

Strengthening Holistic-Integrative Islamic Education Character In Islamic Boarding Schools

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ABSTRACT

The dynamics of globalization and advances in digital technology have significant impacts on the character and moral development of students, requiring an Islamic education model that develops students' potential comprehensively. This study aims to analyze holistic-integrative character-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Islamic boarding schools in Banyumas Regency using a qualitative, descriptive approach. Data were collected through observation and analysis of institutional documents related to educational policies and practices. The research was conducted in At-Thohiriyyah, El-Fira 1, and Al-Ikhsan Beji Islamic boarding schools. The findings show that all three pesantren implement a holistic-integrative PAI approach, integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in intracurricular activities, worship practices, and character building. At-Thohiriyyah focuses on turats study and tahfidz, El-Fira 1 emphasizes classical Islamic texts, while Al-Ikhsan Beji develops Arabic and English skills. Despite resource limitations, the approach fosters santri with spiritual integrity, Islamic knowledge, noble character, and skills to face modern challenges.

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Abstract in English about 120-150 words, contain from IMRaD (Introduction

1. Introduction

The tide of globalisation and developments in digital technology have had a significant influence on the mindset and behaviour of students, particularly in terms of religious character and morality.(Salsabila 2022) Technology has become an important part of human life, especially for the younger generation, so that unlimited access to information can lead to moral degradation if it is not balanced with education based on strong religious values.(Herningrum, Alfian, and Putra 2020) This situation calls for an Islamic education model that not only emphasises cognitive aspects, but also strengthens the spirituality, morals, and social skills of students as preparation for life in the modern era. Islamic boarding schools have a strategic role in responding to these challenges because they serve to instil faith,

piety, and noble character through the guidance of religious teachers and habits cultivated in a religious educational environment (Salsabila 2022). Pesantren are traditional Islamic educational institutions that play an important role in developing the religious knowledge, morals and character of students. In addition to being centres of education, pesantren also function as centres for preaching and community development (Ali Muhdi, 2025).

Efforts to strengthen Islamic education that touches on all dimensions of santri development can be carried out through a holistic-integrative approach to Islamic Religious Education. (Mahardhika and Wantini 2023). Ajusman dkk added, this approach not only develops intellectual intelligence, but also moral and spiritual intelligence by integrating religious knowledge with science and digital technology in an integrated manner (Ajusman, Ahmad Abdillah Matinetta 2024). In practice, Islamic values can be integrated into various disciplines and daily life, thereby eliminating the dichotomy between religion and the modern world. This educational model is necessary to strengthen the character of students against the negative influences of technological developments, while preparing them to play an active role in society more adaptively and ethically (Retnowati and Dewi 2024).

The At-Thohiriyah, El-Fira 1, and Al-Ikhsan Beji Islamic boarding schools, which are the focus of this study, have developed into Islamic educational institutions that not only focus on the transfer of religious knowledge but also on social transformation and strengthening the morals of the community. These boarding schools function as educational institutions that comprehensively shape the personality of Muslims. These boarding schools make a tangible contribution to improving the life skills of their students and even contribute to the social and economic development of the surrounding community. The historical role of boarding schools in educating scholars, preserving Islamic scholarly traditions, and serving as a moral bulwark for the nation demonstrates the urgency of applying a holistic-integrative approach to Islamic education in boarding schools as a response to the increasingly complex challenges facing society.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study is oriented towards describing and analysing in depth holistic-integrative Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in Islamic boarding schools. Through this approach, researchers can explore the meaning, patterns, processes, and social contexts that underlie the implementation of holistic-integrative PAI education based on the perspective of the research subjects. The qualitative approach allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of contextual and dynamic educational phenomena, which cannot be reduced to quantitative measurements alone.

Descriptive-comparative research was used because the main objective of this study was to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the implementation of holistic-integrative PAI, including learning objectives, methods used, learning media, and assessment systems applied in Islamic boarding schools.

In addition, this study also seeks to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of this education. Thus, the research design is not aimed at testing hypotheses, but rather at presenting a comprehensive description of the educational phenomenon being studied as it is, in accordance with the empirical conditions in the field.

This study was conducted in three Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions located in the Banyumas Regency and Purwokerto City, namely At-Thohiriyah Islamic Boarding School, El-Fira 1 Islamic Boarding School, and Al-Ikhsan Beji Islamic Boarding School. The research locations were selected using purposive sampling, considering that all three pesantren have implemented a holistic-integrative approach to Islamic Religious Education. This approach is realised through the integration of religious and general knowledge, as well as the integrated development of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of the santri through structured learning practices. These characteristics make the three boarding schools relevant as representations of contemporary Islamic education models that seek to overcome the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge.

The research subjects in this study consisted of santri (Islamic boarding school students) and institutional documents from Islamic boarding schools. Santri were chosen as the main subjects because they are directly involved in the learning process and curriculum implementation, enabling them to provide authentic information about their learning experiences, perceptions of learning methods, and the impact of holistic-integrative PAI implementation on changes in attitudes, understanding, and behaviour. Meanwhile, institutional documents covering the curriculum, learning programme structure, activity schedules, and evaluation records are used as verifiable supporting data sources. The use of these documents enables researchers to triangulate data to enhance the validity and credibility of research findings. Thus, the research subject structure is designed to present a comprehensive perspective, both empirically and structurally, in understanding the implementation of holistic-integrative PAI in Islamic boarding schools

3. Literature Review

Education is a deliberate and planned process to develop the full potential of students, covering intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and moral aspects. The aim is not only to improve cognitive abilities, but also to shape personality, self-control, good character, and life skills that are beneficial to society (Radhita Azzahra, 2025; Hanif, 2025; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024; Nurhayati & Hanif, 2025). According to Nikmatur, quoting Oemar Hamalik, education seeks to influence students so that they can adapt to their environment, resulting in positive changes that enable them to perform their social roles effectively (Nikmatur, 2022; Hanif & Ausat, 2025; Hanif & Barokah, 2025).

Islamic Religious Education is essentially a process of developing the potential of students through teaching, habit formation, guidance, and supervision based on

Islamic values as guidelines for life in this world and the hereafter (Hakim, 2022; Hanif, 2025; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024). Islamic education aims to foster belief in Allah and shape individuals who are faithful, pious, and noble in character (Hanif, 2014; Nurhayati & Hanif, 2025). Syafrin et al. emphasise that Islamic religious education must produce Muslims who are beneficial to religion, society, and the state. Therefore, Islamic religious education requires a comprehensive approach, covering aspects of knowledge, understanding, instilling values, and worship skills, so that Islamic teachings can be internalised and practised in daily life (Syafrin et al., 2023; Hanif & Ausat, 2025; Ujijanti & Hanif, 2025).

The Concept of Holistic-Integrative Education.

Linguistically, the term holistic in the Big Indonesian Dictionary is defined as something that is comprehensive or whole. Thus, the holistic concept views an object or process as a unity whose parts cannot be separated (Radhita Azzahra, 2025; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024). In the context of education, holistic education, according to Ratna Megawangi, is an approach that develops students holistically by covering intellectual, social-emotional, moral, spiritual, creative, and character aspects (Hanif, Karimah, Bambang Suharto, & Adib, 2024). This education also aims to shape individuals who are capable of lifelong learning so that they are not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also towards the formation of a whole person (Hanif, 2025).

Historically, the holistic education paradigm is not a new concept, as it has been practiced by many classical educational figures such as Jean Rousseau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Bronson Alcott, Johan Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel, and Francisco Ferrer. Other figures who have contributed to the development of holistic education include Rudolf Steiner, Maria Montessori, Francis Parker, John Dewey, John Caldwell Holt, George Dennison, Kieran Egan, Howard Gardner, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Ivan Illich, and Paulo Freire (Holistik, 2017; Hanif, 2014). The main objective of holistic education is to develop the full potential of students through a learning process that is enjoyable, democratic, humanistic, and experience-based (Hanif, 2014; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024). Therefore, the curriculum that most closely approximates the principles of holistic education is a transformational curriculum that emphasizes the integrated development of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, spiritual, and social aspects (Hidayat, 2025; Hanif, 2025).

Etymologically, the term integrative in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) is defined as something that is integrative in nature, namely the process of unification to form a complete whole (Izmayanti, 2013; Hanif, 2014). In the context of education, an integrative approach is understood as a learning system that enables students, both individually and in groups, to actively seek, explore, and discover scientific concepts and principles in a holistic, meaningful, and authentic manner (Kurniawan & Ibrahim, 2023; Hanif, Karimah, Bambang Suharto, & Adib, 2024). Joni T. R. explains that integrative learning will be achieved if the learning experience is linked to authentic events or the exploration of specific themes that are the focus of learning activities, so that students can learn the processes and content of several

subjects simultaneously through direct involvement in these exploratory activities (Hidayat, 2025; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024).

In practical terms, the idea of integrative education is also in line with Hadisubroto's view that integrated learning begins with a specific theme or concept that is then linked to other themes or concepts, either spontaneously or deliberately (Hanif, 2014). The key point of integrative learning lies in the ability of educators to design integrated curricula and learning activities so that there is harmony between the various subject matters within a single unit of meaning (Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024). This learning model is illustrated in an integrated curriculum that not only connects scientific concepts but also emphasizes the dimension of values, as emphasized by Assegaf that integrative education must reflect the integration between the worldly and spiritual dimensions in a proportional and balanced manner (Hidayat, 2025; Hanif, Karimah, Bambang Suharto, & Adib, 2024).

Holistic-Integrative Education in Islamic Boarding Schools.

Holistic-Integrative Education is an educational approach that arose from the concerns of Islamic educational thinkers about the impact of the dichotomy of knowledge, which they feared would only produce intellectually intelligent individuals, but lack concern and awareness of their social environment and human values (Muamanah, 2020; Hanif, 2014). Meanwhile, according to John Dewey, it is understood as a learning approach that aims to develop students' knowledge through a process of meaning construction built from direct interaction with the environment and their life experiences (Hanif, 2014). Thus, it can be concluded that holistic-integrative Islamic Religious Education aims to develop the full potential of students, not only in the cognitive realm, but also in terms of morals and character, so that they can become the solution to the problem of moral degradation in today's education system (Fauzi, 2019; Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024).

A boarding school is a combination of two words, "pondok" and "pesantren." Pondok means room, hut, or small house, which is used in Indonesian to emphasize the simplicity of the building. Some also argue that pondok comes from the word "funduq," which means bedroom, guesthouse, or simple hotel. This is because a pondok is generally a simple shelter for students who are far from their hometowns (Faridah 2019). A pesantren is basically a traditional Islamic boarding school where students live together and study religious sciences under the guidance of a kyai. The dormitories for the santri are located within the pesantren complex where the kyai lives (Fitri, Ondeng, and Makassar 2022). Terminologically, the term pondok actually comes from the Arabic word "funduq," which means inn, bedroom, and simple dormitory or guesthouse (Nasir and Maisah 2022). According to Sugarda Poerbawaktja, a pondok is a place of lodging for young men and women who are studying Islam. The term pesantren comes from the word santri. The word "santri" is also a combination of two syllables, sant (good person) and tra (likes to help), so the word pesantren can be interpreted as a place for educating good people (Radhita Azzahra 2025).

The holistic-integrative approach to Islamic education in Islamic boarding

schools finds its relevance in the culture of literacy and the Islamic boarding school education system, which emphasizes the integration of knowledge, values, and social practices (Hanif, 2014; Nurhayati & Hanif, 2025). This is in line with the findings of Muhdi and Halim (2023), who assert that Islamic boarding schools play a strategic role in building moderate religious diversity through integrated learning and Islamic literacy traditions (Ali & Fachrizal Halim, 2023; Hanif & Ausat, 2025).

4. Results and Discussion

Result

In this Education Programme, it can be stated that there are categories of programmes that are intracurricular, extracurricular, and special programmes. The following is a detailed explanation:

A. Intracurricular Education Program

The intracurricular programs at Pesantren At-Thohiriyyah are designed to support the development of students through two main programs: Madrasah Diniyah (Madin) and Tahfidzul Qur'an. The Madin program is structured into five class levels, with learning activities conducted after Asr, Maghrib, and Isha prayers. These activities include recitation and syawir sughro to strengthen memorization and understanding. Evaluation is done twice a year, with oral exams in each class and written exams for all levels. In class 5, students undergo a comprehensive end-of-year munaqosyah. The Tahfidzul Qur'an program consists of additional recitation after Asr and Isha prayers, along with regular weekly recitations. Students' memorization progress is assessed through juz advancement exams, and major evaluations occur annually in Rabi'ul Awwal and Sha'ban. These programs aim to integrate recitation and memorization into the daily routine, ensuring continuous academic and spiritual growth.

Pesantren El Fira 1 places a strong emphasis on classical Islamic texts within its intracurricular program, with learning sessions scheduled every night after Isha. The program is divided into daily thematic sessions, such as Tafsir Jalalain on Mondays and Muktarul Hadith on Tuesdays. Students are grouped into three academic levels: Awaliyah, Wustho, and Ulya, based on their ability to understand and study classical texts. Madin activities are not held on Sundays to give students time to recover, ensuring that formal learning occurs from Monday to Saturday. This structured approach reflects Pesantren El Fira's dedication to preserving and strengthening the deep tradition of turats in its educational system.

Pesantren Al-Ikhsan Beji has developed an intracurricular program that focuses on enhancing Arabic and English language skills through the AIDS (Arabic–English Development Skills) program, which is mandatory for all students, especially those in MTs and MA levels. The program runs in the morning and afternoon according to grade level, following a structured formal learning pattern. In addition to language learning, students are encouraged to participate in bilingual speech activities, which help develop public speaking skills and support the pesantren's academic culture. The AIDS program is further enriched by optional training

programs, such as the TOT (Training of Trainers) for English and TAKS (Training Arabic for Key Skills), which trains prospective teachers. Although the TOT/TAKS program for MTs students is no longer active, Al-Ikhsan's Ramadan HTS (Hard Teaching Listen) program continues to reinforce the pesantren's commitment to language competency development.

B. Extracurricular Education Programs

Extracurricular programs at the three pesantren varied in form and continuity of implementation, which were generally influenced by human resource capacity, the number of students, and the institutional orientation of each pesantren.

Extracurricular Activities at Pesantren At-Thohiriyyah are no longer organized formally. This is because almost all academic and non-academic coaching activities have been inherently integrated into the intraschool curriculum, particularly in the two core programs: Madrasah Diniyah (Madin) and Tahfidzul Qur'an. Activities such as lalaran, syawir sughro, setoran nadzom, sorogan kitab, and musyawarah kubro at the end of the month have functionally played a role that, in the context of modern education, is categorized as strengthening character, literacy, critical thinking skills, and leadership. Therefore, although not classified as extracurricular, these activities function as co-curricular activities that are inherent in the daily learning process.

Then, extracurricular activities at Pesantren El Fira 1 used to have several active extracurricular activities, namely: Hadrah, Imla'/ Calligraphy, and Choir (Padus). In the past, these activities were held alternately every Sunday, considering that it was a day off from Madin. However, due to the declining number of students and limited human resources, these extracurricular activities were discontinued and no longer run regularly. This situation shows that the continuity of extracurricular programs in Islamic boarding schools is highly dependent on the stability of resources, especially the availability of competent instructors.

And extracurricular activities at Pesantren Al-Ikhsan Beji, bilingual speech activities (Arabic and English), are not categorized as regular extracurricular activities. They are event-based, meaning they are only held when there are competitions or certain commemorative events, such as Santri Day or other important days for Islamic boarding schools. Each class is required to send one representative for Arabic speech and one for English speech. Although this activity has a competitive dimension and strengthens talents, it remains within the framework of a class-based intraschool program, as it is directly guided by the language curriculum that is the academic focus of the pesantren.

C. Pesantren Specialty Programs

Specialty programs are a distinguishing feature of each pesantren, reflecting its academic orientation, scholarly traditions, and educational culture. The three pesantren each have their own specialties in line with their respective learning focuses.

Specialty programs of At-Thohiriyyah Islamic Boarding School are evident in the

integration of traditional academic activities with the reinforcement of tahfidz. These unique programs include:

- 1) "Musyawarah Kubro", a monthly forum for all classes to practice analysis, rhetoric, and leadership.
- 2) "Lalaran" and "Syawir Sughro", pre-Madin learning activities to strengthen memorization and initial discussion.
- 3) "Nadzam" and "Sorogan Kitab deposits", daily evaluations that require accurate reading of the book and memorization of nadzam.
- 4) "Sima'an Tahfidz", group memorization deposits every Friday and Sunday.
- 5) Annual "Tahfidz" Evaluation, held in Rabi'ul Awwal and Sha'ban to assess the quality of memorization.
- 6) Final Class Munaqosyah, an open exam for Madin 5th grade students to assess their ability to read books and their scientific understanding.

And Specialty programs of El Fira 1 Islamic Boarding School in its structured study of classical Islamic texts every night after Isha with a fixed schedule, such as Tafsir Jalalain on Mondays and Mukhtarul Hadith on Tuesdays. The Awaliyah, Wustho, Ulya grading system distinguishes the depth of study. This uniqueness emphasizes El Fira's orientation towards the specialization of classical Islamic texts, rather than memorization or language programs.

And Then, Specialty programs of Al-Ikhsan Beji Islamic Boarding School have a unique intensive language program that creates a bilingual environment. This unique program includes:

- 1) TOT (English) and TAKS (Arabic), a three-month intensive training program for MA students/university students that serves as a path to becoming a teacher.
- 2) Daily AIDS Program, Arabic-English practice every morning and afternoon according to grade level.
- 3) HTS Ramadan, a program consisting of four daily sessions with intensive use of two languages.
- 4) Two-Language Speech Tradition, held during competitions with representatives from each class.

D. Implementation of Holistic-Integrative PAI in Islamic Boarding Schools.

The implementation of Islamic religious education using a holistic and integrative approach in this Islamic boarding school is reflected in the education system, which encompasses several components, including educational objectives, educational materials, educational methods, and so on.

1) Educational Objectives of Pesantren.

At At-Thohiriyyah Islamic Boarding School, the educational objectives focus on developing students with spiritual maturity, deep religious knowledge, and good

manners. The Madin program strengthens students' understanding of classical Islamic literature and essential subjects like fiqh, nahwu, sharaf, while fostering moral values through recitation and sorogan. The Tahfidz program aims to produce hafizh who maintain the quality of their memorization through regular evaluations. El-Fira 1 Islamic Boarding School prioritizes the mastery of Islamic sciences through structured study of classical texts at the Awaliyah, Wustho, and Ulya levels, developing students who can read, explain, and apply religious knowledge. Though extracurricular activities are no longer part of the curriculum, the focus remains on producing disciplined, knowledgeable students with a solid understanding of religion. Al-Ikhsan Beji shifts focus towards enhancing Arabic and English skills through programs like AIDS, TOT, and TAKS, developing fluent speakers and confident communicators, preparing students for global engagement while upholding Islamic values.

2) Learning Materials of Pesantren.

The learning materials at the three Islamic boarding schools reflect their distinct pedagogical orientations while maintaining a shared foundation in strengthening Islamic knowledge, worship, and moral development. At At-Thohiriyyah Islamic Boarding School, the materials are divided into Madrasah Diniyah (Madin) and Tahfidz Al-Qur'an programs, focusing on classical Islamic literature, fiqh, and memorization of the Qur'an with activities to strengthen recitation. El-Fira 1 Islamic Boarding School organizes learning around structured religious texts such as Tafsir Jalalain and Mukhtarul Hadith, promoting a disciplined approach to academic and moral studies. Al-Ikhsan Beji Islamic Boarding School emphasizes proficiency in Arabic and English through skill-based programs like AIDS, TOT, and TAKS, alongside bilingual speech exercises and grammar training. These materials highlight each pesantren's unique focus, with At-Thohiriyyah enhancing turats and tahfidz, El-Fira focusing on book studies, and Al-Ikhsan developing language and communication skills, all grounded in Islamic values.

3) Learning Methods of Pesantren

The learning methods at the three Islamic boarding schools reflect diverse pedagogical approaches aligned with each institution's objectives. At At-Thohiriyyah, the methods in the Madin program include traditional techniques like lalaran, syawir sugro, and sorogan kitab, which foster memorization and comprehension of religious texts, while the Tahfidz program emphasizes structured memorization through ziyadah, deresan, and simakan. El-Fira 1 focuses on book lectures and talaqqi, integrating systematic explanations of texts such as Tafsir Jalalain with opportunities for discussion and question sessions to deepen understanding. At Al-Ikhsan Beji, contemporary methods like public speaking, vocabulary drilling, and bilingual conversation practice dominate, with intensive training programs like TOT and TAKS enhancing language and communication skills. Despite their differences, all three pesantren emphasize close teacher-student interactions, worship habits, and character building, maintaining the core values of Islamic education through discipline and moral development.

4) Instructional Media of Pesantren.

The instructional media at the three pesantren reflect traditional Islamic educational practices, emphasizing close teacher-student interactions and classical texts. At At-Thohiriyyah, learning media primarily consist of classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning) and naẓm for memorization, with the pesantren environment itself serving as a medium for internalizing discipline and ethics. In the Tahfidz program, the Qur'an is central, supported by activities like ziyādah and murāja'ah. El-Fira 1 also centers its learning around classical texts such as Tafsir Jalalain and Mukhtarul Hadith, supplemented by writing tools and the pesantren environment to instill moral values. At Al-Ikhsan Beji, the focus shifts to Arabic and English proficiency, using speech texts, vocabulary lists, and conversation practice, alongside bilingual immersion during Ramadan's HTS program. Despite limited use of modern technology, all three pesantren rely on traditional, text-based media and social environments to transmit knowledge and shape character, discipline, and practical skills.

5) Evaluation of Learning at Pesantren

The evaluation systems at the three pesantren emphasize not only academic achievement but also character formation, discipline, and the internalization of Islamic values. At Pesantren At-Thohiriyyah, evaluations are structured with oral and written exams in the Madin program, complemented by monthly forums like Musyawarah Kubrā, and a rigorous juz progression and munaqasyah in the Tahfidz program. El-Fira 1 focuses on continuous assessment through attendance, participation, and informal evaluations during discussions, with an emphasis on discipline and personal character. Al-Ikhsan Beji places greater importance on language skills, assessing students' performance in bilingual speech activities and the AIDS program, with formal evaluations in the TOT and TAKS programs. These systems, while differing in formality and focus, all serve to enhance students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional growth, reflecting the holistic approach of pesantren education (A. Muhdi et al., 2024).

E. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Education of Pesantren

The successful implementation of educational programs at the three pesantren is influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. At At-Thohiriyyah, the structured activity schedule and traditional academic practices like lalaran and syawir sughrā foster a disciplined learning environment, supported by a strong religious atmosphere and exemplary ustadz. However, challenges such as limited facilities, instability in Qur'anic memorization, and the cessation of extracurricular activities hinder progress. El-Fira 1 thrives on consistent nightly studies of classical texts, a tiered class system, and the talaqqi method, with an emphasis on discipline and adab. Yet, challenges like declining enrollment and limited resources have led to the discontinuation of extracurricular programs. Al-Ikhsan Beji excels through its intensive language programs, including AIDS, TOT, and TAKS, which create a bilingual environment and accelerate language proficiency. However, issues such as limited access for lower secondary students, overcrowded schedules, and

resource constraints impact the full potential of these programs.

F. Learning Implications of Pesantren Education

The implementation of educational programs across the three pesantren results in significant academic, spiritual, social, and personal growth for students. At At-Thohiriyyah, the madrasah diniyah and tahfidz programs enhance students' academic abilities, particularly in reading and understanding classical texts, while also stabilizing Qur'anic memorization through structured routines. The disciplined environment fosters strong character formation, instilling time-management skills, moral conduct, and resilience. El-Fira 1 focuses on deepening religious understanding through nightly studies and discussions of classical texts, promoting analytical thinking and etiquette, while cultivating a disciplined, orderly life. At Al-Ikhsan Beji, the emphasis on language proficiency through daily AIDS programs and intensive training significantly accelerates students' mastery of Arabic and English, enhancing their public speaking and communication skills. The bilingual environment and the Ramadan HTS program further shape students' character and social adaptability, preparing them to meet global challenges and thrive in leadership roles.

Discussion

Comparative Analysis of Findings from the Three Pesantren

Based on the field findings obtained by the researcher, a detailed comparison of each pesantren discussed above can be presented in the following table;

Aspect	Pesantren At-Thohiriyyah	Pesantren El-Fira 1	Pesantren Al-Ikhsan Beji
Main Programmes	Madrasah Diniyah and Tahfidz as the core of learning; emphasis on reading scriptures, memorization, discipline, and religious habits.	Tiered book studies (Awaliyah, Wustho, Ulya); structured and continuous learning through a regular study schedule.	Strengthening Arabic and English language skills through language programs, public speaking, and communication-based learning.
Forms of Learning Activities	Lalaran, syawir sughro, sorogan kitab, hafalan nadzom, musyawarah kubro, and gradual tahfidz evaluation.	Classroom-based book studies, guided discussions, academic etiquette training, and intensive teacher-student interaction.	Language immersion programs, bilingual speech practice, intensive language classes, and active communication activities among students.

Student Development Orientation	Strengthening understanding of religious texts, spiritual discipline, perseverance in learning, and the formation of religious character.	Deepening religious understanding, fostering reflective attitudes, learning etiquette, and strengthening the continuity of the learning process.	Pengembangan Development of language skills, self-confidence, public speaking skills, and social adaptability.
Holistic Integration Character	Cognitive-affective-spiritual integration through memorization, book study, worship practice, and layered evaluation.	Integration of knowledge and attitude building through tiered learning, discussion, and teacher guidance.	Language integration, communication, self-confidence, and the development of social and communication skills among students.
Institutional Distinctiveness	Strong emphasis on the traditions of turats and tahfidz as key characteristics in shaping the character of santri.	A systematic and tiered learning structure for the book, tailored to the level of the students' abilities.	The identity of an institution based on the language and culture of public communication among Islamic boarding school students.
Impact on Students	Stability of memorization, accuracy in reading the scriptures, discipline, and moral habits.	Strengthening religious understanding, text analysis skills, and harmonizing social relations.	The emergence of self-confidence, communication skills, and readiness to play a role in the social environment.

The comparative table indicates that each pesantren emphasises different aspects of student development while remaining within a holistic framework of Islamic education. Pondok Pesantren At-Thohiriyah positions madrasah diniyah and tahfidz as the core of its educational process, with a strong emphasis on the turāth tradition, memorisation, and religious habituation. Learning patterns such as lalaran, sorogan, and musyawarah reflect a classical pesantren approach that prioritises in-depth understanding of religious texts alongside the cultivation of students' spiritual character and discipline. The turāth framework understood as

the transmission of traditional Muslim ethical and scholarly values taught as part of orthodox religious heritage contributes to the formation of moderate Muslim youth through character education (Mujahid 2021).

Arif Rahman (2020) identifies patterns of pesantren sustainability through processes of reproduction. First, the reproduction of a hierarchical genetic social system that firmly upholds the principle that pesantren are an ancestral heritage that must be preserved. Second, the reproduction of the pesantren's scholarly paradigm, shifting from an exclusive focus on religious sciences to an integration of religious and general sciences, which has implications for the skills and character of pesantren graduates. Third, the reproduction of pesantren governance through decentralisation and autonomy across branch institutions and affiliated units (Rahman 2019).

Meanwhile, Pondok Pesantren El-Fira 1 develops the study of classical Islamic texts through a tiered and systematic learning model implemented via classroom instruction, guided discussions, and intensive teacher mentoring. This approach aims to foster continuity in the learning process, cultivate reflective attitudes, and strengthen students' academic ethics (adab).

Apduludin and Martinisyamin (2022) found that innovative learning models can enhance students' critical thinking skills through systematic processes of analysing, discovering, developing, and organising knowledge. Furthermore, they emphasise that effective pesantren education involves not only cognitive learning but also reflective engagement, discussion, and practical experience (Jusubaidi et al. 2024).

According to Ju'subaidi et al. (2024), the system of religious education in pesantren should prioritise not only the cognitive aspects of doctrinal religious knowledge but also students' engagement with society and the cultivation of open-minded, tolerant, and rational character traits. This educational approach facilitates a transformation from deeply rooted and inward-looking traditional values toward modern, rational, disciplined, inclusive, independent, and responsible values. Such transformation is achieved through classroom instruction, active participation in institutional management, involvement in discussions, and the practice of public speaking.

On the other hand, Pesantren Al-Ikhsan Beji demonstrates a stronger orientation toward the development of linguistic and communication competencies, particularly in Arabic and English, through immersion and public speaking programmes. Holistic integration in this pesantren extends beyond cognitive and spiritual dimensions to encompass socio-communicative aspects, thereby equipping students with self-confidence and readiness to adapt to society. According to Mochammad Faris Aresy (2020), pesantren leaders can develop an Arabic language environment through various initiatives, including establishing student language organisations, conducting Arabic conversation activities, providing Arabic vocabulary enrichment, offering supplementary instruction for beginner levels, organising Arabic speech training, and utilising Arabic-language films as learning media (Aresy 2020).

Tasman Hamami and Zalik Nuryana (2022) argue that reform-oriented curricula based on a holistic–integrative model develop students’ potential in an integrated manner, including spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and transcendental intelligence. Contribution: The holistic–integrative curriculum represents a future model of Islamic education that supports the sustainability of private Islamic education systems in Indonesia by fostering a society that is faithful, devout, morally upright, and socially responsible (Hamami 2019).

Overall, the table illustrates that holistic integration in pesantren education can be realised through diverse models, ranging from the strengthening of classical scholarly traditions and reflective tiered learning to the development of modern communication skills, all of which contribute to the comprehensive formation of students. In strengthening classical scientific traditions and reflective tiered learning, Islamic boarding schools need to ignite the flame of literacy; building educational structures in order to foster a culture of literacy, until a generation of literate scholars or literate students is created. After all, this nation was built and strengthened by the contributions of literacy pioneered by scholars and figures from Islamic boarding schools (Ali Muhdi, 2020).

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study on the implementation of holistic–integrative Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in three pesantren, it can be concluded that this approach successfully establishes an educational process that is not solely oriented toward cognitive aspects but also encompasses the development of students’ spiritual, moral, social, and life skills. The integration of religious knowledge and general sciences is implemented through formal learning activities, habituation of religious practices, teachers’ role modelling, and a pesantren environment characterised by strong religious values. The evaluation system is comprehensive, including academic assessment, worship practices, attitude observation, and skill development. The implementation of this model has a positive impact, as reflected in increased discipline, deeper religious understanding, noble character formation, and students’ ability to adapt to developments in science and technology.

Although sharing similar objectives, each pesantren demonstrates distinct approaches and characteristics in implementing holistic–integrative Islamic education. Pesantren At-Thohiriyyah emphasises character formation through strict supervision and tiered assessment. Pesantren El-Fira 1 focuses on the integration of religion and science by employing modern instructional methods. Meanwhile, Pesantren Al-Ihsan Beji excels in developing language proficiency, self-confidence, and social skills. The challenges encountered include limited facilities, teachers’ capacity in managing modern learning approaches, and dense activity schedules. Nevertheless, the holistic–integrative approach remains effective due to the support of consistent habituation, discipline, and a strong religious culture.

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