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## THE CONTRIBUTION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENT DORMITORIES TO THE FORMATION OF STUDENT CHARACTER VALUES

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**ABSTRACTS**

**Background:** Challenges to character education in higher education are issues that must be resolved in an effort to shape student character. Student dormitories are considered a space for character development outside of academic classes. This study focuses on the contribution of student dormitories in shaping student character education with an emphasis on the aspects of orderly, polite, and caring. **Objective:** This study was conducted to see the influence of the dormitory environment in shaping student character in higher education holistically. **Methods:** This study used a mixed method approach. **Results:** The results showed that the contribution of student dormitories has a significant role in shaping student character, especially in the Faculty of Islamic Studies, through a pesantren-based education model that integrates moral, spiritual, and social values in students' daily lives. The t-test results show that the significance value of the influence of the dormitory contribution on character is below 0.05, this means that there is a significant influence between the dormitory contribution on student character building. The regression equation results show  $Y = 37.423 + 0.696X$ . This means that an increase in dormitory contribution by 1% leads to a 0.696% improvement in character development. **Conclusion:** The results of this study contribute that the implementation of a dormitory curriculum that prioritises character education as a whole is different from the approach generally found in other universities that focus more on academic aspects alone.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Character education is at the core of efforts to form human beings who excel morally, intellectually and socially. As a fundamental element in the education system, character education is not only oriented towards academic achievement, but also on the internalisation of moral values that shape individual personalities. Character education is very important in all aspects (Hannang, et.al, 2022). The implementation of character education can have a positive impact (Manullang, 2013). In higher education, character education becomes more significant because students are at a transitional stage towards adulthood. Character education is very important for students in higher education (Siregar & Nurmayani, 2022), especially in character development related to behaviour that needs attention (Siregar, et.al, 2024).

Character education is an educational effort that lasts throughout life that aims to direct humans towards perfection (Lickona, 2016). All lines must strengthen so that the identity of students is not eroded by the dynamics of the times (Pitaloka, et.al, 2021). In fact, character can decline due to inappropriate educator treatment. Character education is continuously carried out, both in primary, secondary and higher education. This education is adjusted to the phase and needs according to the level of each student. Specifically at the tertiary level, character education aims to improve the quality of education implementation and outcomes by focusing on shaping the character and morals of students in a comprehensive and balanced manner in accordance with graduate competency standards. Through this character education, students are expected to independently improve and apply their knowledge, as well as internalise character values to be reflected in their daily behaviour. Emphasis on fundamental character values is agreed upon in the implementation of character education in higher education (Choli, 2020). Not only that, there must be good management in the effort to build good character (Hadiyanto, 2018).

In higher education, character education plays an important role in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have high morality. Universities are expected to produce graduates who are able to integrate academic knowledge with character values that are reflected in their daily behaviour. Character education at this level has a strategic dimension because it contributes to improving the overall quality of education provision. As part of the university curriculum, character education aims to create individuals who are able to face complex challenges in the modern era with integrity, empathy, and a strong sense of social responsibility. In other words, character education should be able to touch various aspects of students' lives, ranging from their attitudes in social relationships, to decision-making in a professional environment (Musadad, et.al, 2024). Not only that, the role of lecturers is very important in an effort to improve student character education (Suhaida & Azwar, 2018).

The approach to character education in higher education, especially in the context of student dormitories, has significant novelty value. Although there has been a lot of research on character education in higher education, the majority of existing studies focus more on the influence of religious-based environments, such as pesantren-based colleges. Research on the role of dormitories in the formation of student character in general universities, especially those located outside the religious-based education environment, is still relatively few. This makes this research very relevant because it offers a new perspective on the role of dormitories in general universities, such as Trunojoyo University of Madura (UTM), which seeks to shape the character of students

who are more orderly, polite, and caring. In addition, by paying attention to the multicultural dynamics that exist at UTM, this research also explores how cultural and religious diversity in the dormitory environment can be used as capital to strengthen the values of tolerance, solidarity, and mutual respect.

Student dormitories, which are often perceived as just a place to live, have great potential as a social laboratory where students can learn and internalise important moral values. This research highlights how dormitories are not only a physical facility, but also a learning environment that allows interaction between students from different backgrounds. Therefore, this research brings innovation by focusing attention on the strategic role of dormitories in character education, an approach that is rarely discussed in the existing literature.

Student dormitories are one of the educational environments that play an important role in student character building. More than just a place to live, student dormitories serve as social laboratories where values such as discipline, politeness, and caring are practised first-hand. The daily interactions between dormitory residents create a unique social dynamic, which influences students' character formation. In the context of Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (UTM), student dormitories become a strategic instrument in supporting character education goals. With a multicultural environment, where students from different cultural and religious backgrounds live together, UTM dormitories create opportunities to strengthen tolerance, solidarity and mutual respect. This environment not only encourages the learning of moral values, but also facilitates the formation of social skills relevant to community life.

As a microcosm of social life, student dormitories reflect the various dynamics that occur in society at large. In the UTM Student Dormitory, the values of order, courtesy, and care are integrated through various policies and programmes. Policies such as curfew rules, attendance systems, and social activities such as Clean Friday are examples of how the dormitory environment actively instils values of discipline and responsibility. In addition, the dormitory is also a space where students learn to understand and respect differences, which is an important foundation for social harmony. These aspects show that student dormitories have an irreplaceable role in shaping students into individuals who are not only academically competent, but also have excellent character.

Research on the contribution of student dormitories in character building has been the concern of many academics, especially in the context of Islamic education. Research on boarding school-based universities shows how an educational environment based on religious values can shape student character. Research on dormitory management at Muhammadiyah Ponorogo University, highlights the importance of the role of dormitory managers in shaping students' religious character (El iq Bali, 2017). In addition, research at Ma'had Al-Jami'ah Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar and UIN Ar-Raniry shows that dormitory programmes are effective in instilling values of discipline and care (Istiqomah, et.al, 2018). However, although these studies provide important insights, most of them focus on Islamic-based universities, so there has not been much discussion on the role of dormitories in general universities such as UTM.

In this context, more specific research on the role of student dormitories in general universities, especially in shaping orderly, polite and caring characters, is important. Orderly character reflects an individual's ability to manage time, obey rules, and maintain order in various aspects of life. Polite character emphasises respect and

courtesy towards others, while caring character reflects empathy and social awareness to help others. These values, if properly instilled in the dormitory environment, can be an important asset for university students in facing the challenges of modern life. This research aims to fill the gap by exploring in depth the contribution of the UTM Student Dormitory in shaping the character of students, especially in the Faculty of Islamic Studies.

The innovation in this research lies in the development of character education programmes that not only focus on academic aspects, but also build important social skills for students. One of the innovations proposed in this research is the integration of moral and social values in the policies and programmes run in the dormitories. Programmes such as 'Clean Friday' and curfew policies, for example, not only aim to maintain order in the dormitories, but also to teach students the values of discipline and responsibility. In addition, this study also develops a new approach to measuring the success of character education in the dormitory environment by identifying more comprehensive social indicators, such as empathy, solidarity, and respect for differences. In the multicultural context of UTM, students from different cultural and religious backgrounds learn to live together in harmony. This research proposes that these differences, if managed well, can be used as strengths to build more inclusive and tolerant student characters. This makes an important contribution to the study of character education, where aspects of diversity are often overlooked.

The significance of this research lies in two main aspects. Firstly, academically, this study contributes to the character education literature by offering a new perspective on the role of dormitories in shaping moral and social values. Second, practically, the results of this study are expected to serve as a guide for dormitory managers in other universities to design more effective character building programmes. In addition, this research is relevant for policy makers in the field of higher education, who aim to improve the quality of character education in Indonesia.

To enhance its broader educational and societal relevance, this study highlights that dormitory-based character education can be applied in other higher education institutions, particularly non-religious public universities. Student dormitories may function as strategic learning environments that complement formal curricula in fostering discipline, politeness, empathy, and social responsibility. In addition, the findings offer important implications for higher education policy. Policymakers may consider integrating dormitory-based character education into national guidelines as part of a comprehensive character education framework. Recognizing dormitories as integral components of the educational ecosystem can support the development of morally grounded and socially responsible graduates.

## **B. METHOD**

The mixed-method approach strengthens the validity of this study through methodological triangulation, where qualitative data provide contextual depth and quantitative data offer measurable evidence of the dormitory's contribution to character development. Qualitative findings help explain patterns identified in the quantitative analysis, thereby enhancing the robustness and credibility of the results. This research to see the contribution of student dormitories in shaping character education through orderly, polite, and caring (TSP) characters in students. This approach was chosen to explore the social phenomena that develop in the dormitory environment through

analysing the interaction patterns and teachings applied in it. This research uses a mixed method, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2017). This combined research was conducted to obtain comprehensive results (Sugiyono, 2019). The qualitative approach is carried out to provide an overview related to character education taught in student dormitories so that Islamic character values are formed. The quantitative approach was carried out to see the significance of the influence of the contribution of student dormitories to the cultivation of student character values. This study seeks to obtain information from students related to the contribution of pesantren to the cultivation of Islamic character values experienced by certain students, namely students of the Faculty of Islam so that this study is only experienced by certain objects so that it can be said to be a case study research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2021). We also tried to get an overview of the teaching methods used in the student dormitory environment so that it affects the character of students (K Yin, 2018). This research was conducted in one of the universities in East Java, especially in the Faculty of Islam Studies, which has implemented the motto Orderly, Polite, and Caring in the faculty environment. In lecture activities, lecturers apply these characters so that good character values are embedded during lectures and outside lectures. As one of the pioneers of innovation in developing the character of Orderly, Polite, Caring (TSP), the faculty provides recommendations for Trunojoyo Madura University student dormitories to apply these characters while in the dormitory environment so that character habituation occurs in students living in student dormitories. The selection of the object of study using samples from Islamic faculty students at Trunojoyo Madura University on the assumption that students who are in the dormitory already have insight and character cultivation that has existed since the beginning of their stay in the dormitory. This research was conducted during the 2024/2025 academic year, using participants as many as 44 of Islamic faculty students who live in student dormitories. The steps in determining participants in this study are as follows: (1) we informed about the research on the contribution of student dormitories in Islamic character building; (2) we asked for consent to be involved in the research; (3) we asked 5 participants to be interviewed; (4) we asked students to fill out the questionnaire that had been given.

This research uses field data as primary data and data from scientific journals as secondary data. Field data was obtained through observation, interview, and questionnaire filling techniques. To obtain data during observation, we conducted documentation with audio and video (Cohen & Goldhaber, 2016). This research used semi-structured interviews to collect data on facts and representations discovered during oral exchanges (Albaret & Deas, 2023). Interviewees were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth of information, involving dormitory managers, lecturers, and students residing in the dormitory. Potential biases were mitigated through the use of semi-structured interview guides, data triangulation across sources, and voluntary participation, which supported transparency and reliability in the research process.

Questionnaires were given to students to obtain information related to the contribution of student dormitories to Islamic character education. The questionnaire was made using closed questions in this questionnaire (Guangul et al., 2020). The questionnaire was made using a 5-scale Likert scale consisting of (5) Strongly Agree

(SA); (4) Agree; (3) Neutral; (2) Disagree (D), and (1) Very Disagree. To ensure that the data from the questionnaire are valid and reliable, validity and reliability tests are carried out using SPSS. The blueprint of the questionnaire is in accordance with the variables used as indicators in this study:

Table 1:  
Blueprint of Student Character Education Questionnaire

No.	Variable	Indicator	No. Questions
1.	Orderly	Attend class on time	1
		Attend lectures according to the time given during the lecture	2
		Always complete assignments in an orderly manner	3
		Focus and concentrate on attending lectures	4
		Discipline in studying	5
2	Courteous	Giving a smile when meeting friends, lecturers, and educators	6
		Greeting when meeting friends, lecturers, and educators	7
		Greeting when meeting friends, lecturers, and educators	8
		Shaking hands when meeting friends, lecturers, and educators	9
		Wearing polite clothing during lectures	10
3	Caring	Pay attention to personal neatness	11
		Pay attention to class neatness	12
		Pay attention to class cleanliness	13
		Pay attention to friends' conditions	14
		Pay attention to lecturer advice	15

Table 2:  
Blueprint Questionnaire Student Dormitory Contribution

No.	Variable	Indicator	No. Questions
1.	Teaching Model	The dormitory provides systematic teaching after Maghrib prayers related to Islamic character values	16
		The dormitory provides structured studies in the formation of Islamic character	17
		The dormitory provides moral studies every week	18
		The dormitory develops religious moral values in teaching	19
		The dormitory develops human moral values in teaching	20

2	Dormitory Curriculum	The dormitory implements a weekly curriculum related to instilling religious and social moral values in students	21
		The dormitory implements a monthly curriculum related to instilling religious and social moral values in students	22
		The dormitory implements a temporal curriculum related to instilling religious and social moral values in students	23
		The dormitory implements an annual curriculum to strengthen the values of character education that are essential in the formation of quality individuals	24
		The dormitory implements a curriculum that is directly practiced in everyday life	25

Field research was conducted to obtain primary data focusing on the management pattern, programme implementation, and impact of character building in the dormitory. Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants, which included dormitory directors, dormitory supervisors, dormitory administrators, and lecturers from the Faculty of Islamic Studies. The interviews were designed to gain in-depth insights into the character building programme, the key values emphasised, and the challenges faced in its implementation. In addition, the interviews also aimed to obtain direct perceptions from the parties involved regarding the effectiveness of the coaching programme in the dormitory. Not only that, researchers also interviewed several students who lived in the dormitory related to the contribution of the dormitory to student character building.

The research stages can be seen in figure 1 below:

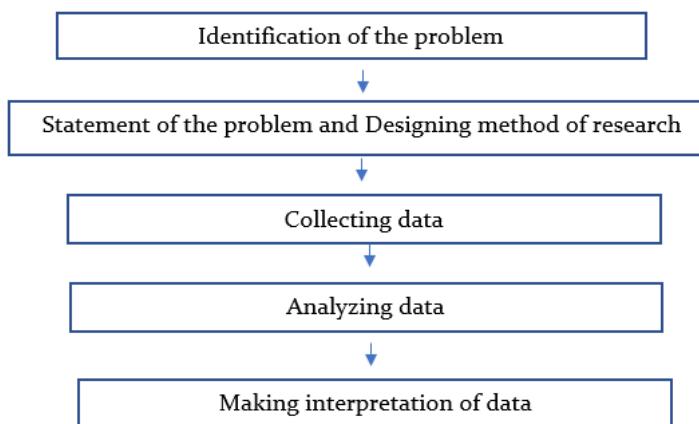


Figure 1. Steps of Research

Based on Figure 1 above, the research begins with problem identification, formulation of research problems, and determination of research design. After that, field data collection was carried out through interviews, direct observation in the

dormitory environment, and filling out questionnaires. Data analysis was conducted inductively to produce relevant and focused conclusions.

For quantitative data testing, correlation, coefficient of determination, regression, and hypothesis testing were used. The hypotheses given in this study are:

$H_0$ : There is no effect of the dormitory's contribution to character building

$H_1$ : There is an influence of the dormitory's contribution to character building

The criteria for hypothesis testing, if the sig value  $> 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted and vice versa.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### Student Dormitory of Universitas Trunojoyo Madura

The Student Dormitory at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (UTM) was first opened in the 2012-2013 academic year. Unlike student dormitories in other universities, UTM student dormitories have a unique identity as part of the development of character education with a pesantren-style model for UTM students. The function of the UTM student dormitory is not only as a comfortable, affordable and strategic place to live because it is located in the campus area, but also as an environment that supports the process of spiritual deepening, moral improvement, intellectual development, and instilling social awareness for students as the next generation of the nation who obey religious values, are noble, intelligent, professional, and care for others (Interview with Bapak Ahmad Agus Ramdlany, as The First Director of UTM Student Dormitory, 5 Mei 2024).

The development of moral and spiritual potential makes the UTM student dormitory a place to form the identity of students who are active, creative, independent, religious, sharp-minded, and professional in facing challenges in the campus and community environment. In line with this, the dormitory manager has designed coaching programmes aimed at directing students to these functions. With the aim of creating a conducive environment for spiritual deepening, moral improvement, intellectual development, and cultivation of interests and social care, the UTM student dormitory sets a vision and mission that includes strengthening faith and spirituality, developing academic abilities, supporting the development of interests and talents, and instilling empathy and social care values.

The UTM student dormitory consists of five buildings, namely buildings A, B, C, D, E. Each with four floors, of which four are occupied by female students and one by male students, namely building A. Through this vision and mission, the UTM student dormitory asserts that character building is a top priority in its management. With a focus on instilling moral and spiritual values and developing students' potential holistically, the dormitory acts as a place that not only provides a place to live, but also as an environment that supports the formation of a strong character and integrity.

### Curriculum and Programmes

Curriculum, like the governing spirit of an educational institution, plays a vital role in determining the direction and purpose of education. However, the curriculum is not just limited to written documents; shared aspirations and unspoken values are also an important part of the curriculum. Dormitory programmes, which include weekly, monthly and temporal activities, are designed to reinforce character education. The

following is one of the character education materials delivered by the speaker in the student dormitory:

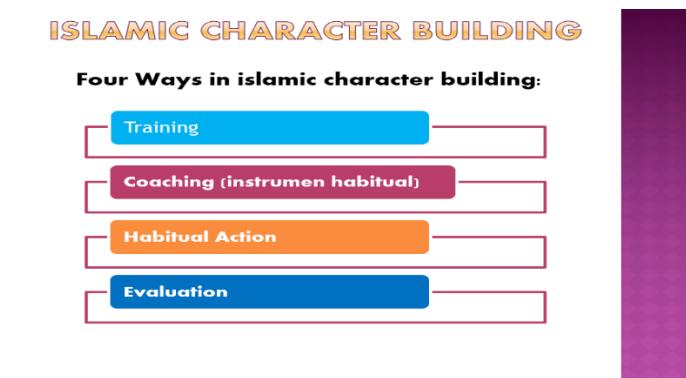


Figure 1. Character Building Material

Weekly activities include various activities such as social service to clean the environment, healthy gymnastics, as well as evaluation of the level of order and participation of dormitory members. In addition, temporal programmes are organised in response to emerging issues, such as conducting joint prayers for the Rohingya people, with the aim of instilling and strengthening the values of caring among dormitory residents.

Not only that, the dormitory also organises annual activity programmes that have a long-term impact on student character building. One of them is welcoming new students with a character motivation seminar that aims to provide an initial foundation for students to develop the character expected by the hostel. Thus, through these various programmes, the dormitory is not only a place to live for students, but also a place that strengthens the values of character education that are essential in the formation of a quality person (Interview with Mr. Sigit Dwi Saputro, Head of Character Development of the UTM Student Dormitory (2023-2027).

### Teaching Model

The teaching model is a vital knowledge transformation system in the world of education. In the Trunojoyo Madura University (UTM) Student Dormitory, a teaching model is applied that carries a face-to-face system between the ustaz who leads the study and the students who are structured in the study formula. This study activity is routinely carried out every day after maghrib until isyak by involving congregational participation. The following is one example of a routine activity carried out in the dormitory after maghrib::



Figure 2. Study Activities After Maghrib

It is important to note that these study activities are organised separately in each dormitory building, consisting of buildings A, B, C, D, and E. This is done to increase effectiveness, given the number of dormitory residents which reaches more than 1000 people, making it impossible to gather all in one study majlis (Interview with Hasbi as Head of Musahhil of UTM Student Dormitory). As stated in the schedule, the dormitory also mandates special time each week for the study of moral material. This signifies the dormitory's commitment to developing students' religious and moral aspects, as an integral part of their character education. With this teaching system in place, students are expected to develop a deeper understanding of religious and ethical values, and apply them in their daily lives. This model not only helps in improving the quality of education, but also forms a strong moral and spiritual foundation for students, which in turn will help them become better individuals in the society.

### **Habituation in the Dormitory**

The Trunojoyo Madura University (UTM) Student Dormitory makes various habituation efforts to support the internalisation of character values that have been taught through regularly scheduled routine studies. One such effort is in encouraging the value of order among its residents. In this case, the dormitory sets a curfew where all dormitory residents are required to be in the dormitory at a maximum of 22.00. The closing of the dormitory gates is announced with the sound of a thunderous siren, signalling the dormitory residents to go inside immediately. In addition, the dormitory also implements an attendance system when there are studies and official dormitory events, which is one of the assessments of student discipline while living in the dormitory and is taken into consideration in the year-end evaluation regarding the continuation of living in the UTM student dormitory (An interview with Hasbi, Head of the Musahhil of the UTM Student Dormitory, conducted on May 5, 2024).

In addition to the value of order, the dormitory also promotes the value of courtesy in its environment. This is reflected in the habit of saying smiles, greetings, and greetings to fellow boarders. When a guest arrives, the dormitory manager or musahhil will immediately meet and serve well, showing a friendly and polite attitude to every visitor. Furthermore, the dormitory also encourages the value of caring through activities such as clean Friday and room cleanliness competition moments. Room cleanliness is prioritised, with musahhil in the cleaning division responsible for regularly checking the cleanliness of residents' rooms, creating a clean and comfortable

environment for all boarders. With these various familiarisation efforts, UTM dormitories are committed to shaping the character of students who are not only academically intelligent, but also have high moral and social values (An interview with Hasbi, Head of the Musahhil of the UTM Student Dormitory, conducted on May 5, 2024).

### **The influence of student dormitories in character building**

The validity test results show that all items are valid with a sig.<0.05 value. The overall reliability test shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.6, which means reliable.

### **Hypothesis test**

The correlation test of the dormitory contribution variable on character building can be seen in table 3 below:

**Table 3. Correlation Test**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,598 <sup>a</sup>	,358	,343	3,163

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the Correlation Value is 0.598. This means that the contribution of the dormitory to character is quite strong. The coefficient of determination is 0.358, which means that the dormitory contributes 35.8% to character building.

### **Regression test**

The correlation test of the dormitory contribution variable to character building can be seen in table 4 below:

**Table 4. Regression Test**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant) 37,423	6,625		5,649	,000
	X ,696	,144	,598	4,841	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

### **The t-test**

The significance value of the t test is 0.000, this value is smaller than 0.05. Based on the above criteria, H<sub>1</sub> is accepted and H<sub>0</sub> is rejected. This means that there is an effect of the dormitory's contribution to character building.

### **Regression equation**

Based on the regression testing table, the regression equation can be seen as follows:

$$Y = 37,423 + 0,696X$$

The equation above shows that the coefficient of the dormitory contribution variable is positive 0.696, this means that there is an effect of dormitory contribution on positive character where if the dormitory contribution is increased by 1%, it will increase character by 0.696%.

### **Results of interviews with students regarding the contribution of dormitories to character building**

Interviews were conducted to see student responses to the contribution of dormitories to character building. Interviews were conducted with 5 students who were used as samples for interview activities. The results of the analysis of the interview activities show that students get a positive influence from the existence of student dormitory activities in student character building. The following are the results of the interview:

In my opinion, the dormitory is very good at forming orderly, polite, and caring characters. The studies given every night have a positive impact on me. Not only that, I am happy with the habituation carried out by the dormitory so that it forms a good character for me.

(Interview, Student 1)

I am very happy with the study material provided in the dormitory because it can help in shaping my character to be better. The customs in the dormitory are also very good and help me better understand better character.

(Interview, Student 2)

The student dormitory is good at educating us to learn character. The studies delivered by the teachers in the dormitory have been very good in shaping my character. The material presented is good and is always applied in everyday life so that I am used to behaving in an orderly, polite and caring manner.

(Interview, Student 3)

I am happy with the teaching in the dormitory. I get a lot of materials about good character education so that I become better.

(Interview, Student 4)

I am very happy with the student dormitory, I get a lot of knowledge from the programmes developed, especially in character building. I am now used to behaving well, being orderly, polite, and caring.

(Interview, Student 5)

### **Discussion**

#### **The Contribution of Student Dormitories in Shaping the Orderly, Courteous, Caring Character of Students**

Student dormitories are one of the important platforms in the higher education experience that influences students' character development and social maturity. In this context, the Trunojoyo Madura University Student Dormitory has a significant role in shaping the character of its students. As an integral part of the campus environment, the dormitory serves not only as a place to live, but also as a social laboratory where students learn about inter-individual interactions, collective responsibility, and moral values.

Student character building in Indonesia is often considered a major challenge in higher education. Student dormitories play an important role in shaping character outside the classroom, not only developing academic aspects, but also moral, social, and spiritual values. The University of Trunojoyo Madura (UTM) Student Dormitory provides an interesting example by integrating the pesantren education pattern. This model creates an environment that supports the holistic development of student character, prioritising courtesy, discipline and care. With this approach, the UTM dormitory is not only a place to live, but also a space for students to develop values that form a whole person.

Based on the qualitative analysis of the results of the discussion that has been carried out, several important points related to the curriculum, programmes, teaching models, and habituation efforts in the UTM Student Dormitory can be identified. In addition, the contribution of the pesantren education pattern applied in the dormitory is also proven to have a positive impact on student character building. The following is a more in-depth description of this.

### **Curriculum and Character Development Programme**

The UTM Student Dormitory has a series of programmes designed to strengthen character education, with activities carried out in a structured and sustainable manner. These programmes include weekly, monthly and temporal activities that focus on improving discipline, social care, and strengthening moral and religious values. For example, social service activities carried out every month are a tangible form of the hostel's commitment to student character development, where students are given the opportunity to be directly involved in social activities that support concern for others.

These programmes are not only focused on developing academic aspects, but also on building a well-rounded character. Some activities such as healthy gymnastics, evaluating the level of order, and managing a clean environment show how the dormitory encourages students to pay attention to aspects of physical health and cleanliness as part of an orderly character. This shows that character education in UTM dormitories is designed to develop students who are not only academically intelligent, but also have good life skills, character, and care for the surrounding environment.

One of the unique features of the UTM Dormitory is its ability to respond to emerging social issues by organising temporal programmes that are adaptive. For example, fundraising programmes or support for victims of natural disasters are conducted to instil broader values of social care. This programme signifies the hostel's commitment to not only prioritise routine teaching, but also to adapt to existing social conditions.

## **Teaching Model in UTM Dormitory**

One important aspect of character education in the UTM Dormitory is the implementation of a teaching model that prioritises direct interaction between students and ustaz. This model prioritises personal relationships and intense communication between students and dormitory caregivers (ustaz). Every day, students follow the study of moral material which aims to deepen their understanding of religious, ethical and moral values. This teaching model is different from the character education approach commonly found in other universities, as it emphasises the religious and ethical aspects through direct interaction.

The daily studies involve congregational participation, which not only teaches religious theory, but also provides a space for students to share their understanding and experiences related to daily life. This activity is very effective in developing students' understanding of moral and social values that must be applied in their lives, both on and off campus.

In addition to the study of moral material, the purpose of this teaching model is for students to apply the values learned in their daily lives. For example, students are trained to develop the traits of patience, honesty, and discipline, which are reflected in their routine activities, such as following curfew, keeping the dormitory clean, and avoiding unethical behaviour. Thus, teaching in the UTM Dormitory aims to create students who are not only academically smart, but also have good character in their daily lives.

## **Habituation in Dormitory Life**

Habituation is an important step in ensuring the internalisation of the character values that have been taught in the daily lives of students. UTM dormitories have ingrained habits in student life, which not only focus on discipline, but also on being friendly and polite. This habit covers several aspects, such as the establishment of a curfew, the cleanliness of the dormitory environment, and the habit of saying greetings and smiling as a form of politeness to others.

One of the habits implemented is the involvement of students in cleaning activities, both in the dormitory and in the neighbourhood. Students are trained to keep their environment clean, not only as an obligation, but as part of character building that cares about the social environment. This effort shows that character education in the UTM Dormitory is not only focused on moral aspects, but also on students' social responsibility.

Through daily habituation, UTM students are encouraged to apply the values they have learnt in their daily lives. This habituation is an important foundation for students to form smart, polite, caring characters, and have high moral values. This habit also helps students in carrying out their academic activities with a disciplined, organised and responsible attitude.

## **Dormitory Contribution to Character Building**

The UTM Student Dormitory has a positive impact on student character building, especially in terms of discipline, politeness, and concern for the social environment. The majority of informants gave a high assessment of character education in the dormitory, confirming that this approach is effective in forming students who not only excel academically, but also have good morals. This is in line with research

conducted by Basit who found the implementation of character building in the dormitory programme (Basith, 2019). This is also in line with research conducted by Ngadiyono who found the implementation of character education in midwifery students (Ngadiyono, et.al, 2016). Not only that, character education in students who come from different regions so that the multiculturalism that exists in students is a concern of the dormitory manager. This is very necessary to shape the character of students who come from different backgrounds. This is in line with the research of Susilo et.al who examined the influence of multiculturalism in character education to shape personality (Ngadiyono, et.al, 2016).

The influence of the dormitory's contribution shows that the UTM dormitory does not only function as a place to live, but also as a holistic educational institution in shaping student character. Through the integration of religious, social, and moral education that is carried out regularly, students can internalise values that are not only useful in academic life, but also in their social and spiritual lives. This is in line with research conducted by Rosyidah et.al, Hannang, et.al, Sabana, Pajarianto, et.al on character building in ma'had (Rosyidah, et.al, 2024). The results of this study indicate the influence of ma'had on character building. This is also in line with research conducted by Maimunah, et.al who found a form of integration of the application of pesantren and universities in ma'had. This is also in line with research conducted by Yusuf, et.al examining the role of ma'had management in shaping character values (Yusuf, et.al, 2024).

Not only that, this study found that dormitory managers have an important role in character building efforts through habituation and studies provided on a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis. This is in line with the research of Puteh, et.al who examined the role of dormitory managers in character building for Ma'had Al-Birr students at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar who found that there was a role for dormitory managers in character building (Puteh, et.al, 2019). Not only that, the dormitory manager also designs a curriculum tailored to the needs of students. This is in line with research related to curriculum planning in an effort to face the era of disruption in higher education, showing the importance of curriculum planning in an effort to increase the value of student character (Karim, et.al, 2024).

In teaching in the dormitory, the curriculum taught is based on Islamic values so that students who live in the dormitory have good Islamic values character, one of which is through the character of orderly, polite, caring according to Islamic values. This is in line with research conducted by Huda who found that Islamic character is built through al islam and kemuhammadiyahan (Maimunah, et.al, 2021). This research is in line with Muhammad, et.al who found that to get religious character requires good management (Muhammad, et.al, 2021). The results showed the cultivation of orderly, polite, caring character values as the foundation of students living in dormitories, this is in line with Rokim's research which found that in the letter Al-Sajdah there is the value of justice, patience, and responsibility that can be applied in everyday life (Rokim, et.al, 2024). This is also in line with Yusuf & Imawan's research which found character values in the yellow book in the formation of religious Muslim character in Indonesia (Yusuf & Imawan, 2021).

Overall, this qualitative analysis shows that the Trunojoyo Madura University Student Dormitory successfully integrates an effective character education programme. With a community-based teaching model and structured habituation, this dormitory

has a significant impact on student character building. The teaching pattern in the dormitory is proven to encourage the creation of orderly, polite, and caring attitudes among students. This research confirms that dormitories have an important role in holistic student character development, covering not only academic aspects, but also moral, social, and spiritual aspects that become the foundation of a better person. This is in line with research conducted by (Musadad & Nasik, 2017) who found that the development of orderly, polite, caring characters can be implemented in life in college.

The results of quantitative testing through the t test show that the significance value of the dormitory's contribution to character is below 0.05, meaning that there is a significant effect of the dormitory's contribution to character building. The regression equation results show  $Y = 37.423 + 0.696X$ . This means that the coefficient of the dormitory contribution variable is positive 0.696, which means that the effect of dormitory contribution on character is positive where if the dormitory contribution is increased by 1%, it will increase character by 0.696%. This is in line with research related to the effects of mentoring and counselling on character building showing a positive and significant impact in Merdeka Ibrahim's curriculum (Ibrahim, 2024).

### **Implications of the Findings: Multicultural Dormitory Environment and Character Development**

While the findings have been discussed comprehensively, it is important to further interpret their broader implications, particularly regarding the role of the multicultural dormitory environment in shaping students' tolerance and social awareness. The UTM student dormitory accommodates students from diverse regional, cultural, and socio-religious backgrounds, creating a naturally multicultural setting. This diversity serves as a lived learning space where students are required to interact, cooperate, and adapt to differences in daily life. Such interactions contribute significantly to the development of tolerance, empathy, and social sensitivity, which are essential components of character education in higher education.

From a theoretical perspective, this finding aligns with multicultural education theory, which emphasizes that exposure to diversity in authentic social contexts fosters mutual respect, inclusive attitudes, and social cohesion. The dormitory's pesantren-based model, combined with multicultural student composition, allows character education to be internalized not only through formal instruction but also through everyday social encounters. Habituation practices such as shared worship, collective activities, and communal responsibilities encourage students to transcend individual differences and develop a shared sense of belonging and responsibility.

Moreover, the positive contribution of the dormitory to character building identified in this study is consistent with previous studies on residential education and character formation. Similar research has shown that dormitory-based education models promote discipline, moral development, and social responsibility by integrating structured programs with communal living experiences. Compared to conventional character education implemented solely in classroom settings, the dormitory environment provides continuous and experiential learning opportunities, making character formation more sustainable and deeply internalized.

In comparison with prior studies on pesantren-based or ma'had education in universities, the findings of this study reinforce the argument that residential learning

environments play a strategic role in holistic student development. However, this study extends previous research by highlighting the added value of multicultural interaction within the dormitory context, demonstrating that character values such as tolerance and social awareness are not only taught but also practiced and negotiated in daily life. Overall, these implications suggest that student dormitories should be viewed as integral educational spaces rather than merely residential facilities. Universities may consider strengthening dormitory-based programs as part of institutional strategies for character education, especially in increasingly diverse academic communities. By fostering structured habituation, moral guidance, and multicultural interaction, dormitories can significantly contribute to preparing students to become socially responsible, tolerant, and ethically grounded members of society.

## CONCLUSION

The University of Trunojoyo Madura (UTM) Student Dormitory demonstrates an innovative approach to student character building, through a pesantren-based education model that prioritises moral, spiritual and social values. With curriculum integration involving structured coaching activities and various programmes such as social service and regular studies, the dormitory plays an important role in creating an environment that supports holistic student character development. This research highlights how the dormitory does not only function as a place to live, but also as an institution that has a significant contribution in shaping student character, especially in the aspects of being orderly, polite, and caring.

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be proposed for universities and dormitory managers seeking to strengthen student character education through residential programs. First, universities may adapt the UTM pesantren-based dormitory model by integrating structured character education programs into daily dormitory life. This can be achieved through the design of routine activities that combine moral instruction, social engagement, and habituation practices, such as scheduled reflective sessions, communal service activities, and regulations that promote discipline and responsibility. Second, dormitory managers are encouraged to emphasize direct and continuous interaction between students and mentors or supervisors. Similar to the role of ustaz in the UTM dormitory, trained facilitators or character mentors in other universities can serve as role models who guide students not only academically but also morally and socially. This personalized and community-based approach may be adapted flexibly according to institutional contexts, religious diversity, and cultural backgrounds of students. Third, the findings of this study can inform the design of future character education curricula in higher education. Universities may consider embedding experiential and residential learning components into formal character education frameworks, ensuring that values such as discipline, politeness, tolerance, and social care are not only taught conceptually but also practiced in everyday student life.

In particular, the integration of multicultural dormitory environments can be intentionally leveraged to foster tolerance, social awareness, and mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, the structured separation of coaching and study activities across dormitory units, as implemented at UTM, may serve as an

effective strategy for managing large student populations while maintaining instructional effectiveness. Other universities with high residential density may adopt similar decentralized learning models to enhance participation, supervision, and the internalization of character values.

Finally, these findings suggest that student dormitories should be positioned as strategic educational spaces within higher education institutions. By aligning dormitory management, curriculum planning, and character education objectives, universities can maximize the potential of residential environments in supporting holistic student development. This study thus provides a practical reference for policymakers, university leaders, and dormitory administrators in designing innovative, context-sensitive character education models. Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted at a single university, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies are encouraged to involve multiple universities and dormitories across different regions to examine the consistency and broader impact of dormitory-based character education models. Second, the sample was limited to students residing in dormitories and predominantly drawn from Islamic faculties. Further research may expand the scope by including students from various faculties and comparing residential and non-residential student populations. Such comparative studies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of dormitories in shaping student character across diverse academic and cultural contexts.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Author contributions:**

<b>Ahmad Musadad</b>	: collected data, drafted manuscript, analyzed qualitative data
<b>Khoirun Nasik</b>	: collected data, took interviews, made data transcription
<b>Shofiyun Nahidloh</b>	: collected data, took interviews, made data transcription
<b>Sigit Dwi Saputro</b>	: interpreting data, translate paper
<b>Imam Rasiman</b>	: interpreting data, translate paper
<b>Tri Pujiati</b>	: analyzed quantitative data

**Data availability:**

All of data are available in this research

**Disclaimer:**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interest or personal relationship that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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