

INNOVATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEACHERS AS A WAY TO DEVELOP STUDENT CHARACTER AT MTS SABILUL HUDA BADEGAN

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Received: 12/09/2025	Revised: 20/11/2025	Approved: 31/12/2025
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Abstract

This study explores the innovation of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers in shaping students' character based on Islamic values at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo. The research addresses the phenomena of moral decline, lack of discipline, and weakening social responsibility among students, which necessitate innovative strategies from PAI teachers. The aims of this study are: (1) to describe the forms of Islamic Education teacher innovation in building students' Islamic character, and (2) to analyze the supporting and inhibiting factors of such innovation. This qualitative descriptive research utilizes observation, interviews, documentation, and triangulation, involving PAI teachers, school principals, curriculum vice principals, parents, and students as research subjects. Data were analyzed through data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that teacher innovations are implemented through intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities oriented toward forming religious, disciplined, and responsible character. Supporting factors include teacher competence, a religious school environment, and support from institutions, parents, and communities. Inhibiting factors comprise limited facilities, time constraints, diverse student characters, and curriculum changes. The research contributes to strengthening character education practices in Islamic schools..

Keywords: *Teacher Innovation, Islamic Education, Character Building, MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji inovasi guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam pembentukan karakter siswa berbasis nilai-nilai Islam di MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi fenomena kemerosotan moral, rendahnya kedisiplinan, dan melemahnya tanggung jawab sosial di kalangan siswa yang menuntut guru PAI berinovasi dalam strategi pembelajaran. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah: (1) mendeskripsikan bentuk inovasi guru PAI dalam membentuk karakter Islami siswa dan (2) menganalisis faktor pendukung serta penghambat inovasi guru tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi, dan triangulasi. Subjek penelitian meliputi guru PAI, kepala madrasah, waka kurikulum, orang tua, serta peserta didik. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan pengumpulan, reduksi, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan inovasi guru PAI diterapkan melalui kegiatan intrakurikuler, kokurikuler, dan ekstrakurikuler yang berorientasi pada pembentukan karakter religius, disiplin, dan bertanggung jawab. Faktor pendukung meliputi kompetensi guru, lingkungan madrasah yang religius, serta dukungan dari lembaga, orang tua, dan masyarakat. Faktor penghambat antara lain keterbatasan sarana prasarana, waktu pembelajaran, perbedaan karakter siswa, dan perubahan kurikulum. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada penguatan praktik pendidikan karakter di madrasah.

Kata Kunci: *Inovasi Guru, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pembentukan Karakter, MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan*

A. Introduction

Education serves as the pillar in building the civilization of a nation. The quality of a country's human resources not only shapes the present, but also determines the nation's ability to face rapid global changes in the future. In the context of the 21st century, the mastery of science and technology is no longer sufficient (Puspitasari & Rusmalinda, 2025). Cultivating strong character, ethical values, and social responsibility among the younger generation has become a necessity in navigating the complexities of the global era. For this reason, educational innovation is deemed a crucial factor to ensure that learning processes remain relevant, responsive, and able to anticipate various challenges across timescales (Batoebar, 2021, p. 32).

Innovation in education encompasses a wide spectrum of ongoing collective efforts to update, improve, and adapt educational content,

pedagogical models, and strategies (Rafiuddin et al., 2024). These efforts are realized through curriculum development, transformative teaching methods, and the integration of relevant learning resources (Sari et al., 2023, p. 2555). Innovation not only addresses barriers in the learning process, but also enhances the quality of learning outcomes for students in a holistic manner covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Rusdiana, 2014, p. 46). In practice, educational activities in schools are not only limited to classroom (intracurricular) learning but are also strengthened by co-curricular and extracurricular activities, with the aim of nurturing well-rounded individuals (Hosaini et al., 2024, p. 967).

Within the national education system, Islamic Education plays a pivotal role in shaping students' character by fostering Islamic moral values and ethical conduct (Nabila, 2021, p. 867). The significant role of PAI teachers is not limited to the delivery of course content, but also extends to their active participation in planning and guiding co-curricular and extracurricular religious activities within the school (Kurniawan & Puspitasari, 2025). This broadening of the teacher's role responds to the demand for continuous innovation, in line with efforts to comprehensively improve the process and quality of religious learning (Muhammad Nur Hadi et al., 2022, p. 53).

However, reality in the field often reflects the persistence of challenges. Several observations reveal that some students remain passive participating during PAI lessons. Meanwhile, religious co-curricular and extracurricular activities sometimes still lack innovative management and effective integration (Puspitasari et al., 2025). These conditions hamper the main objective of PAI to shape students into individuals with a strong Islamic identity who are able to practice noble character in their everyday lives. Several studies have also indicated a widening gap between learning outcomes targeted in the curriculum and the actual conditions observed in schools or madrasahs (Rochmat, Yoranita, et al., 2022, p. 6).

To address these issues, reference is made to the theoretical framework presented by Abdullah Nashih Ulwan in "*Tarbiyatul Aulad Fil Islam*." Ulwan

emphasizes that character education (*at-tarbiyah al-khuluqiyah*) as a process of instilling values through habituation, exemplary conduct, good advice, attention, and educational punishment (Amaliati, 2020b, p. 34). This approach suggests that the success of character development efforts is strongly influenced by the synergy of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social elements a synergy that should be realized both in formal learning situations and various school activities (Pujianti, 2024, p. 241).

MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan, as an Islamic education institution, has attempted to implement innovations in PAI learning. Intracurricular programs employ Problem-Based Learning and Reading Aloud methods, making learning more participative and contextual. In parallel, religious habituation activities such as the implementation of dhuha and zuhur prayers in congregation, Qur'an reading sessions, and daily recitation of asma'ul husna empower students to internalize values through structured practice. These efforts highlight the importance of integrating intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities to shape character comprehensively (Zarkasyi et al., 2022, p. 71).

Current implementation, however, is not without limitations. In the absence of continuous innovation and systemic integration across activities, the overall effectiveness of PAI learning may be reduced. The need for educational innovation is further underscored by dynamic changes in curriculum, evolving student characteristics, and resource constraints faced by many schools. Creating a responsive and innovative school climate, together with active stakeholder participation, is thus required to actualize the vision of character education that is both relevant and adaptive.

Several relevant studies have explored similar issues. A study by Purwoko and Ida Zahara Adibah (2025), titled "PAI Learning Innovation in Forming the Character of Students at MA Nurul Islam Tenggara," highlights the importance of PAI learning innovation. However, the research only focused on the MA level. It differs from this study which focus on the MTs level within the specific context of MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan and emphasize the role of PAI teachers in integrating educational innovation through intra-curricular, co-

curricular, and extracurricular activities.

This research is expected to provide a renewal and offer practical and theoretical contributions to the literature on Islamic education innovation. First, it focuses on the specific context of MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan, highlighting the strategies and measures taken by teachers to continuously innovate in the formation of students' character. Second, the research seeks to analyze the supporting and inhibiting factors present in the process, providing reference points for other educators and institutions seeking to optimize religious character formation in similar settings.

Thus, the urgency of this research lies in the need to strengthen PAI teachers' role in implementing comprehensive educational innovations. The goal is for students is not only to understand academic material, but also to internalize Islamic values in daily life.

B. Method

This research utilized a descriptive qualitative approach to investigate the innovation of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers as a way to develop students' character at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan, Ponorogo. The study was conducted during the 2025/2026 academic year and employed a case study design rooted in post-positivist (interpretive) philosophy, appropriate for in-depth analysis of phenomena in natural settings.

The researcher served as the primary instrument, directly collecting data through a combination of participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Main research participants included the principal, vice principal for curriculum, PAI teachers, and students. Data collection techniques applied triangulation to ensure credibility and validity. Observation focused on the implementation of innovative teaching practices and student participation in intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. Interviews explored experiences, perceptions, and the process of integrating Islamic values in daily school life, while documentation included institutional records, learning materials, and school activity archives (Sugiyono, 2024, p. 104).

The collected data were qualitative in nature consisting of descriptive narratives, field notes, interview transcriptions, and documentation relevant to teacher innovation and student character development. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The process was conducted iteratively throughout data collection to ensure data reliability and uncover the meaning, contribution, and impact of PAI teacher innovation within the context of the school. All procedures and standards for data collection and analysis were performed systematically to achieve a clear, comprehensive, and accurate depiction of the studied phenomena..

C. Findings and Discussion

In this study, the researcher uses the character education theory according to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, who emphasizes that character development in Islamic education can be achieved through five primary methods: exemplification (*Uswah Hasanah*), good advice (*Mau'izhah Hasanah*), habituation (*Ta'wid*), supervision (*Muraqabah*), and educational punishment (*Uqubah*)(Amaliati, 2020a, p. 34).

The five methods of character education according to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan serve as the main framework for understanding how Islamic Education (PAI) teachers innovate in instilling religious, moral, and social values in students. Conceptually, Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory on character formation can be illustrated in the following table:

Table 1. Character Development of Students at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan

No.	Character Education Methods According to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan	Implementation in Character Building of Students at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan
1	Exemplification (<i>Uswah Hasanah</i>)	A teacher serves as a role model in religious attitude, discipline, and noble character.
2	Good Advice (<i>Mau'izhah Hasanah</i>),	The teacher provides guidance and direction with an approach that touches students' hearts.

3	Habituation (<i>Ta'wid</i>),	The madrasah instills the habit of worship, including the Zuhur and Dhuha prayers, the memorization of the Quran, and the recitation of the Asmaul Husna.
4	Supervision (<i>Muraqabah</i>)	The teacher supervises and guides students' behavior with controls that build self-awareness.
5	Educational Punishment (<i>Uqubah</i>)	The school implements sanctions that foster responsibility and discipline.

The Form of innovation of Islamic Education teachers as a Way To Develop Student Character At Mts Sabilul Huda Badegan

The innovation implemented by Islamic Education teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan in forming students' character is carried out through three main types of activities: intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular. This approach aims to integrate Islamic values comprehensively into the educational process, so that students not only gain knowledge but also develop behaviors that reflect noble character (Hawa, 2025, p. 231).

Based on observations and interviews, these innovations are adapted to the boarding school-based madrasah context, where Islamic Education teachers play a primary role as facilitators in instilling religious and social character. This aligns with M. Saleh Muntasir's concept of educational innovation, which states that innovation is a planned change aimed at improving the existing education system to be more effective and relevant to academic needs. Approaches through intraclass, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities align with the aspects of Islamic Education innovation, including curriculum, teaching methods, character education, and the integration of religious values into daily life (Muntasir, 1985, p. 146).

The effective integration of intraclass, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities can create a comprehensive learning environment, though it still requires ongoing teacher commitment. Innovations by Islamic Education (PAI) teachers can be further developed through regular evaluations to align with students' needs, so that these innovations not only form students' character but

also prepare them to face challenges with a solid foundation (Umro, 2025, p. 128).

Intracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan focus on formal classroom learning. Islamic Education (PAI) teachers implement innovations in lesson material development, teaching methods, assessment, and approaches that incorporate character and spiritual values. The teachers' approach at MTs Sabilul Huda includes strengthening learning that integrates character values into various subjects, such as tolerance in Civics Education and ethics in Indonesian Language, as well as a spiritual paradigm that includes Islamic elements in general subjects, for example, calculating zakat in Mathematics or understanding the greatness of Allah through the universe in Natural Sciences. Thus, learning is not limited to cognitive aspects but aims to form students' character to be faithful, noble, and capable of applying Islamic values in daily life. The scope of Islamic Education includes four subjects: Faith and Morality, Fiqh, the Qur'an and Hadith, and Islamic History and Culture. Updates in the learning process through the integration of character values into the learning process show a connection with Abdullah Nasih Ulwan's theory of character education, which emphasizes that character formation requires five primary methods: exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*), habituation (*ta'wid*), good advice (*mau'izhah hasanah*), supervision (*muraqabah*), and educational punishment (*Uqubah*) (Adwiah et al., 2024, p. 3).

The intracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan demonstrate educational innovation focused on strengthening character and spiritual values. Islamic Education teachers implement curricula that integrate Islamic values across subjects, thereby emphasizing not only cognitive but also affective and moral aspects of learning. This shows a tangible effort to realize holistic Islamic education, centered on developing students' faith, morals, and social responsibility. Innovative, interactive teaching methods, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), align with the principles of holistic and participatory Islamic Education (PAI) and encompass cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This aligns with the objectives of the Faith and Morality subject in Islamic Education, which focuses on strengthening faith and applying Islamic values in

daily life. According to Abdullah Nasih Ulwan, students find it easier to imitate actions than listen to advice, reflecting the value of a good example (*uswah hasanah*), which is education through real-life examples. The role of the teacher as a role model and providing positive habits, such as honesty, aims to form students' character to be faithful and responsible (Ruly Nadian Sari & Ulfah Umurohmi, 2025, p. 20).

The study of Faith and Morality at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan demonstrates the implementation of an innovative, interactive learning model focused on character development. Teachers encourage students to think critically, engage in discussions, and respect others' opinions, while instilling values of honesty, responsibility, and discipline through exemplary behavior (Lestari et al., 2025, p. 78). Fiqh teachers implement various innovations, such as group discussions to foster teamwork, individual assignments to develop independence, and worship practices, including procedures for wudhu and prayer, accompanied by exemplary behavior and discipline from teachers. Ninth-grade students are responsible for leading the optional Dhuha prayer, while teachers serve as the imams for the Zuhur prayer. The fiqh teacher plans to evaluate learning through worship practices by recording videos to utilize educational technology. Intracurricular activities, such as congregational prayer, also strengthen students' understanding of fiqh, so that the value of worship does not end at theory but becomes part of students' habits.

The activity reflects educational innovation theory through its methods and the use of technology to enhance student participation. Habituation and supervision (*muraqabah*) also support the character-building method theory, according to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, as practicing as an imam and engaging in worship practices help form students' spiritual character and discipline (Mahmud, 2020, p. 185). The implementation of the Fiqh teacher's innovations at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan reflects an educational process focused on strengthening students' religious character. The application of discussion methods and direct worship practices is a strategic step toward enhancing students' independence and responsibility in worship. This innovation has

successfully fostered a sense of responsibility and awareness of worship among students.

In the subject of the Qur'an and Hadith, the teacher uses a reading-aloud model to strengthen students' reading and pronunciation of verses. This activity is continued with gradual memorization of selected Qur'an verses and Hadith, as well as fostering the habit of reading the Qur'an and Asmaul Husna before lessons begin. Exemplary behavior serves as the primary foundation for forming students' character; the teacher also consistently supervises (*muraqabah*) the progress of memorization each week, while providing understanding of the meaning of the verses being studied. Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory emphasizes the importance of habituation, exemplary behavior, and supervision in character education methods (Hidayati & Gufron, 2024, p. 44). This approach not only fosters memorization skills but also instills awareness that reading the Qur'an is a form of worship and a means to draw closer to Allah SWT. A supportive environment helps strengthen students' positive habits. Innovative learning models need to be implemented to prevent boredom during memorization. This approach can serve as an innovative model for forming students' spiritual character (Syarifah & Kubra, 2024, p. 67).

The Islamic Culture History teacher uses a contextual approach, related to Islamic historical events, such as the struggles of the companions and scholars, to students' real lives. This strategy not only makes learning more relevant and engaged but also effectively instills values of courage, honesty, and responsibility. This aligns with Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory of giving good advice (*mau'izhah hasanah*), which involves delivering moral messages to help students accept and deeply internalize Islamic values (Nur Asyifa Ananda & Noorazmah Hidayati, 2024, p. 110).

The implementation of intraclass innovations at MTs Sabilul Huda demonstrates alignment with aspects of educational innovation, particularly in teaching methods, curriculum, and character education. Teachers integrate religious values with everyday life contexts, making learning more meaningful and applicable. This approach aligns with Peter M. Drucker's innovation

principles, which emphasize that innovation should start with small, tangible changes focused on students' real needs, such as fostering religious attitudes in the classroom and actively involving students in discussions of moral values (Ramayanti et al., 2023, p. 1910).

Innovations in intracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda also demonstrate consistency with previous research. The findings of Purwoko and Ida Zahara Adibah show that innovations in Islamic Education learning at MA Nurul Islam Tenggara include curriculum development, human resource management, the learning process, and evaluation, all aimed at forming students' character (Purwoko & Adibah, 2025, p. 16). These innovations are also evident in this study, where teachers not only deliver material but also relate it to the context of character education. However, the difference lies in the level and approach; the innovation at MTs Sabilul Huda is bottom-up, emerging from teachers' initiatives based on students' needs and the school's environment.

The innovation of PAI teachers in intracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo reflects the integration of Islamic character education theory according to Abdullah Nasih Ulwan, the principles of educational innovation according to Peter M. Drucker, and its relevance to previous research. This process demonstrates that character development in students depends not only on curriculum content but also on teaching strategies that instill values of faith, morality, and discipline through practical classroom application (Pane et al., 2022, p. 1905). The teacher serves as a mentor who integrates students' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects, so that intraclass learning becomes the primary foundation for the comprehensive development of students' Islamic character. The innovations made by Islamic Education teachers in intraclass activities for character development at MTs Sabilul Huda are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Innovation of Islamic Education Teachers in Intracurricular Activities

Type of Activity	Innovative Forms	Character Values
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Intracurricular	Strengthening Learning	Character development in accordance with the content and objectives of the subject
	Spiritual Paradigm	Incorporation of Islamic characters in every subject
	Learning of Faith and Morality with the Problem-Based Learning Method	Strengthen faith and obedience, think critically, be responsible, and uphold integrity.
	Integration of worship practices (prayer, ablution, zakat, fasting, and Hajj rituals) in the Fiqh subject	Discipline in performing worship and responsibility for religious obligations
	Qur'an and Hadith Learning with the Reading Aloud Method	Fostering love for the Qur'an and Hadith
	Learning about Islamic Cultural History with the Contextual Teaching and Learning method	Nationalism

The co-curricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo serve as a reinforcement of Islamic Education values outside the classroom. Innovation through cocurricular activities is realized through flagship programs such as Madrasah Diniyah (Madin), Quran memorization, public speaking, reading of Asmaul Husna, performing Dhuha and Dhuhr prayers in congregation, tahlil, educational field trips, and the Pancasila Student Profile Project (P5). These programs function as media for character building and the internalization of religious values in daily life (Maulana, 2025, p. 4869).

This activity reflects an innovative character education that supports the principles of Islamic Education, which functions to deepen knowledge through authentic experiences. It also aligns with Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory, emphasizing exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*), habituation (*ta'wid*), good advice (*mau'izhah hasanah*), supervision (*muraqabah*), and educational punishment as methods for comprehensive character development. The co-curricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo demonstrate innovation in character development through the school's flagship programs. The co-curricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda have created a school environment that supports

the internalization of Islamic values (Piqriani et al., 2023, p. 2559).

Co-curricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda reflect the principles of Islamic character education according to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, which emphasize modeling, habituation, good advice, supervision, and educational discipline. Therefore, cocurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo are not just supplementary to learning but also support the development of a holistic character. Through innovations by Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, the values of faith, patience, discipline, and social responsibility are not only taught theoretically but also instilled through real experiences, appreciation, and social interactions that have educational value. This process affirms that innovations in Islamic education bring Islamic values to life in every aspect of learning, enabling madrasahs to produce knowledgeable, faithful, and better moral generations (Shilviana & Hamami, 2020, p. 159). The teacher's innovation in co-curricular activities for character building of students at MTs Sabilul Huda is presented in the following table:

Table 3. Innovation of Islamic Education Teachers in Co-curricular Activities

Type of Activity	Form of Innovation	Character Values
Co-curricular	Madrasah Diniyah	Deepening religious knowledge, politeness, and humility
	Qur'an Memorization	Patience, perseverance, and steadfastness
	Public Speaking	Courage, positive thinking, and communication skills
	Recitation of Asmaul Husna	Love, peace, and sincerity
	Congregational Dhuha and Zuhur Prayers	Discipline and obedience
	P5 (Pancasila Student Profile Project)	Faithful, creative, cooperative, and socially responsible
	Tahlil	Instilling concern
	Educational Field Trip	Feeling Curious

Extracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo are a form of educational innovation strategically designed to complement intraclass and co-curricular learning. These activities are not only focused on developing students' talents and interests but also aimed at strengthening religious character, discipline, responsibility, and a spirit of togetherness in accordance with Islamic values (Cerlin et al., 2024, p. 450).

Teachers play an essential role in providing guidance and coaching so that every extracurricular activity becomes a means of internalizing religious values. Thus, every non-academic activity is not just a medium of entertainment or skill development, but also a means of character building that is integrated with spiritual values. Scouting at this madrasah not only trains marching skills and leadership but also integrates Islamic values through the practice of collective prayer and character strengthening. Teachers and Scout supervisors emphasize the importance of honesty, responsibility, discipline, and cooperation, which are core values in Islamic character education.

This approach reflects the application of the habituation principle (*ta'wid*) in Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory, where positive habits are trained continuously so that they become part of the students' character. Teachers and Scout supervisors guide students to work in groups, develop activity strategies, and practice time discipline and neatness. This aligns with Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory of Islamic Character Education, which emphasizes a balance between physical education and moral education (*tarbiyah khuluqiyah*). Through outdoor activities such as Scouting, students are not only physically trained but also guided to maintain manners, cleanliness, and camaraderie. Through regular training, field assignments, and camping activities, students become accustomed to being independent and responsible for their decisions and actions (Nurdin et al., 2021, p. 952).

The Al-Habsy extracurricular activity, or rebana, is one of the activities that functions to develop students' artistic talents in a religious context. This activity teaches students to recite sholawat and praise poetry to the Prophet

Muhammad (peace be upon him). Dariana's research also reinforces this by emphasizing that value-based and collaborative learning strategies can form a strong spiritual character. The tambourine activity is one form of implementing these strategies, where collaboration among students in a tambourine group strengthens empathy, teamwork, and a shared sense of responsibility (Dariana, 2025, p. 134).

The extracurricular drum band at MTs Sabilul Huda has educational value beyond just music practice. This activity fosters discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence through regular rehearsals, team coordination, and performances at school events. Teachers also provide moral guidance, emphasizing the importance of sportsmanship and respecting teammates (Alivia & Sudadi, 2023, p. 108). In the context of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory, this activity is suitable with social education (*tarbiyah ijtimai'iyah*), which fosters a sense of togetherness and social concern among students. Meanwhile, from Peter M. Drucker's perspective, such activities reflect the principle of innovation that starts with small, sustainable steps, as they have a direct impact on students' discipline and cooperation in the long term.

Calligraphy activities provide students with a space to hone their artistic skills in writing Arabic letters, with an emphasis on Islamic aesthetic values. The guiding teacher directs students not only in the technical aspects of writing but also in understanding the meaning of the verses or hadiths they write. Through this activity, students learn to appreciate the Qur'an's visual and spiritual beauty. Calligraphy also serves as a medium for character education by fostering carefulness, patience, and focus. According to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory of character education, character development through creative activities like this is part of psychological education (*tarbiyah nafsiyyah*), which involves training inner peace, patience, and spiritual beauty (Aminah, 2023, p. 174).

The sports activities at MTs Sabilul Huda include badminton, table tennis, and volleyball. Although these activities are physical, they cannot be separated from Islamic character values. The supervising teachers emphasize the importance of sportsmanship, teamwork, and punctuality. Sports activities are

not only a place for competition but also a means to instill moral values and foster appreciation for students' abilities. From Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's perspective, these activities are an application of physical education, which not only maintains physical health but also builds attitudes of sportsmanship, fighting spirit, and social responsibility. The attitudes of sportsmanship and discipline instilled by teachers during sports activities are tangible manifestations of the exemplary method (*uswah hasanah*), where teachers serve as role models in managing emotions, accepting defeat, and respecting opponents (Husnah, 2024, p. 8).

These activities align with Peter M. Drucker's principle of innovation, which states that innovation should be directed toward becoming a pioneer of positive change. Through sports activities, teachers become agents of change, instilling character values beyond the academic context and forming students to be healthy, honest, and resilient. Islamic Education teachers' innovation through extracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan, Ponorogo, illustrates the implementation of a holistic education concept that combines spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and physical dimensions, as emphasized by Abdullah Nashih Ulwan. Through activities such as Scouts, Al-Habsy, tambourine drumline, calligraphy, and sports, teachers successfully create effective non-formal learning spaces that foster students' Islamic character.

Table 4. *Innovation of Islamic Education Teachers in Extracurricular Activities*

Type of Activity	Form of Innovation	Character Values
Extracurricular	Scout	Leadership, independence, problem-solving, and resilience
	Al-Habsy	Unity and love for Islamic culture
	Drum band	Discipline, teamwork, and confidence
	Calligraphy	Patience, focus, and appreciation of Islamic aesthetics.
	Sports (Badminton, Volleyball, Table	Sportsmanship, teamwork, and discipline.

Each of these activities reflects the fundamental principle of educational innovation, according to Peter M. Drucker: innovation that begins with students' real needs, is carried out consistently, and is directed toward sustainable, positive change. Islamic Education plays a strategic role in forming students' character in the modern era by integrating religious values into every educational activity (Sulastri et al., 2021, p. 225). Therefore, extracurricular activities at MTs Sabilul Huda are not only a form of curricular innovation but also make a reflection of the transformation of Islamic values into practical, real-life applications for students.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Islamic Education Teacher Innovations at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan

Research results show that the success and obstacles in implementing innovations by Islamic Education teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan are influenced by several internal and external factors. In the context of Islamic education, Abdullah Nashih Ulwan also emphasizes that the success of character education depends not only on the methods but also on the environment (Anwar & Yusdar, 2022, p. 155).

The majority of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda have educational backgrounds that are directly related to their field. 90% of the PAI teachers are alumni of the same madrasah, which allows them to understand the students' culture and needs deeply. The head of the madrasah stated that teachers' boarding school experience enables the integration of pesantren traditions into formal learning, making teacher competence a supporting factor for innovation. As educators, teachers are responsible for students' development through mastery of the material and their role. Teachers' competencies that align with their field support their planning and implementation of learning. Teachers who understand Islamic values thoroughly can instill character education through exemplary behavior and habit formation (Firdaus et al., 2024, p. 325).

The role model of teachers is an aspect that supports the success of

learning innovation. Islamic Education teachers at this madrasah not only provide conceptual instruction but also set an example of behavior that students can emulate, such as punctuality, politeness in speech, and participation in collective worship (Rochmat, Maulaya, et al., 2022, p. 232). This aligns with Nashih Ulwan's theory of the exemplary method (*Uswah Hasanah*), in which the teacher's role as a role model is an effective means of instilling moral and spiritual values. Students find it easier to understand the teachings when the teacher applies them in practice. In Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's view, moral education is not enough; the educator's role must reinforce it (Amirulloh et al., 2024, p. 1221).

A conducive and religious environment at the school is a significant supporting factor. MTs Sabilul Huda is known for practicing habitual worship, including reciting the Quran, performing the optional Dhuha prayer, attending congregational prayers, memorizing the Quran, and reciting tahlil. These activities foster a strong spiritual environment and encourage students to practice Islamic teachings consistently. From Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's perspective, such an environment falls within the concept of a good environment that supports students' faith and morals. A religious environment is an effective supporting factor in fostering students' moral awareness because learning does not stop in the classroom but continues in students' daily life practices (Priatmoko & Salsabila, 2023, p. 98).

Support from institutions, the community, and parents also plays a supportive role in the implementation of innovations at MTs Sabilul Huda. The school activities involve not only teachers but also external parties, such as parents, village heads, and staff from the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). This collaboration strengthens the social support for each school program. The synergy between the school, family, and community is a form of integrated education that is key to the successful development of character (Ambiani et al., 2025, p. 1099).

The implementation of strict, consistent discipline is essential to character development. At MTs Sabilul Huda, students who violate rules on neatness or are late are often given educational sanctions, such as fines, which are then used

for social activities. This system demonstrates the integration of disciplinary values and social responsibility. Within Nashih Ulwan's theoretical framework, this is an application of the educational method through disciplinary punishment (*tarbiyah bil 'uqubah*), which is a punishment that does not harm but instead corrects. Through this system, students not only understand the moral consequences of their actions but also learn about the value of empathy (Anshori, 2020, p. 126).

Social programs such as orphan donations and social service activities have become a form of innovation in character education. Through these activities, students learn to interact with the community and foster concern for others. In Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's view, such activities are suitable with social education (*tarbiyah ijtimaiyyah*), which aims to instill moral responsibility and social awareness. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding students to express gratitude and tolerance towards others. MTs Sabilul Huda actively participates in forming students who are not only academically intelligent but also have a high social spirit (Noorhanah & Gufron, 2025, p. 125).

Although there are many supporting factors, PAI teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda also face several challenges that hinder the smooth implementation of learning innovations. The Islamic Education curriculum, which allocates only 2 hours per week per subject, becomes a significant obstacle to deepening the material and instilling character. Teachers must innovate by utilizing activities at Madrasah Diniyah and other programs to overcome this limitation. PAI teachers have sought to address the limited formal learning time by expanding the learning context through lessons at Madrasah Diniyah, so that character values can still be internalized even when face-to-face formal time is limited.

Limited facilities, such as the scarcity of technological devices, especially a single projector, become obstacles in implementing innovative learning media. Teachers have to take turns using this facility, so the implementation of contextual learning becomes less than optimal (Rochmat et al., 2024, p. 91). This condition shows that innovation not only requires creative ideas but also infrastructure support. Without adequate resources, innovation tends to stall at

the conceptual stage (Rizki & Purba, 2024, p. 78).

Differences in students' social backgrounds and characters pose a unique challenge for teachers. Some students demonstrate high levels of discipline and motivation, while others still require emotional approaches and guidance. PAI teachers must adjust their approach methods according to students' needs. According to Abdullah Nashih Ulwan's theory, this aligns with the principle of gradual education, which holds that teachers should tailor their instruction to students' abilities and mental readiness. This adaptive approach also demonstrates teachers' innovative ability to manage student diversity, keeping it aligned with the forming of Islamic character (Adzim et al., 2024, p. 9).

Some students have difficulty memorizing Quranic verses and hadiths. The teacher addresses this by using group memorization strategies, repetition, and motivation to ensure students do not feel burdened. In the context of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, this method reflects the principle of intellectual education (*tarbiyah 'aqliyyah*), which involves guiding students with patience and positive encouragement to love the learning process, not just the results (Fiqih Rizqiyah et al., 2024, p. 249).

The change in the national curriculum also presents a significant challenge. Islamic Education teachers must quickly adapt to new systems and approaches, such as the Independent Curriculum, and even face plans to transition to the Love Curriculum (Deep Learning). Teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda responded by adjusting teaching materials, updating media, and strengthening collaboration among teachers to ensure the continuity of Islamic values already taught amid changes in the education system. These findings indicate that PAI teachers successfully integrated Islamic values into students' daily routines, fostering comprehensive character growth at MTs Sabilul Huda (Hulaimi et al., 2025, p. 3).

D. Conclusion

The forms of innovation by Islamic Education teachers in forming students' character at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo are realized through

three main activities: intraclass activities, co-curricular activities, and extracurricular activities. In intraclass activities, PAI teachers apply problem-based learning, reading aloud, and group discussions, and integrate Islamic values into every subject to instill Islamic principles. In co-curricular and extracurricular activities, teachers develop innovative learning approaches that emphasize direct practice and habituation to form students' character with strong moral values. Teachers act as mentors who demonstrate exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*), provide good advice (*mau'izhah hasanah*), foster habits (*ta'wid*), supervise (*muraqabah*), and administer educational discipline (*uqubah*).

Supporting and inhibiting factors for the innovation of Islamic Education teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan include supporting factors such as teacher competence, a religious school environment, support from the school principal, collaboration among teachers, and active roles of parents and the community. Conversely, hindering factors include limited teaching time, inadequate facilities, differences in student character, and curriculum changes. Nevertheless, teachers strive to overcome these obstacles by collaborating and creatively utilizing existing facilities and media to ensure innovation continues effectively. Thus, the innovation by Islamic Education teachers at MTs Sabilul Huda Badegan Ponorogo makes a tangible contribution to form students' characters to be faithful, knowledgeable, morally upright, responsible, and aligned with the goals of Islamic education to realize a perfect human being who benefits society and religion. However, further improvements in facilities and teacher training are needed to make the innovation more optimal and sustainable.

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