

# RELIGIOUS-CULTURAL APPROACH IN INTERNALIZING THE VALUE OF *ISLAH AND QUDWAH* IN THE LIFE OF PESANTREN TARBIYATUT THOLABAH

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the values of *Islah and Qudwah* in the life of the Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic boarding school, as well as to analyze the implementation strategies of the religious-cultural approach in internalizing the values of *Islah and Qudwah* in the life of the Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic boarding school. This study employs a qualitative field research method with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary studies at the Tarbiyatut Tholabah boarding school. The results of the study indicate that the values of *Islah and Qudwah* are understood as foundational values that must be realized in the boarding school education process to create a harmonious boarding school education. The value of *islah* is interpreted as a drive for peace, improvement, and harmony in the lives of students. Meanwhile, the value of *qudwah* is a drive to become a role model in behavior (agent of change), encompassing religiosity, sincerity, humility, and responsibility. The internalization of the values of *Islah and Qudwah* through a religious-cultural approach in pesantren life is carried out through the exemplary behavior of the supervisors, the ustadz and ustadzah of the pesantren, the cultivation of values in daily activities, and the strengthening of a participatory dialogical culture, a curriculum and learning process infused with the values of *Islah and Qudwah*, social interaction among students, religious nurturing, and student organization. These findings confirm that the religious-cultural approach is capable of shaping the character of students to be inclusive, moderate, and tolerant, and contributes to the strengthening of contextual and transformative Islamic education.

**Keyword:** Pesantren Religious-Cultural, Value Internalization, *Islah, Qudwah*.

## Introduction

In recent years, the issue of radicalism and intolerance in Indonesia has attracted serious attention from scholars and policymakers. Several terrorism incidents, such as the Jakarta and Surabaya bombing<sup>1,2</sup>, illustrate the challenges faced by the nation in maintaining harmony within its pluralistic society. However, the urgency of this study is not merely to recount such cases, but to highlight the role of Islamic educational institutions, particularly pesantren, in fostering moderation, peace, and inclusivity.

Pesantren, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, are central in shaping students' character and transmitting Islamic values. Beyond doctrinal teaching, pesantren need to ensure that Islamic values are interpreted inclusively and contextually, avoiding narrow or exclusive understandings that could potentially lead to radical tendencies<sup>3</sup>. Pesantren play an important role in promoting religious moderation, which is essential to counter radicalism and encourage peaceful living ecosystems in the social life of pluralistic societies<sup>4</sup>.

Within this context, the values of *Islah* (reconciliation) and *Qudwah* (exemplary) become crucial principles. Yet, studies specifically examining how these values are internalized through a religious-cultural approach in pesantren remain limited. Addressing this gap, the present research explores how Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah integrates the values of *Islah* and *Qudwah* in its educational practices to strengthen moderate Islamic character.

Therefore, the Islamic moderation education movement is becoming increasingly important to be strengthened through contextual and down-to-earth approaches. In the context of the Indonesian nation which has ethnic, religious and social plural diversity,

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<sup>1</sup> "January 14, 2016, Terror Bombing and Shootout in Thamrin, 8 People Killed All Page - Kompas.Com," accessed May 19, 2025, <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2022/01/14/093000365/14-januari-2016-aksi-teror-bom-hingga-baku-tembak-di-thamrin-8-orang-tewas?page=all>.

<sup>2</sup> "Terrorism in 2018: Family Bombing Shakes Surabaya," accessed May 19, 2025, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4358370/terorisme-terlakanat-2018-bom-sekeluarga-mengguncang-surabaya>.

<sup>3</sup> Sutrisna Sutrisna, 'The Internalization of Islamic Wasathiyah Values Within the Framework of Social Harmony', *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities*, 9.2 (2025), pp. 239–56, doi:10.18326/millati.v9i2.3089.

<sup>4</sup> Riswadi Riswadi and others, 'Integration of Religious Moderation in Character Education: A Study of the Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Approach', *Global International Journal of Innovative Research*, 2.11 (2024), pp. 2738–57, doi:10.59613/global.v2i11.355.

education that teaches the value of moderation is important<sup>5</sup>. The diversity of a nation certainly creates its own challenges, especially in building harmony. It is not an easy thing to unite various differences, because often differences lead to the birth of divisions and even conflicts<sup>6</sup>. However, if the principle of nationality becomes the most important of this plurality, it will become an extraordinary potential.

In this context, the value of *Islah* (reconciliation) and *Qudwah* (exemplary) are two main principles in Islam that need to be internalized thoroughly to Muslims, especially santri, so that they are able to become agents of peace and role models in society. The religious-cultural approach in pesantren education is a strategic choice to bridge the normative-theological dimension with the reality of the social life of the santri. The cultivation of these two values in the lives of santri through the implementation of the religious-cultural approach needs to be examined in pesantren. Therefore, this research tries to explore the religious-cultural approach in Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren.

Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah is one of the Islamic boarding schools located in Kranji Village, Paciran District, Lamongan Regency, East Java. This pesantren is known as an Islamic educational institution that maintains the traditional values of salafiyah pesantren and adopts modern Islamic education, this is evidenced by its formal education ranging from pre-school to higher education. This pesantren is also an old pesantren in Lamongan, with the principle of forming a generation of students who are knowledgeable, moral, and have high social awareness. This pesantren is cared for by kiai who have scientific and moral authority, and is supported by an education system that emphasizes adab before knowledge. In daily life, santri not only study the yellow classical books, but are also involved in social, organizational, and self-development activities. The main characteristics of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah are the balance between formal and informal education, as well as openness to approaches that are in accordance with the local socio-cultural context<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Mas Muhammad Badrut Tamam and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, 'Membentuk Perilaku Moderasi Beragama Siswa Melalui Internalisasi Nili-Nilai Islam Di MTs Mambaus Sholihin 7 Bintang', *Jurnal Al-Fatih*, 8.1 (2025), pp. 402–16 <<https://doi.org/10.61082/alfatih.v8i1.487>>.

<sup>6</sup> Nasaruddin Umar, *Islam Nusantara The Long Way of Moderation in Indonesia*, (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 2019), pp. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Aly Mahmudy, Foundation Manager of PP Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Interview, May 15, 2025

Therefore, this pesantren is an interesting example to be studied in an effort to understand how Islamic values such as *Islah* and *Qudwah* are instilled through a religious-cultural approach.

Educational practices at Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah show a strong integration between religious and cultural aspects, both in the learning structure and in the daily social life of santri. One manifestation of this approach is the classical book recitation activities combined with the habituation of collective and cultural life. In this pesantren, santri are accustomed to living simply, respecting each other, and following various local traditions such as *Haul*, *Istighotsah*, and *Tablilan* which become a medium for value education.

The example of kiai and ustadz becomes the main foundation in the value internalization process, especially the value of *Islah and Qudwah*, because in the pesantren tradition, the figure of kiai is not only a teacher, but also a spiritual and social role model<sup>8</sup>. In addition, this pesantren develops a santri leadership regeneration system through internal organizations such as cottage administrators and room administrators, which indirectly form social responsibility and the ability to be a role model for others<sup>9</sup>. This practice is a concrete form of internalizing the value of *Islah and Qudwah* through a religious-cultural approach. The life of the pesantren, which is full of values, symbols, and habits, forms an educational atmosphere that not only educates, but also shapes the character of the santri as a whole, which needs further research to explore the internalization of *Islah and Qudwah* values in pesantren life.

This study aims to describe the concept of *Islah and Qudwah* values that are internalized in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah Kranji Paciran, as well as analyze the form of implementation strategy of the religious-cultural approach in the process of internalizing these values in pesantren life. This goal is based on the belief that Islamic values not only need to be taught, but also culturally instilled so that they seep into the daily behavior of santri. Through this approach, this study is expected to have implications for the relevance of the religious-cultural approach in strengthening inclusive and contextual Islamic character education. This study is significant to reveal how pesantren form inclusive and moderate santri characters through the religious-cultural approach. Therefore, the contribution of this study is expected to be

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<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Aly Mahmudy, Manager of PP Tarbiyatut Tholabah Foundation, Interview, May 15, 2025

<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Aly Mahmudy, Manager of PP Tarbiyatut Tholabah Foundation, Interview, May 15, 2025

not only limited to the development of Islamic education theory, but also to the practice of character education based on the values of *Islah* and *Qudwah* in pesantren more broadly.

## Literature Review

The concept of *Islah* (reconciliation, improvement, peace) has long been rooted in Islamic thought. The Qur'an frequently emphasizes *Islah* as a principle for resolving conflicts and fostering harmony (Q.S. al-Hujurat [49]: 9-10). Classical scholars such as al-Ghazali also stress that reconciliation and peace are central to human morality and social order, serving as a foundation for ethical conduct in education and community life<sup>10,11</sup>. From a broader perspective, peace studies highlight reconciliation and non-violence as core values for building sustainable social harmony<sup>12</sup>. Thus, the value of *Islah* can be positioned both within Islamic classical scholarship and contemporary peace theories as a moral compass for education.

Meanwhile, the concept of *Qudwah* (exemplary or role model) is central in Islamic pedagogy. Ibn Khaldun, in his *Muqaddimah*<sup>13</sup>, emphasized the teacher's role as a model whose behavior significantly shapes the learner's character. Modern educational theories, such as role model pedagogy<sup>14</sup>, also argue that exemplary behavior is more effective than verbal instruction in forming students' attitudes and morals. In the pesantren context, *Qudwah* manifests through the figure of the *Kyai*, teachers, and senior santri, whose daily practices transmit values to younger students. This aligns with Thomas Lickona's framework of character education, which integrates moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action<sup>15</sup> through lived examples.

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<sup>10</sup> A H Al-Ghazali and M bin Ahmad, "Ayyuha Al-Walad," *Dalam Majmuah Rasa'il Al-Imam Al Ghazali...*, 1993, <http://la.utexas.edu/users/hcleaver/330T/350kPEEGhazaliAyyuhaL.WaladExcerptTable.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Ghozali, 'Ihya' Ulumuddin, Bairut: Dar Ibnu Hazm', 2005, p. 1963.

<sup>12</sup> Riadhotus Sholikha and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, 'Pemikiran Filsuf Dalam Pendidikan Islam: Menelusuri Warisan Pemikiran Dan Praktik (Al-Banna, Muhammad Abduh, Mohammad Iqbal, Naquib Alattas)', *MIYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 21.01 (2025), pp. 51–66 <<https://doi.org/10.33754/miyah.v21i01.1388>>.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Al-Allamah Abdurrahman Khaldun, *Mukaddimah Ibnu Khaldun*, Perpustakaan Nasional, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> A Bandura, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*, Prentice-Hall Series in Social Learning Theory (Prentice-Hall, 1986).

<sup>15</sup> T Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, A Bantam Trade Paperback (Bantam, 1992).

Several previous studies have examined religious moderation and character education in pesantren. The results of Salim's research (2023) show that moderate Islamic characters can be applied through the hidden curriculum and through habituation in pesantren<sup>16</sup>. Research by Riswandi focuses on the integration of religious moderation in character education, with the result that the values of religious moderation are internalized through learning activities in formal schools, then through habituation and religious activities<sup>17</sup>.

On the other hand, there is a dissertation research by Zinuddin which focuses on the implementation of religious culture in madrasas with the results of research that religious culture is implemented in the form of activities such as congregational prayer, *tahfidz*, greetings, and commemoration of religious activities such as recitation and so on. From these activities, it then has implications for the moral formation of the madrasah community, especially students<sup>18</sup>. Moh. Nasrul Amin and Raikhan, in their study describe how the values of moderation are integrated into the Islamic Education curriculum through the principles of balance, the universal values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, as well as curriculum strategies and evaluations that involve both intra- and extracurricular activities<sup>19</sup>.

Research in pesantren was also conducted by Subur with the result that Islamic religious education in Islamic boarding schools as character strengthening through internalization of religious values, teaching local wisdom, and habituation of disciplined life. Routine activities such as *Mujahadah Kamis Wage*, pilgrimage, religious studies, Friday Fajr recitation, and *al-Barzanji* recitation become a means of character education. The local wisdom values instilled include spirituality, discipline, financial independence, social responsibility, as well as a culture of courtesy and hard work. The character values that

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<sup>16</sup>Nur Agus Salim and others, 'Fostering Moderate Character of Santri: Effective Hidden Curriculum Strategy in Islamic Boarding Schools', *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7.2 (2024), pp. 357–72, doi:10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4676.

<sup>17</sup>Riswandi and others, 'Integration of Religious Moderation in Character Education: A Study of the Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Approach'.

<sup>18</sup>Zainudin, 'IMPLEMENTASI RELIGIOUS CULTURE DI MADRASAH (Studi Atas Pendidikan Akidah Akhlak Pada Madrasah Aliyah Di PP. Qamarul Huda Bagu, PP. Nahdlatul Wathan Pancor Dan PP. Abu Hurairah Mataram)', *Disertasi UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MATARAM*, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Moh. Nasrul Amin and Raikhan, 'Strategi Pengembangan Kurikulum PAI Berbasis Moderasi Beragama Dan Implementasinya Pada SMA Di Lamongan', *JALIE: Journal of Applied Linguistics and Islamic Education*, 7.01 (2023), pp. 19–46, doi:10.33754/jalie.v7i01.608.

are formed include: religion, discipline, hard work, respect for achievement, curiosity, social care, responsibility, and love of reading<sup>20</sup>.

Various previous studies have discussed character education and the values of Islamic moderation; however, none have specifically examined the values of *Islah and Qudwah* within the religious-cultural context of Islamic boarding schools. Furthermore, the religious-cultural approach as an effort to integrate Islamic values with local socio-cultural practices has not been studied in depth in relation to the internalization of *Islah and Qudwah* values. In fact, these two values have strong potential to foster the character of santri who are tolerant, communicative, and able to reduce social conflict. In addition, previous studies have not highlighted how these values are practiced concretely in pesantren life. Therefore, this research is here to fill the literature gap by offering an interdisciplinary perspective that combines Islamic education, cultural anthropology, and peace approaches in the context of pesantren life directly.

## Method

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach with the type of *field research*<sup>21</sup> to deeply understand the implementation of the religious-cultural approach in internalizing the values of *Islah and Qudwah*. Data collection techniques were carried out through direct observation of santri life and pesantren activities, in-depth interviews with various key informants, and document studies of various records, reports, and relevant literature<sup>22</sup>. Data analysis in this study refers to the Miles and Huberman model, namely through the process of data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing<sup>23</sup>. As an analysis tool, the religious-cultural approach is used to read the practice of value education in the context of pesantren life which is full of spiritual values and local culture. Primary data were collected from interviews, field observations, and questionnaires designed to explore

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<sup>20</sup>Subur Subur, Akhmad Baihaqi, and Imron Imron, *Strengthening The Character Education of Islamic Boarding School Students and The Internalization of Values Through Local Wisdom at The Islamic Boarding School* (Atlantis Press SARL, 2024), doi:10.2991/978-2-38476-273-6\_98.

<sup>21</sup>J. W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications. (USA, 2014).

<sup>22</sup>Ahmad Lintang Creswell, John W., Lazuardi, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, ed. Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, 3rd ed. (Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2015).

<sup>23</sup>Mattew B. and A. Michael Huberman. Miles, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. (USA, 1992).

information related to the internalization of *Islah and Qudwah* values and the religious-cultural approach in Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren. Secondary data were obtained from various scientific references such as books, journals, articles, and previous research reports that strengthen the theoretical framework and field findings.

The main sources of information in this study consist of various participants who are directly involved in the educational ecosystem at Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic Boarding School<sup>24</sup>. They include pesantren caregivers who have scientific authority and spiritual leadership, pesantren administrators who are involved in the daily management and activities of students, teachers who spearhead formal and informal education, and students as the main subject of the value internalization process. Informants were selected purposively<sup>25</sup> based on their involvement and understanding of the implementation of *Islah and Qudwah* values in pesantren life. The diversity of participants allows researchers to get a holistic picture of how the religious-cultural approach is carried out in the pesantren environment. In-depth interviews were conducted personally or in small groups, with semi-structured guidelines to maintain the focus of the discussion while still allowing new relevant information to emerge.

The data collection stages in this study were carried out systematically and in layers to obtain comprehensive and in-depth information. The process began with participatory observation to understand daily life in the pesantren, then in-depth interviews were conducted with pesantren caregivers, teachers, and administrators to obtain perspectives from key actors in the pesantren education process. Document study becomes an important source of additional data, where researchers examine various internal pesantren documents, activity reports, and records related to fostering santri character. The analysis stage starts from collecting field data which includes the results of observations, interviews, and document studies. The collected data is then processed through a reduction process, namely sorting out relevant data, grouping by theme, and eliminating inappropriate information. Furthermore, the data was presented in narrative and visual form to facilitate the exploration of patterns and interrelationships between themes. Descriptive analysis was used to systematically describe the forms and implementation strategies of the

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<sup>24</sup> Lexi J. Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology* (Bandung: Rosda Karya, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Administrasi*, ed. by Apri Nuryanto, Ed. rev (Alfabeta, 2009).



religious-cultural approach. Finally, interpretation was done to find the deep meaning of each finding, which was then formulated in the form of conclusions as an answer to the problem formulation.

## **Result and Discussion**

### ***Islah and Qudwah* Values in the Life of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah**

The pesantren caregiver explained that the value of *Islah* is the main foundation in forming a harmonious atmosphere in the pesantren environment by showing mutual respect and having a forgiving heart. Meanwhile, the value of *qudwah* is considered as an effective way to instill Islamic values to santri through the real example of caregivers, teachers and pesantren administrators, especially in religiosity, santri discipline and responsibility<sup>26</sup>. This is also reinforced by the administrators, that the value of *Islah* is understood as the ability of the administrators to bridge the differences that exist in the students to continue to respect and help each other in living their daily lives in the pesantren. While the value of *Qudwah* is interpreted as the moral obligation of administrators to provide examples, especially by senior santri to juniors or role models in daily behavior, especially in aspects of worship and morals<sup>27</sup>.

In the daily life of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, the value of *Islah* or peace is not only used as a verbal teaching, but has been institutionalized in the system of social relations between students. The pesantren teacher emphasized that the value of *Islah* is a basic value that cannot be negotiated because living in a pesantren is living in a diversity of characters and dispositions. If there is no *Islah*, then pesantren life will be filled with small conflicts that grow bigger.<sup>28</sup> This is reinforced by the observation findings that every time there is a small conflict such as a misunderstanding between students, it is resolved through deliberation between the parties involved and accompanied by the room administrator through the rules that apply in the pesantren.

When traced deeper, the term *al-Islah* and its various derivations appear in the Qur'an 249 times in verses scattered in various surahs. Of these, 190 times are found in *Makkiyah Surahs* and 59 times in *Madaniyah*

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<sup>26</sup> Sahlul Khuluq, Caretaker of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 15, 2025

<sup>27</sup> Danang, Chairman of the Board of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

<sup>28</sup> Aqil Musthofa, Teacher of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

*Surahs*.<sup>29</sup> The meaning of the word *al-Islah* includes notions such as peace, happiness, tranquility, coolness, and efforts to improve. The term is found in various verses of the Qur'an, including in *Surah al-Baqarah* (2): 182, 224, and 228; *Surah al-Nisa* (4): 35, 62, 90, 91, 114, and 128; *Surah al-Anfal* (8): 61; *Surah al-Qashas* (28): 19; *Surah Muhammad* (47): 35; and *Surah al-Hujurat* (49): 9 and 10<sup>30</sup>. Thus, the value of *Islah* contained in Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren such as mutual respect for goodness, inclusiveness in accepting other opinions or views, trying to dialogue when there is a dispute for a peace in the pesantren is in line with the meaning of the value contained in the Qur'an that the value of *Islah* is understood as peace, happiness, tranquility, coolness, and efforts to improve. In addition, the priority of understanding each other among students because of the different backgrounds of students is also an attitude whose orientation prioritizes peace. The Qur'anic attitude towards conflict resolution reflects two main meanings: first, Muslims are encouraged to stay away from violence and conflict; second, Muslims are encouraged to play an active role in spreading and realizing peace<sup>31</sup>. So that the life of pesantren is more peaceful and harmonious which can then be implemented by santri in the social life of the community.

Meanwhile, the value of *Qudwah* or exemplary appears in the form of daily practices, both from the figures of caregivers, ustadz, and senior administrators who are role models. From an interview with one of the teachers, Ustadz Aqil, it was explained that the habit of getting up early, praying tahajjud, fasting sunnah, and the simplicity of the ustadz are part of da'wah *Bil Hal*, an example that is stronger than lectures<sup>32</sup>. This example is a concrete form of the value of *Qudwah* that was directly observed by the researcher, such as when the santri administrators not only directed, but also took an example in terms of actively studying the *Qur'an* and also *Jama'ah*. In addition, administrators actively apply the principle of *Qudwah* in everyday life, for example in terms of time discipline, maintaining dormitory

<sup>29</sup> Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi, *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufabras li Alfāz al-Qur'an*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1981, pp. 410-412.

<sup>30</sup> A. Hamid Hasan Qolay, *Index to the Translations of the Qur'anul Karim, Complemented by Verses*, Volume I: A-D, Jakarta: Halimatus-Sa'diyyah Foundation, 1997, pp. 819-820.

<sup>31</sup> Fanani Ahwan, 'Model Resolusi Konflik Alternatif Dalam Hukum Islam', *Al-Manahij, Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam*, 2013, pp. 271-90.

<sup>32</sup> Aqil Musthofa, Teacher of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

cleanliness, and starting worship activities<sup>33</sup>. This becomes learning that touches students emotionally and spiritually<sup>34</sup>.

The example given by the caregivers, teachers and administrators of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah related to the examples of behavior shown ranging from discipline, responsibility and religiosity is very effective as learning that can touch the emotional spiritual aspects of students. The word “*Qudwah*” is mentioned in the Qur'an in two different forms, namely in *al-An'am* [6] :90, “*Qudwah*” appears as a command, emphasizing the importance of following the guidance of the prophets. In *al-Zukhruf* [43]:23, it is used as an adjective, highlighting the role of individuals who embody exemplary behavior. This usage highlights the importance of personal behavior and the impact of one's actions on others. This means that *qudwah* has two meanings: as a directive and a descriptor of virtuous behavior, especially in the context of Islamic education and personal development. This form emphasizes the importance of following the teachings and examples set by the prophets as a means to achieve spiritual and moral growth<sup>35</sup>.

Moreover, in the context of pesantren education, the concept of “*Qudwah*” is an integral part of Islamic education, where it is associated with the role of the teacher as an example of moral and ethical behavior. Teachers are expected to embody the principles of “*Qudwah*” to effectively influence and guide their students<sup>36</sup>. From here, the value of *Qudwah* can be interpreted as examples of attitudes and behaviors raised by caregivers, teachers and administrators of Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren as a process of transferring knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that are expected to be well received by students.

When analyzed more deeply, the value of *Islah* and *Qudwah* contained in the life of Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren is described in the following paragraph:

Table 1. Analysis of *Islah* and *Qudwah* values in the life of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah

<sup>33</sup> Activities of students of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Observation May 15-18

<sup>34</sup> Anfa Regita Ayu Pratiwi and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, 'Pembentukan Kecerdasan Emosional Melalui Kegiatan Keagamaan Di MTs Ihyā'ul Ulum Dukun Gresik', *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan*, 3.4 (2025), pp. 1663–66 <<https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.720>>.

<sup>35</sup> Aep Saepurrohman and Mohamad Erihadiana, 'The Concept of Qudwah and Its Implications for Teacher Personality Competence in Islamic Education', *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 14.2 (2024), pp. 90–102, [doi:10.38073/jpi.v14i2.1806](https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v14i2.1806).

<sup>36</sup> Saepurrohman and Erihadiana.

Value	Core Meaning	Attitude Indicators	Behavior Indicators
<b>Islah (Repair, Reconciliation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promoting peace</li> <li>– Improvement</li> <li>– harmony in the lives of students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Empathize with fellow students</li> <li>– Able to restrain anger</li> <li>– Fair-minded and clear in conflict</li> <li>– Inclusive attitude Open to criticism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Able to resolve conflicts peacefully</li> <li>– Mediating friend disputes</li> <li>– Avoid provocative behavior</li> <li>– Active in social community activities</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consistent in the value of religiosity that is believed</li> <li>– Sincere and honest</li> <li>– Humble</li> <li>– Responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Being an example of discipline and good manners</li> <li>– Avoiding foul speech</li> <li>– Demonstrating hard work and honesty in class/activities</li> <li>– Helping without being asked</li> </ul>
<b>Qudwah (Exemplary)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Being a role model in behavior:</li> <li>– Religiosity</li> <li>– Sincerity</li> <li>– humility</li> <li>– responsibility .</li> </ul>		

Based on the analysis table above, the value of *Islah* is reflected in the daily practices of the santri, such as their ability to control anger, mediate peer conflicts, and actively participate in social and communal activities. Meanwhile, the value of *qudwah* appears through the exemplary conduct of the *kyai*, teachers, and senior administrators who consistently demonstrate discipline, responsibility, humility, and religiosity. Viewed more critically, the practice of *Islah* at Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah is not merely a mechanism for resolving internal conflicts, but also a concrete manifestation of reconciliation in Islam as emphasized in the Qur'an (Q.S. al-Hujurat [49]: 9-10). This finding the practice of *Qudwah* embodied by the *kyai* and teachers strongly resonates with Bandura's<sup>37</sup> role model theory, which asserts that observable behavior is more influential in shaping character than verbal instruction. Thus, the values of *Islah and Qudwah* in this pesantren are not merely traditional practices, but also pedagogical processes that

<sup>37</sup> Bandura, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*.

bridge classical Islamic principles with contemporary educational theories.

### **Internalization Strategy of *Islah and Qudwah* Values in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah Environment**

From the research findings, the strategies used in internalizing values are through habituation, exemplary, and personal coaching through *bahsul masa'il / deliberation* (knowledge discussion). In addition, routine activities such as recitation of moral books are also a means of conveying moral messages rooted in *Islah and Qudwah*<sup>38</sup>. In addition, according to Ustadz Hakim, pesantren education provides a comprehensive education concept through learning character attitudes and behaviors with the recitation of taklim as well as concrete examples of good moral behavior in life in pesantren<sup>39</sup>. Thus, pesantren internalize the value of *Islah* and *Qudwah* not only limited to providing moral knowledge but how morals are also practiced in the lives of students.

One of the main strategies applied in internalizing the value of *Islah and Qudwah* is through the direct example of the caregivers, ustadz and administrators in the pesantren. The caregiver explained that from the beginning, the boarding school must be reflected by the caregiver and the ustadz, our *Ulama'* taught that what is contained in the ulama' in this case is the caregiver and ustadz is part of the teachings that must be considered by the students, as the prophet Muhammad taught his companions not only through lectures or the prophet's words but also through behavior or things contained in the prophet. Therefore, the scholars follow this teaching that exemplary learning is part of learning. Allah in his firm also mentions "*Laqod Kana Lakum Fi Rasulillahi Uswatun Hasanah*"<sup>40</sup>. This confirms that students must directly see examples of the behavior of a kyai or ustadz, not just hear theories or lectures. This is observed in the daily activities of caregivers who consistently carry out the values of harmony / courtesy, patience, and wise leadership. Field observations also noted how caregivers are disciplined in every santri activity, thus building a climate of appreciation of the value of *Qudwah*.<sup>41</sup> Teachers apply a religious-

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<sup>38</sup> Sahlul Khuluq, Caretaker of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 15, 2025.

<sup>39</sup> Nur Hakim, Teacher of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

<sup>40</sup> Sahlul Khuluq, Caretaker of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 15, 2025

<sup>41</sup> Activities of students of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Observation May 15-18

cultural approach in learning by emphasizing the *uswah hasanah* method, interactive discussions, and the use of stories of prophets and scholars as a tool to ground the value of *Islah and Qudwah*. In addition, they organize contextual learning that relates Islamic teachings to the lives of santri in pesantren.

The next strategy is the application of the deliberation method or what the board calls *Babsul Masail*. *Babsul Masail* teaches students to be open to the opinions of each student which is then decided by consensus to solve problems that arise in the social environment of the community or pesantren. In addition, the management stated that when a dispute occurs between students, we do not immediately impose sanctions, but prioritize dialogue and mediation so that they learn to solve problems peacefully and forgive each other<sup>42</sup>. This method serves as a means of internalizing the value of inclusiveness and harmony of santri. The management uses various informal approaches such as mentoring between rooms, night guidance (*muthola'ah*), and weekly discussion forums as a medium to instill the value of *Islah and Qudwah*. In addition, they integrate the value into daily activities such as night patrols and environmental cleanliness management as a form of responsibility value.

Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah systematically integrates the value of *Islah and Qudwah* into the educational curriculum and extracurricular activities of the pesantren. Materials on morals including the value of *Islah and Qudwah* are taught in yellow books such as the book of morals ta'limul muta'alim, Minhajul abidinya imam ghozali and so on. In addition, the social activities of the students, and the management of the students become a place for real practice of the application of these two values, so that students learn directly from social experience. Cultural values such as courtesy, respect for teachers, and mutual cooperation are packaged in Islamic narratives and made part of the pesantren moral curriculum<sup>43</sup>. Often referred to as the hidden curriculum, the hidden curriculum in pesantren can foster moderate character traits such as balance and openness.<sup>44</sup> So that this curriculum model is important to be applied in pesantren education.

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<sup>42</sup> Danang, Chairman of the Board of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Aly Mahmudy, Foundation Manager of PP Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Interview, May 15, 2025

<sup>44</sup> Salim et al., "Fostering Moderate Character of Santri: Effective Hidden Curriculum Strategy in Islamic Boarding Schools."

An equally important strategy is continuous coaching through habituation and regular evaluations carried out systematically by pesantren administrators. According to the results of interviews with administrators in the field of queuing, we hold monthly evaluations of santri behavior, and positive habituation *is* repeated continuously so that the value of *Islah* and *Qudwah* *is* strongly embedded. This evaluation is also a feedback to formulate the next coaching step, so that value internalization becomes a dynamic process and is responsive to the real conditions in the pesantren. The administrators revealed that they do not only rely on formal rules in regulating the lives of santri, but also use local values such as *unggah-ungguh*, *tepo seliro*, and *deliberation* in solving problems<sup>45</sup>. Rituals and routine pesantren activities such as recitation of the yellowclassical books, *kehitobah*, *muhadarah*, and *istighotsab* also function as a means of conveying and reinforcing the values of *Islah and Qudwah*<sup>46</sup>. If these findings are analyzed, they can be described in the following table:

Table 2. Analysis of the findings of the internalization strategy of *Islah and Qudwah* values in the life of Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren

Aspects of Pesantren Life	Value Internalization	Internalization Strategy	Religious-Cultural Approach	Activities
Exemplary of Caregivers, Teachers, and Administrators	<i>Islah &amp; Qudwah</i>	Giving real examples in morals, worship, discipline, and social interaction.	Direct exemplification of the central figure of the pesantren as a religious-cultural figure as an orientation for santri to imitate the morals of religious figures	The caregiver is always present in congregational prayers, polite in behavior and wise.
Education and Learning Curriculum	<i>Islah &amp; Qudwah</i>	Lectures that contain the value of improvement and exemplary	Raising the stories of the Prophet, local scholars, and saints who teach <i>Islah</i> and exemplarity	Recitation, Mau'idhoh Hasanah on the theme of noble morals and peace

<sup>45</sup> Muhammad faiz, Tarbiyatut Tholabah Boarding School Administrator, interview, May 18, 2025

<sup>46</sup> Danang, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, interview, May 18, 2025

Pesantren Local Tradition	<i>Islah &amp; Qudwah</i>	Preservation of a culture of peace and harmony	Integration of local traditions such as Thursday Wage mujahadah, grave pilgrimage, etc., which instill collective awareness and social harmony	Mujahadah together for peace of mind and goodwill and Tradition of sungkeman and friendship
Santri Organization Activities (OSIS/OSPP)	<i>Qudwah &amp; Islah</i>	Development of santri cadres to become role models and conflict mediators	Integrating Islamic and cultural leadership values in organizational training	Leadership training based on the stories of Prophets and Guardians and conflict resolution between students in deliberation
Spiritual Development ( <i>Riyadhab</i> )	<i>Islah</i>	Spiritual struggle to improve oneself	Practice of practices (wirid, tahajud, dhikr) that strengthen introspective awareness and ethics	Mujahadah santri
Daily Social Interaction	<i>Islah &amp; Qudwah</i>	Habituation of politeness, respect, and humility	The tradition of greeting, kissing hands, and respect for elders as cultural and religious values	Students kiss the hands of the ustadz and greet each other- Helping friends who are sick or in trouble
Bahtsul Masā'il (Religious Discussion)	<i>Islah</i>	Critical thinking exercises and solving public problems with adab	The intellectual tradition of pesantren based on fiqh, scientific adab, and tolerance	Forum for santri to discuss contemporary issues peacefully

The analysis of Table II shows that the internalization of *Islah and Qudwah* values in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah is carried out through multiple strategies. These include the exemplary conduct of caregivers and teachers, integration of values into the formal and hidden curriculum, preservation of local traditions, organizational training for santri leadership, and spiritual practices such as *Riyadhab*. Routine activities, including *Bahtsul Masail*, also serve as a forum for dialogue



and collective problem-solving, promoting inclusiveness and peaceful conflict resolution among students.

When interpreted critically, these strategies demonstrate that pesantren employ a holistic religious-cultural approach that resonates with both classical and contemporary theories of character formation. The use of *Qudwah* as the primary method reflects the Qur'anic principle of *Uswah Hasanah* (Q.S. al-Ahzab [33]: 21), which places exemplary conduct at the core of Islamic pedagogy. This also corresponds to Bandura's<sup>47</sup> social learning theory, which emphasizes observational learning through role models. Furthermore, the systematic coaching and habituation strategies observed in pesantren are consistent with Lickona's<sup>48</sup> stages of character education-moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action-as well as Mulyasa's<sup>49</sup> stages of value transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization.

Thus, the internalization strategies at Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah not only reflect local wisdom and Islamic tradition but also embody theoretical frameworks of moral and peace education. This indicates that the religious-cultural approach is both contextually relevant and pedagogically robust, making it a potentially replicable model for other Islamic educational institutions.

This approach is not only built on the basis of religious teachings, but also synergizes with the local culture that lives in the community around the pesantren. This synergy is very important in maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of pesantren in character education, because it is in line with the cultural context of students.<sup>50</sup> The internalization process takes place in an integrated manner through various activities such as the recitation of the yellow classical books, religious discussions, socio-religious activities, and the direct example of the kyai and ustadz. Internalization of values occurs through these activities. is very effective because of direct interaction with religious leaders (Kyai and Ustadz).<sup>51</sup> *Kyai* and *Ustadz* play an important role in the internalization process, serving as moral guides and role models.

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<sup>47</sup> Bandura, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*.

<sup>48</sup> Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*.

<sup>49</sup> H E Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter* (books.google.com, 2022).

<sup>50</sup> A A Rizqi, "PLANTING RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN PESANTREN IN SHAPING THE CHARACTER OF SANTRI (Case Study at Al Ishlah Islamic Boarding School)," *PUSTAKA: Journal of Language and Education*, 2022, <https://jurnal-stiepari.ac.id/index.php/pustaka/article/view/170>.

<sup>51</sup> Kamilia Hamidah and Arif Chasannudin, "Mechanization of Islamic Moderation Da'wah in the Nahdlatul Ulama Pesantren Tradition," *Journal of Da'wah Science* 41, no. 1 (2021): 15–29, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v41.1.7134>.

Santris are actively involved in life practices that reflect the values of peace and exemplarity, both in relationships among peers, interactions with caregivers, and involvement in pesantren community activities. Activities promote a culture of moderation and tolerance.<sup>52</sup> This finding indicates that the religious-cultural approach not only shapes the mindset of moderate santri, but also creates a humanist and reflective educational space that encourages students to internalize values through experiences and role models.<sup>53</sup> This is a central finding that value-based education rooted in religiosity and local cultural wisdom can be an effective alternative in counteracting the flow of radicalism while forming a complete and contextual character.

The value internalization process is carried out through contextual learning strategies. Learning is attempted to link classical teachings with the current context, such as the importance of maintaining harmony in diversity, emulating the Prophet's character in everyday life, and avoiding extreme and intolerant attitudes.<sup>54</sup> Some ustadz even develop project-based learning approaches, such as organizing dialogue forums between students and community service, to strengthen the application of these values in real practice. These findings indicate a strong pedagogical awareness among pesantren teachers that character education cannot only be taught, but must be experienced<sup>55</sup>. Therefore, teachers and ustadz have a central role in facilitating the learning process that not only emphasizes cognitive aspects, but also affective and psychomotor aspects.

Looking at the findings above, related to the internalization of the value of *Islah and Qudwah* in the life of Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic boarding school which is carried out by various methods such as exemplarity, education and learning curriculum, daily activities of students, methods of deliberation and problem solving with *Bahsul Masail*, social interaction of students, religiosity coaching, and student organization includes the stages of character education initiated by Thomas Lickona, namely there is an internalization process through

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<sup>52</sup> Riswadi et al., "Integration of Religious Moderation in Character Education: A Study of the Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Approach."

<sup>53</sup> Riswadi et al.

<sup>54</sup> Subur, Baihaqi, and Imron, *Strengthening the Character Education of Islamic Boarding School Students and the Internalization of Values Through Local Wisdom at the Islamic Boarding School*.

<sup>55</sup> Riswadi et al., "Integration of Religious Moderation in Character Education: A Study of the Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School Approach."

moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral doing<sup>56</sup>. Furthermore, the stages of internalization in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah are also in line with Mulyasa, namely value transformation, value transactions and value internalization.<sup>57</sup> Internalization of *Islah and Qudwah* values in the life of Tarbiyatut Tholabah pesantren based on religious moderation values involves three main stages, namely:

1. Value transformation: In this initial stage, the teacher acts as a conveyor of information about the values of *Islah and Qudwah*. This process is one-way and takes place verbally, where the teacher conveys the message without active involvement from the learners.
2. Value transaction: This stage involves two-way communication between teachers and learners. The interaction is reciprocal, where the teacher not only conveys values verbally, but also sets an example in daily behavior. Learners are also encouraged to respond and practice the values of *Islah and Qudwah* in their lives, resulting in a more contextual and applicable learning process.
3. Transinternalization: This is the most profound stage, where the role of the teacher is not only seen from physical appearance or speech, but also from mental attitudes, behavior, and personality reflected in daily life. At this stage, there is a personality interaction between teachers and students that influences each other and shapes character in a deeper and more sustainable way.

Based on the discussion that has been presented, the religious-cultural approach as applied in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah has great potential to be replicated in other Islamic educational institutions, especially in facing the challenges of radicalism and the crisis of role models. This educational model can be an inspiration for madrasah and schools to build an inclusive, reflective, and value-based character development process. The success of this approach is not only due to the methods used, but also due to the consistency of the values taught and the exemplary behavior displayed by pesantren leaders. Therefore, the strategy of implementing *Islah and Qudwah* values through a religious-cultural approach should be studied further to be used as a national model of character education, especially moderate character. This research opens up opportunities to develop a broader theoretical

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<sup>56</sup> T Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, A Bantam Trade Paperback (Bantam, 1992), <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=Cx0njf7KZAcC>.

<sup>57</sup> Mulyasa, *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter*, Jakarta: Bumi Aksara Group (bumi aksara group, 2011).

framework on Islamic education that integrates spiritual, social, and cultural values harmoniously.

The implications of these findings are quite significant in the realm of interdisciplinary Islamic education, especially in formulating contextual and humanistic character education models in instilling the values of *Islah and Qudwah* in pesantren life. This is in line with the goal of Islamic education to form human beings who are noble, moderate, and able to coexist peacefully in a pluralistic society. Thus, research on the religious-cultural approach in internalizing the value of *Islah and Qudwah* in Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah makes an important contribution to the development of the theory and practice of character education in Islam.

The findings show that an approach that integrates religious and cultural teachings is not only effective, but also relevant in shaping moderate and tolerant characters. Through a combination of spiritual values and traditional wisdom, character education does not only become a discourse, but is alive and real in the daily lives of santri. The relevance of this approach in interdisciplinary Islamic education emphasizes the importance of contextual and holistic strategies in responding to the challenges of the times. Therefore, this research is important to strengthen the theoretical basis as well as a practical reference in developing a quality, contextual, and sustainable Islamic education model.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the religio-cultural approach at Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah effectively internalizes the values of *Islah* (reconciliation) and *Qudwah* (exemplary) through exemplary leadership, habituation, dialogue, and integration of local traditions into educational practices. These strategies shape santri into moderate, inclusive, and socially responsible individuals. The findings highlight that classical Islamic values, when contextualized with local culture, remain relevant as a model of character education and can be adopted more widely in Islamic educational institutions to counter radicalism and strengthen religious moderation.

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