations should be understood as part of normal psychosocial development rather than merely intentional misconduct. Students entering pesantren must adapt to structured routines, communal living, and continuous supervision, which often differ significantly from their previous family environments. Previous studies indicate that parenting styles, family background, cultural values, and previous habits significantly affect students' adaptability (Hua et al., 2022). Likewise, peer influence, boredom caused by repetitive routines, communication barriers, and emotional difficulties experienced by students from broken-home families may reduce commitment to institutional regulations (Hua et al., 2022). These findings demonstrate that discipline is closely associated with adolescents' psychosocial development.

Another important challenge concerns inadequate infrastructure and the educational environment. Limited facilities, including overcrowded dormitories, insufficient bathrooms, restricted learning spaces, and poor sanitation, disrupt students' daily routines and reduce compliance with institutional schedules (Ujung & Ruslan, 2025). This finding supports the concept of school climate, which argues that supportive physical and psychosocial environments promote responsibility and self-regulation, whereas inadequate facilities increase stress and behavioural problems (Eker, 2026). Therefore, discipline should be viewed not only as an individual responsibility but also as a product of supportive institutional conditions. The synthesis further indicates that managerial limitations, students' psychological characteristics, and infrastructural constraints are interrelated. Weak supervision reduces students' motivation to obey regulations, while inadequate facilities intensify psychological stress during adaptation. Similarly, adolescents become more susceptible to peer influence when institutional guidance is inconsistent. This interaction reinforces Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, highlighting that discipline development requires an integrated approach involving leadership, psychological support, institutional management, and environmental improvement.

To address these challenges, previous studies consistently recommend adaptive and humanistic strategies rather than relying solely on punitive discipline. First, improving supervisors' competencies through leadership training, counselling, communication skills, conflict management, and continuous professional development strengthens consistent guidance and disciplinary implementation (Erdoğan, 2025).

Second, discipline should incorporate developmental and psychological approaches. Supervisors are encouraged to identify the causes of behavioural problems through dialogue, mentoring, and counselling instead of immediately imposing sanctions. Structured orientation programmes for new students and individualised mentoring for those experiencing behavioural difficulties facilitate the gradual internalisation of disciplinary values (Putri et al., 2025). This approach is consistent with Erikson's view that adolescents require supportive relationships during identity formation. Third, collaboration among pesantren, families, and student organisations is essential. Previous studies indicate that discipline is more effectively internalised when educational and family environments consistently reinforce similar values (Asrin & Musa, 2025). Active parental involvement and the empowerment of student organisations such as OPPM, OSKA, and ORSADA strengthen peer supervision and encourage students to participate actively in maintaining institutional discipline (Lase & Hanafiah, 2025).

Finally, improving institutional facilities and diversifying educational activities further support sustainable discipline development. Better residential infrastructure, sanitation, and learning facilities reduce environmental barriers, while leadership programmes, sports, community service, and the continuous internalisation of pesantren values such as the *Panca Jiwa* foster responsibility, cooperation, and self-discipline (Yugo, 2025). Overall, the findings demonstrate that discipline development in pesantren depends on the interaction of educational leadership, students' psychological readiness, institutional management, environmental support, and collaboration among stakeholders. Effective discipline cannot be achieved through regulations alone but requires a holistic educational ecosystem in which exemplary leadership, supportive environments, psychological guidance, and institutional collaboration work together to transform external compliance into intrinsic self-discipline.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the development of santri discipline within the pesantren boarding system is a holistic educational process that integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions through continuous character formation. The thematic synthesis identifies three interconnected pillars that shape effective discipline development: the strategic role of supervisors as educators, role models, and substitute parents (*in loco parentis*); habituation supported by integrated institutional regulations and educational *ta'zir*; and institutional synergy involving pesantren leaders, dormitory supervisors, student organisations, and parents. These interconnected strategies enable the transformation of externally enforced compliance into intrinsic self-discipline while addressing challenges related to infrastructure, supervisory competence, and students' diverse socio-cultural backgrounds through adaptive and collaborative approaches. Accordingly, this study contributes to providing both a theoretical reference for future research and a practical guideline for implementing adaptive, humanistic, and sustainable discipline development within contemporary pesantren boarding systems.

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