

Pesantren Culture and Character Building of Female Students

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Abstract

The moral degradation and ethical challenges facing the younger generation in the digital era necessitate a context-based model of character education. This study aims to examine the character formation process of female students (*santriwati*) and analyze the influence of Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) culture on their character. A mixed-methods approach with a sequential exploratory design was employed. Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews and observations, while quantitative data were obtained via questionnaires administered to active students and analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Qualitative results reveal that character formation is systematically integrated across three key domains: daily religious routines, the dynamics of ethical social interaction, and regulations regarding traditional attire, such as *sarung* and *jarik* (or *sewek*), which embody philosophical values of simplicity and modesty. Quantitative analysis reinforces these findings, yielding an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.001 (< 0.05), thereby demonstrating a significant and consistent influence of pesantren culture on the character formation of female students.

Keywords: Character Formation, Female Islamic Boarding School Students, *Pesantren* Culture.

Abstrak

Degradasi moral dan tantangan etis yang dihadapi generasi muda di era digital menuntut adanya model pendidikan karakter yang berbasis konteks. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji proses pembentukan karakter santriwati dan menganalisis pengaruh budaya pesantren terhadap karakter mereka. Pendekatan metode campuran dengan desain eksploratif sekuensial diterapkan dalam penelitian ini. Data kualitatif dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan observasi, sedangkan data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui kuesioner yang diberikan kepada santriwati aktif dan dianalisis menggunakan uji *Wilcoxon signed-rank*. Hasil kualitatif menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan karakter diintegrasikan secara sistematis ke dalam tiga ranah utama: rutinitas keagamaan sehari-hari, dinamika interaksi sosial yang etis, serta peraturan mengenai busana tradisional, seperti *sarung* dan *jarik* (*sewek*), yang mencerminkan nilai-nilai filosofis kesederhanaan dan kesantunan. Analisis kuantitatif memperkuat temuan tersebut dengan nilai Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) sebesar 0,001 ($< 0,05$), yang menunjukkan adanya pengaruh signifikan dan konsisten dari budaya pesantren terhadap pembentukan karakter santriwati.

Kata Kunci: Kultur Pesantren, Pembentukan Karakter, Santriwati Pesantren.



Introduction

The internalization of moral values within the Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) environment is not merely taught in theory but is practiced consistently to reinforce institutional culture.¹ As the oldest traditional Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, the *pesantren* carries a historical mission to instill a deep understanding of religion and to foster noble character, independence, and a broad Islamic perspective among its Muslim students (*santri*). *Pesantren* also offers a unique living environment that harmonizes religious values, scholarly traditions, social dynamics, and distinctive aesthetics.² In this context, the internalization of moral values in *pesantren* essentially leads to students' character formation, which is one of the primary goals of *pesantren*. However, character formation remains a crucial issue that requires ongoing study, especially amidst the increasing ethical challenges facing the younger generation in the digital age.³

This situation further emphasizes the importance of character education that is not only oriented towards instilling normative values but also rooted in students' lived realities. Several previous studies indicate that character building in *pesantren* occurs through an integrated process involving value-based learning, habituation, role modeling, and the socio-religious environment. Sopandi et al., for instance, found that character education in *pesantren* is implemented through approaches based on role modeling and discipline training, in which the ustadh (teacher) serves as a behavioral role model, demonstrating discipline and responsibility.⁴ These findings are reinforced

¹ Nadia Nabila and Muhammad Husni, "Peran Pesantren Dalam Menanamkan Nilai Keberkahan Pada Generasi Muda," *Jurnal Ilmiah Research Student* 3, no. 1 (January 2026): 158–66, <https://doi.org/10.61722/jirs.v3i1.8498>; Rita Anisaturrizqi, Fitriyatul Hanifiyah, and Prima Cristi Crismono, "Holistic Tahfidz Education Based on Pesantren: Bibliometric Analysis of the Integration of Memorization and the Formation of Qur'anic Character," *J-PAI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 11, no. 2 (July 2025), <https://doi.org/10.18860/jpai.v11i2.34373>.

² Fitriyatul Hanifiyah, "Peran Tradisi Pesantren Dalam Membentuk Akhlak Santri (Studi Kasus Santri Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah, Kecamatan Silo, Kabupaten Jember): The Role of Pesantren Tradition in Fostering Santri Morals (Case Study of Santri Al-Falah, Silo Jember District)," *Educan* 8, no. 2 (2024): 187–94, <https://doi.org/10.21111/educan.v8i2.12000>.

³ Zainal Abidin Muhja and Liza Shahnaz, "Islamic Identity in the Digital Age: Between Firmness of Faith and the Challenges of Technology," *JIE (Journal of Islamic Education)* 10, no. 2 (September 2025): 603–23, <https://doi.org/10.35723/jie.v10i2.664>; M. Imamul Muttaqin et al., "Facing The Challenges of Youth Moral Degradation In The Digital Age," *Ma'alim: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (June 2023): 54–70, <https://doi.org/10.21154/maalim.v4i1.6417>.

⁴ Ipan Sopandi et al., "An Integrated Approach to Character Education in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study at Hidayatul Faizien Islamic Boarding School, Garut," *Islamic Management: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 01 (January 2025): 297–306, <https://doi.org/10.30868/im.v8i01.8027>.

by Astuti and Winarti, who identified three indicators of moral education practices in *pesantren*: role modeling, habituation, and discipline.⁵

Similarly, Surur and Habibullah emphasize that the character building of *santri* involves five approaches: the habituation of discipline, role modeling by egalitarian kyai (religious leaders), the strengthening of *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), the cultivation of *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (national brotherhood), and the synergy between tradition and pedagogical innovation.⁶ These findings confirm that *santri* character-building is inseparable from the *pesantren* lifestyle, which consistently provides space for habituation and the internalization of values. Thus, previous studies show that *santri* character formation is a contextual, multidimensional process shaped by daily practices, social relationships, institutional culture, and the *pesantren's* response to changes in students' living environments.

Although previous studies have shown that *santri* character formation occurs through habituation, role modeling, mentorship, disciplinary rules, religious culture, and reinforcement of digital ethics, most research has focused on the forms, strategies, and mechanisms of character education in these institutions. Meanwhile, research on the formula for success for female students in *pesantren* remains scarce. Therefore, this study explores the character formation model at Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan to address this gap and offer an original alternative solution to the contemporary crisis of adolescent character.

The urgency of this research lies in moving from general discourse mapping to empirical evidence of the concrete stages through which character is sustainably cultivated and internalized. This study offers novelty and makes a substantive contribution to character education literature by examining local cultural symbolism as a pragmatic educational instrument. The primary focus is the use of *kain jarik* (*sewek*), conceptualized not merely as traditional clothing but as a systematic instrument that internalizes modesty, simplicity, and patience through daily physical and symbolic habituation. Thus, the main contribution of this study is a local wisdom-based character education model that relies not on verbal doctrines but on living cultural articulations within the *pesantren* environment. Grounded in this discourse, the study is formulated

⁵ Livia Astuti and Agus Winarti, "Moral Education in Islamic Boarding Schools for Shaping the Social Character of Adolescents," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 10, no. 1 (January 2026): 20–36, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v10i1.220>.

⁶ Shobihus Surur and Jumadil Awali Habibullah, "Integrasi Metode Klasik Dan Kontemporer Dalam Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Pesantren," *Irsyaduna: Jurnal Studi Kemahasiswaan* 5, no. 2 (September 2025): 418–34, <https://doi.org/10.54437/irsyaduna.v5i2.2490>.

around two main research questions: (1) how is the character formation process of *santri* carried out at Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan? and (2) is there a significant influence of the *pesantren* culture on the *santri*'s character?

Method

This study employs a mixed-methods approach with a sequential exploratory design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches sequentially. In this design, qualitative data are utilized to elaborate on and reinforce the previously obtained quantitative findings.⁷ The integration of these two methods aims to yield more comprehensive data. Qualitative methods prioritize the in-depth exploration of meaning, characteristics, and descriptive interpretation of observed phenomena.⁸ This study explores the role of *pesantren* culture in shaping the character of female students (*santriwati*) at Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan.

Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and participant observation. Key informants included the head of the institution, the principals of MA and MTs Al-Falah, teachers of the Islamic supplementary school (*madrasah diniyah*), current and former heads of the student board, and several resident female students. A questionnaire-based quantitative approach was employed to measure the extent of *pesantren* culture's influence on the character formation of female *santriwati*. The research instrument was distributed offline (hard copy) to active students as respondents on May 30–31, 2026. This study tests the initial hypothesis that the culture of the Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan has a significant effect on students' character formation.

Results and Discussion

Results

The Character Building Process of Female *Pesantren* Students

Initial observations reveal a unique culture among female students (*santriwati*) at the Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan. This culture is internalized through daily activities, using methods such as advice, habituation, and role modeling, with a focus on the values of politeness, discipline, and patience. This is further reinforced by the statement from the head of the student board during an interview, who emphasized that:

⁷ Jim Hoy Yam, "Refleksi Penelitian Metode Campuran (Mixed Method)," *Jurnal Empire* 2, no. 2 (2022): 126–34, <https://doi.org/10.33592/empire.v2i2.3310>.

⁸ Weng Marc Lim, "What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines," *Australasian Marketing Journal* 33, no. 2 (May 2025): 199–229, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264619>.

*"The unique culture is constructed through daily activities and habitual practices. In general, this cultural construction is categorized into three main domains: daily routines, social interaction dynamics, and dress codes."*⁹ An active *santriwati* expressed a similar idea, stating that: *"the clarity of its cultural identity is evident in its daily activities, social interaction patterns, and dress codes."*¹⁰

The internalization of cultural values in the daily lives of female students (*santriwati*) is achieved through traditions such as congregational prayers, the study of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*), and other routine activities. In an interview, an alumna and the head of the board of management at *pesantren* underscored this point, stating that: *"Activities within the Al-Falah Putri Islamic Boarding School environment are highly diverse, including PPTQ (Qur'anic Translation Training Program), Majelis Taklim (Islamic study assemblies), bahtsul masail (jurisprudential discussion forums), khitobah (public speaking practice), syawir (peer study deliberations), lalaran (collective text memorization recitations), and ro'an (communal work)."*¹¹

This is reinforced by an active student, who stated: *"The internalization of cultural values in the daily lives of santriwati is reflected through various routine practices, such as the recitation of Dibaiyah, Quranic tilawah, as well as the recitation of Yaasiin Fadhilah and Surah Al-Kahfi."*¹² The character formation of female students (*santri*) at the *pesantren* does not rely solely on the formal curriculum; rather, it is maximized through a hidden curriculum that thrives within daily interactions. In line with an in-depth interview conducted with Aris Zubaidah, a female student at the school, the obtained information confirms that: *"pesantren consistently foster students' awareness as social beings. Mutual respect and deference are demonstrated through concrete actions, such as using both hands when shaking hands, conversing in refined Javanese (krama inggil), and maintaining composure and etiquette when encountering caregivers or members of the founder's family."*¹³

Additionally, the aspect of simplicity is realized through the standardization of female students' (*santriwati*) daily attire, where they are required to wear a *sarong* combined with a long top extending below the hips during activities. This was confirmed by the caretaker and principal of MTs SA Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan, who

⁹ Informant HSA, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹⁰ Santriwati IAA, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹¹ Informant SHW, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹² Santriwati HFN, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹³ Santriwati AZH, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

explained that: *"The aspect of simplicity in the pesantren environment is realized through the standardization of santriwati daily attire, which mandates combining a sarong with a long top extending below the hips during daily activities. This rule aims to instill a modesty-oriented (brukut) style of dress that aligns with Islamic law (sharia), while simultaneously preserving traditional garments such as the sarong and jarik. Although such attire is often perceived as outdated by outsiders, the pesantren regards it as a practical and economical choice that provides physical comfort."*¹⁴

The reinforcement of the value of simplicity was also emphasized, stating: *"Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan prohibits the wearing of gamis in daily activities to mitigate social inequality and consumerism among female students (santriwati). Instead, the tradition of wearing a sarung is maintained as a symbol of local culture and simplicity, while serving as an instrument to equalize visual identity within the boarding school environment."*¹⁵ In line with this policy, the traditional school uniform consists of stiff skirts, stiff sarongs, and *Jarik* (*sewek*) cloth. Regarding the use of the *jarik*, an instructor of *Faraidh* (Islamic inheritance law) at the Islamic complementary school (*Madrasah Diniyah*) within the boarding school, explained that this attire holds profound philosophical significance for (*santriwati*): *"According to the elders, the jarik (also known as sewek) is intended to restrict a woman's stride so that her steps remain modest."*¹⁶ In line with field observations, the use of *jarik* (traditional Indonesian batik cloth) has been shown to refine female students' gait, making it more graceful, calm, and polite, while adding aesthetic value to every step.

The Significant Influence of *Pesantren* Culture on *Santri* Character

To identify the influence of culture on the character construction of *santriwati*, a quantitative method was employed. The initial step involved distributing 40 closed-ended questionnaires to the research sample using a Likert scale. The collected data were systematically processed and analyzed to conclude. The statistical testing stages in this study included: Validity and Reliability Testing, and the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test.

¹⁴ Informant FTR, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹⁵ Informant NEK, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

¹⁶ Ustadh IGH, "Interview," interview by Kholifatur Rohmah, Mei 2026.

Validity Test

To measure the accuracy of the research instrument, a validity test is conducted, with validity criteria based on comparing the calculated *r* value with the table *r* value using a two-tailed test (sig 0.05). An instrument item can be considered valid when it has a positive and significant correlation, indicated by a calculated *r* value $\geq$ the table *r* value. Conversely, when *r* is calculated $<$ *r* table, the statement item is considered invalid.

Table 1. Validity of Culture and Character

No.	R Calculated Culture	R Calculated Character	R Table	Description
1.	0.402	0.791	0.312	VALID
2.	0.587	0,568	0.312	VALID
3.	0.576	0,737	0.312	VALID
4.	0.536	0,444	0.312	VALID
5.	0.328	0,647	0.312	VALID
6.	0.773	0,739	0.312	VALID
7.	0.656	0,693	0.312	VALID
8.	0.436	0,735	0.312	VALID
9.	0.471	0,488	0.312	VALID
10.	0.473	0,512	0.312	VALID
11.	0.607	0,766	0.312	VALID
12.	0.782	0,815	0.312	VALID
13.	0.523	0,394	0.312	VALID
14.	0.485	0,608	0.312	VALID
15.	0.466	0,710	0.312	VALID
16.	0.635	0,398	0.312	VALID
17.	0.670	0,655	0.312	VALID
18.	0.727	0,504	0.312	VALID
19.	0.794	0,538	0.312	VALID
20.	0.525	0.350	0.312	VALID

Source: Results of IBM SPSS calculations

Table 1 presents the results of the validity test for all instrument items used in this study. Based on these results, all instrument items were found to be valid and suitable for use as data collection tools. This is evidenced by the calculated *r*-values for each statement item, which were consistently greater than or equal to the *r*-table value. Thus, all items in the research instrument met the established validity criteria and measured the research variables in accordance with the formulated objectives.

Reliability Test

The evaluation of the instrument's consistency and stability is conducted through a reliability test using Cronbach's alpha. This method was chosen for its relevance to measuring the reliability of research questionnaires over repeated administrations. Next,

the applicable coefficient index criteria table is used as a reference to determine the reliability level of the obtained data.

Table 2. Reliability Coefficient Index

No.	Interval Value	Criteria
1.	<0,20	Very Low
2.	0,20-0,399	Low
3.	0,40-0,599	Moderate
4.	0,60-0,799	High
5.	0,80-1,00	Very High

The instrument used in this study met the established Cronbach's alpha threshold of 0.60 or higher. This value indicates that the instrument possesses an adequate level of internal consistency, thereby demonstrating its reliability in measuring the research variables. Based on the analysis, each variable exhibited a reliability value that met the specified criteria. The reliability test results for each variable are presented in detail in the table below.

Table 3. Reliability Test Results for Culture and Character Variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
<i>Pesantren</i> Culture	0,887	20
Character Building	0,909	20

Source: Results of IBM SPSS calculations

Based on the reliability test results in the table above, all questionnaire items demonstrate good reliability and are suitable for use as data-collection instruments. This is evidenced by an overall Cronbach's alpha exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.60, indicating adequate internal consistency. Referring to the reliability coefficients in Table 3, the culture variable yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.887, while the character variable yielded 0.909. Both values fall into the "very high" reliability category. Consequently, the instruments used to measure the culture and character variables are deemed consistent and highly reliable for this study.

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test is used to test whether there is a significant difference. This step is taken as an appropriate alternative because the obtained data is not normally distributed, which is an absolute requirement in parametric testing. This test is used as a valid alternative for evaluating the significance of differences or relationships among the variables studied.

Tabel 4. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

Test Statistics ^a	
Character-Culture	
Z	-3.828 ^b
Asym.Sig (2-tailed)	<.001
a. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank.	
b. Based on positive ranks	

Based on the Wilcoxon test results presented in Table 5, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) The value was found to be 0.001. This significance value is lower than the established significance level of 0.05 ($0.001 < 0.05$). These results indicate a significant difference between the conditions or measurements compared in the study. Consequently, the proposed research hypothesis is accepted, while the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, the Wilcoxon test results provide statistical evidence of a significant effect or change, consistent with the hypothesis formulated in this study.

Discussion

Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri is an Islamic educational institution in Jember Regency that consistently upholds Salaf values and was founded by the late KH. Mansyur Sholih in 1981, this Islamic boarding school firmly adheres to the jurisprudence maxim: "*Al-muhafazhatu 'alal-qadimi al-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadidi al-ashlah*" as its philosophical foundation, which translates to maintaining good classical traditions while adopting more constructive innovations.¹⁷ Based on these principles, this *pesantren* is committed to a vision of forming integrative individuals by combining aspects of faith, piety, science and technology, and noble character (*akhlakul karimah*). This endeavor is transformed through a holistic educational mission oriented toward strengthening religious values, socio-community values, and national insight.

The character of *santriwati* at Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri is systematically shaped through the consistent internalization of local culture. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study reveals a unique pattern of character formation shaped by three dimensions of *pesantren* culture: daily activities, social interactions, and dress codes. These qualitative findings are reinforced by quantitative analysis, demonstrating a significant and consistent influence of cultural implementation on the character

¹⁷ Intan Nur Aini, Imam Sopingi, and Athi' Hidayati, "Al-Muhafadzah Bil Qadim al-Shalih Wa Al-Akhdzu Bil Jadid Al-Ashlah in Education Perspective of Hadrotus Syaikh KH Hasyim Asy'ari," *Al-Munawwarah: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (May 2025): 91–100, <https://doi.org/10.38073/almunawwarah.v1i1.2685>.

formation of female students. Within the dimension of daily activities, religious values and discipline are instilled through binding worship and academic routines, such as congregational prayers, classical Islamic text studies (*pengajian kitab kuning*), the Qur'an translation training program (PPTQ), group deliberation (*syawir*), Islamic jurisprudence forums (*bahtsul masail*), public speaking exercises, and traditional schooling.

This framework is further reinforced by disciplinary enforcement patterns within the *pesantren* environment, which play a crucial role in the successful internalization of character values.¹⁸ Furthermore, aspects of togetherness and environmental consciousness are cultivated through the tradition of *ro'an* (communal work). Individually, *ro'an* instills personal discipline and hygiene, whereas collectively, this activity creates a hygienic environment and fosters the social character of female students (*santriwati*).¹⁹ The culture of social interaction within the *pesantren* environment is a crucial dimension shaping the character development of *santri*.²⁰ The internalization of these values is achieved through the habituation to the Smile, Greeting, and Salutation (*Senyum, Sapa, Salam*, or 3S) culture in daily communication with teachers (*ustadh*), guardians, administrators, and peers.

The implementation of politeness and respect is also demonstrated through the use of *Jawa Krama Inggil* (the highest register of the Javanese language) when interacting with the head scholar (*kiai*) and the leader's family (*keluarga ndalem*), maintaining tranquility, and exhibiting deferential attitudes, such as bowing when passing by and shaking hands with both hands. In practice, these traditions serve as strategic media for instilling character values through a hidden curriculum.²¹ This

¹⁸ Ahmad Azaim Multazami and Eka Diana, "Implementasi Manajemen Kedisiplinan: Upaya Meningkatkan Konsistensi Ibadah Santri Di Pesantren," *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 10, no. 4 (December 2025): 1930–43, <https://doi.org/10.34125/jmp.v10i4.976>; Sopandi et al., "An Integrated Approach to Character Education."

¹⁹ Riza Dora and Muhamad Arif, "Penumbuhan Karakter Sosial Santri Di Pondok Pesantren," *Madinah: Jurnal Studi Islam* 11, no. 2 (December 2024): 239–56, <https://doi.org/10.58518/madinah.v11i2.2931>.

²⁰ M. Rizqi Fajrul Falah et al., "Communication In Pesantren Educational Institutions: The Application Of Social Cognitive Theory In Understanding Social Interaction In The Pesantren Environment," *Mapendis: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.37758/mapendis.11i2.345>; Firmansyah, Irja Putra Pratama, and Munir, "Symbolic Meanings in the Social Interaction of Santri in the Pesantren Environment," *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* 8, no. 3 (October 2024): 1086–102, <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v8i3.698>; Fiksi Juita, Ahmad Zainuri, and Saipul Annur, "Implementasi Budaya Interaksi Sosial Di Pesantren Al Barokah Kabupaten Empat Lawang," *JUPIN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Nusantara* 4, no. 02 (2025): 97–105, <https://doi.org/10.30599/2f4wpf56>.

²¹ Sofiyani Baehaki, Akhmad Syahri, and Mustain, "Hidden Curriculum Dalam Pendidikan Pesantren: Membentuk Keterampilan Seni Santri Melalui Program Kaligrafi Di Pondok Pesantren Darussalam Bermi," *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains, Geologi, Dan Geofisika (GeoScienceEd Journal)* 7, no. 3 (2026): 2327–32, <https://doi.org/10.29303/goescienceed.v7i3.1991>; Nur Agus Salim et al., "Fostering Moderate

proves that *pesantren* do not merely focus on the transfer of religious knowledge and formal education, but are also oriented toward the formation of noble personality traits. Ultimately, this interaction pattern reflects the *pesantren's* success in cultivating *santriwati* who are adaptive, polite, and sensitive to social and spiritual hierarchies.

The regulation of daily clothing and uniforms in salaf schools is a significant cultural imperative for shaping students' character. Clothing in this context does not merely function as a covering for the body but becomes a symbolic language that represents the wearer's identity.²² The policy is implemented by standardizing the obligation to wear sarongs and long tops that fall below the hips during activities. The implementation of this uniform is not merely a formality but an instrument for instilling discipline, representing the institution's identity, and preserving the *pesantren's* noble traditions.²³ Specifically, the Al-Falah girls' Islamic boarding school implements regulations on the use of stiff-textured sarongs, stiff maxi skirts, and *jarik* (*sewek*). Philosophically, the use of *jarik* can represent humility and reflect a personality free of arrogance.²⁴

Thus, the use of *sarung* and *jarik* is not merely a form of compliance, but a medium for instilling the character of simplicity to minimize hedonistic culture in the *pesantren* environment. The use of traditional clothing among female students (*santriwati*) reflects a cultural-preservation identity while embodying philosophical and religious significance in the maintenance of self-control. Technically, the use of a *jarik* (*sewek*) is designed to narrow the wearer's physical stride. From a philosophical perspective, this shapes the character of *santriwati* to consistently project elegance, preserve honor, and uphold modesty. Furthermore, the practice of wearing fully covered attire (*brukut*) serves as a tangible expression of obedience to Islamic principles.

Character of Santri: Effective Hidden Curriculum Strategy in Islamic Boarding Schools,” *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (June 2024): 357–72, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4676>.

²² Asilatul Hanaa Abdullah, “Veiled Empowerment: The Baju Kurung as an Islamic Symbol of Modesty, Femininity, and Malay Women’s Agency in Malaysia,” *International Journal of Humanities Technology and Civilization*, November 27, 2025, 134–44, <https://doi.org/10.15282/ijhtc.v10i2.12855>; Moch Nuril Anwar and Edy Supriyono, “Analisis Konsepsi Dan Makna Busana Santri Putra Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi’iyah Sukorejo,” *Maddah: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Konseling Islam* 7, no. 1 (January 2025): 262–71, <https://doi.org/10.35316/maddah.v7i1.6675>.

²³ Syahrani et al., “Manajemen Dan Distribusi Seragam Di Pondok Pesantren Anwaha Serta Dampaknya Terhadap Disiplin Dan Identitas Santri,” *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan* 3, no. 4 (2025): 425–35, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.494>.

²⁴ Ilzam Hubby, “Nilai-Nilai Syiar Islam Dan Budaya Pada Tradisi Takbir Keliling Pondok Pesantren Krapyak Yayasan Ali Maksum Yogyakarta,” *AT-THARIQ: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Budaya* 4, no. 01 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.57210/trq.v4i01.278>.

Traditional clothing and Muslim attire in the environment of salaf *pesantren* are not merely physical complements but rather instruments of discipline that shape students' morality. The process of wearing a *jarik* involves wrapping the cloth in a circular motion around the abdomen, from left to right or vice versa, until it perfectly covers the entire lower body.²⁵ The characteristic of this rigid clothing material is intentionally designed to obscure the body's silhouette or curves, thereby maintaining self-honor. In line with Azzahra's argument, Muslim attire in this environment serves as a manifestation of moral values that construct a person's character integrity.²⁶ This dress code not only fosters the internalization of patience but also tests a high level of discipline in adhering to institutional regulations. Furthermore, the rigidity and simplicity of the clothing materials conceptually require students to adopt body gestures that are polite, modest, and that radiate normative elegance.

It can be concluded that *pesantren* culture plays a crucial role in shaping students' character. To reinforce this hypothesis, a statistical test was conducted to determine whether *pesantren* culture has a significant effect on students' character. The non-parametric Wilcoxon test was selected because the collected data did not meet the assumptions of parametric statistics. The results of the Wilcoxon test yielded an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.001, which is less than 0.05, indicating a significant effect of *pesantren* culture on students' character. This demonstrates that the *pesantren* culture influences the character formation of its students. These statistical findings are consistent with the study, which demonstrates that school culture has a positive and significant effect on student character.²⁷ Mahmud and Darmawan reported similar findings in their study on character building at An-Nur H.A. Islamic Boarding School in Rambipuji, Jember. The study confirmed that *pesantren* culture and teaching competence have a significant influence, both individually and jointly.²⁸

²⁵ Nise Samudra Sasanti and Ambaristi Hersita Milanguni, "Kimono Dan Kebaya Pakaian Adat Wanita Jepang Dan Jawa (Makna, Filosofi, Dan Fungsinya)," *Prasi: Jurnal Bahasa, Seni, Dan Pengajarannya* 19, no. 01 (June 2024): 11–21, <https://doi.org/10.23887/prasi.v19i01.68042>.

²⁶ Muthia Azzahra et al., "Busana Muslim Di Kalangan Generasi Muda: Antara Gaya Hidup Identitas Dan Pendidikan Karakter Islami," *Al-Abshor : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 1 (January 2026): 48–59, <https://doi.org/10.71242/78z9tg93>.

²⁷ Istiqomah Istiqomah, Sri Enggar Kencana Dewi, and Nor Kholidin, "Pengaruh Budaya Sekolah Terhadap Karakter Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Dasar," *Finger: Journal of Elementary School* 1, no. 1 (2022): 11–19, <https://doi.org/10.30599/finger.v1i1.94>.

²⁸ Asrori Mahmud and Didit Darmawan, "Pengaruh Budaya Pesantren Dan Kompetensi Pengajar Terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik Di Pesantren An-Nur H. A. Jember," *Nusantara: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial* 12, no. 5 (August 2025): 2212–20, <https://doi.org/10.31604/jips.v12i5.2025.2212-2220>.

This idea aligns with Bangun's view, which posits that an individual's character is shaped, in part, by their social and cultural environment.²⁹ Furthermore, he explained that societal values, religious beliefs, and local culture in one's place of residence significantly shape individual perspectives and behavior. Although this study makes a significant contribution to understanding *pesantren* culture and *santri* character, several limitations should be noted. The primary limitations are the sample size and the number of informants, which were restricted to a single *pesantren*, as well as the lack of in-depth interviews. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to expand the sample scope and gather data through more comprehensive interviews to enhance the generalizability of the findings to a broader population.

Conclusion

The findings of this study conclude that local culture at the Pondok Pesantren Al-Falah Putri Wuluhan significantly influences the formation and reinforcement of female students' (*santriwati*) character, including politeness, discipline, patience, and modesty. The internalization of these values is successfully implemented across three main domains: daily religious routines, social interaction dynamics prioritizing ethics and respect, and traditional attire regulations that embody philosophical values aligned with Islamic law. Furthermore, the validity of this positive relationship and influence between *pesantren* culture and female students' character development is scientifically supported by statistically sound tests.

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²⁹ Mic Finanto Ario Bangun, *Pendidikan Karakter Membentuk Kepribadian Anak* (Malang: CV. Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2023), <https://repository.ubharajaya.ac.id/28724/>.

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