



DEVELOPING THE INDEPENDENT CHARACTER OF FOSTER CHILDREN THROUGH THE ORPHANAGE DORMITORY CURRICULUM

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Abstrack

Curriculum is an important element in the implementation of education that functions as a guideline in the learning process to achieve educational goals effectively and systematically. In its implementation, the success of the curriculum is greatly influenced by curriculum ad-ministration and the role of teachers in shaping students' learning experiences, including character education. One of the main characters emphasized in national education goals is independence. Independent character is important to be instilled from an early age because it affects children's ability to make decisions, take responsibility for themselves, solve prob-blems, and increase self-confidence and readiness to face social life. Especially for orphaned children, independence becomes an essential aspect in enabling them to face life's challenges without dependence on others. This study aims to explore the character education curricu-lum in shaping the independent character of orphaned children. This research used a descrip-tive qualitative approach with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth in-terviews, and documentation. The results of this study indicate that the character education curriculum for students is implemented through various programs, such as psychological counseling, classroom learning activities, outdoor learning activities, independence develop-ment programs, and recreational excursions. This study recommends strengthening training for educators as well as improving the character evaluation system to support the sustaina-bility of character education programs in the dormitory.

Keywords: curriculum, character education, independence

Abstrak

Penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan dan menguraikan pendidikan dalam kurikulum asrama Yatim Mandiri yang diterapkan untuk membentuk karakter mandiri anak yatim di Jember. Pendidikan karakter, khususnya kemandirian, menjadi aspek penting dalam membekali anak yatim agar mampu menghadapi tantangan hidup tanpa kebergantungan pada pihak lain. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari pengelola asrama, pendidik dan anak-anak yatim. Hasil penelitian ini



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menunjukkan bahwa kurikulum pendidikan karakter santri diimplementasikan dalam program-programnya. Programnya seperti konseling psikologi, KBM dikelas, KBM outdoor, pembinaan kemandirian, dan rihlah rekreasi. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan pelatihan bagi pendidik serta perbaikan sistem evaluasi karakter untuk mendukung keberlanjutan program pendidikan karakter di asrama.

Kata kunci: kurikulum, pendidikan karakter, mandiri.

Introduction

Character can be understood as the morals or manners possessed by an individual or a nation. Therefore, a nation's character reflects the quality of its people's morals and manners. A nation with character is one that upholds moral values and good behavior, while a nation without character is characterized by weak morals and a lack of normative guidelines in social life. Therefore, character education is a serious and ongoing effort to instill, develop, and strengthen ethical values, both in individuals and all members of society and citizens. (Tsauri, 2015)

According to Elkind and Sweet (2004), character education is a conscious and planned effort to help individuals understand, appreciate, and apply ethical and moral values in their lives. When discussing the character traits expected of children, the primary goal is for them to be able to distinguish between right and wrong, have a strong concern for truth and justice, and have the courage to act in accordance with their moral beliefs. This attitude must be maintained even when they face pressure from their environment and various temptations that can influence their decisions and behavior. (Heri Gunawan, 2022)

Thomas Lickona states that character education is a deliberate effort to help someone understand, pay attention to, and carry out core ethical values. (Loloagin et al., 2023). According to Lickona (1991), character education includes three fundamental components, namely recognizing the values of goodness (*knowing the good*), foster a sense of love for goodness (*loving the good*), as well as realizing these values in real action (*doing the good*). Thus, character can be understood as the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, which include knowledge, attitudes, motivation, behavior, and skills that support the formation of an ethical personality. (Samrin, 2016)

Character education is an effort to instill and develop noble values in individuals through the development of positive ways of thinking, attitudes, and behavior. This process focuses not only on knowledge but also on the appreciation of moral values and their application in daily life. Through character education, individuals are expected to demonstrate behavior consistent with their identity and values, both in their relationships with God, themselves, their fellow human beings, and their environment. Their surroundings. Thus, character education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals who are moral, responsible, and able to live harmoniously in society. (Wahyuni, 2021)

The curriculum can be understood as a series of activities involving teachers and students in the learning process at school. According to S. Nasution, the curriculum is also defined as a systematic plan designed to support the smooth running of teaching and learning activities, which is under the responsibility of the school or educational institution and its teaching staff. This view suggests that the curriculum cannot be implemented immediately; it must first go through a planning

stage so that its implementation in the school environment can be directed and effective. (Mariatul Hikmah, 2022)

The curriculum is a key element in educational implementation. Education providers' understanding of the curriculum has a broad meaning, encompassing guidelines, open materials, learning outcomes, and learning experiences. One of the most significant contributing factors to the success of curriculum implementation is curriculum administration, a series of activities consciously designed and implemented, planned, and sustained to create an effective and efficient teaching and learning process to achieve predetermined educational goals. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing the curriculum. Therefore, collaboration between thorough planning and effective implementation is key to achieving educational goals. (Sawitri et al., 2023)

Regarding character education in Indonesia, the government has stipulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 3 states that national education aims to develop the potential of students to become individuals who are faithful, pious, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and responsible as democratic citizens. Independence is one of the essential goals in the implementation of national education (Safi'ah & Marhumah, 2018). The formation of independent character in children requires a structured approach so that they are able to understand, internalize, and practice independent attitudes and behaviors in everyday life. To support this process, a conducive living environment is an important factor in instilling character values, while also providing space for children to get used to positive and responsible behavior. (R. P. Cahyani et al., 2020)

In this case, Asrama Yatim Mandiri is a program that builds the independence of orphans and the poor of elementary school age through family-based guidance with the concept of boarding (yatim mandiri, n.d.). Asrama Yatim Mandiri plays a role not only as a place of care, but also as an educational institution that develops a special curriculum to shape the character of orphans as a whole. The curriculum implemented does not only focus on academic achievement, but also prioritizes learning life values, such as independence, through organized daily activities and character development programs.

However, implementing independent character building in a dormitory environment certainly presents its own challenges. While dormitories have significant potential to create a holistic and consistent educational environment, less adaptive educational approaches and children's psychosocial conditions can hinder the achievement of these goals. This study aims to examine This study explores in-depth the educational curriculum designed and implemented in character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage to foster independent character in orphans. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study seeks to present a realistic portrait of the implementation of character education in the dormitory environment, including the various challenges that arise in the process.

Method

The method in this study is descriptive qualitative. With the type of research is phenomenology. With this method, the aim is to analyze in depth the dormitory curriculum and how the implementation of the character education curriculum to shape the independent character of orphans. (Iii et al., n.d.) The study was conducted at the Jember branch of the Independent Orphanage, on Jl. Sriwijaya

no. 56, Karangrejo village, Summersari sub-district, Jember regency. This institution focuses on fostering orphans through a dormitory-based educational and family-based care approach.

The subjects of this study were dormitory managers, dormitory educators, and orphans. The researchers used several data collection techniques, namely: observation, interviews, and documentation. Meanwhile, to analyze the data, the researchers used the Miles and Hubermans model, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and verification/drawing conclusions. To ensure data validation, source and method triangulation techniques were used, namely comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation.

Results and Discussion

Implementation of the Islamic Boarding School Education Curriculum

A curriculum can be understood as a set of plans and arrangements that encompass objectives, core competencies, core materials, and learning outcomes, including the methods used as a reference in implementing the learning process to achieve competencies and educational goals. Based on various studies by experts,

The definition of curriculum can be viewed from two perspectives: the traditional view and the modern view. The traditional view views the curriculum as a collection of subjects that students must complete to obtain a diploma. In contrast, the modern view views the curriculum as the entire learning experience for which the educational institution is responsible. This encompasses activities both inside and outside the classroom, including extracurricular activities, without separation. Its implementation is not limited to the classroom, and teachers are required to adapt methods to students' needs. The main goal is to shape personality and social skills, not simply to convey subject matter. (Arsyad & Safitriani, 2024)

The curriculum serves as the primary guideline for learning and a means to achieve educational goals at every level and type of education, including Islamic boarding schools. The curriculum needs to be continually developed to keep pace with current developments. The success of curriculum implementation is greatly influenced by sound curriculum management, as an effectively structured and managed curriculum can produce competent and qualified students. (Sawitri et al., 2023)

Modern Islamic boarding school management demands that leaders be able to integrate traditional values with a planned management system. This is evident in various leading Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, which have successfully developed through a combination of Islamic boarding school traditions and modern, professional-based management. The same pattern is also implemented at the Asrama Yatim Mandiri, which uses a structured dual curriculum and systematic time management. (Anggraeni et al., 2024)

The educational curriculum at the Mandiri Orphanage combines traditional and modern perspectives. The traditional curriculum is found in the Madrasah diniah (Islamic boarding school) and the Genius Studio (Studio Genius). The modern curriculum encompasses all dormitory activities, not limited to the study room. This includes guidance and fostering the independence of orphans living in the dormitory. The primary goal is to develop independent, responsible, and disciplined personalities. This aligns with the institution's vision: (Yatim Mandiri, n.d.)

"Preparing an independent and high-achieving generation. The vision indicators are: independent: resilient and disciplined. High-achieving: intelligent and creative."

According to the dormitory management, both traditional and modern curricula are included in the teaching and learning programs and mentoring of orphans at the dormitory. These include diniah (Islamic teaching) and the genius studio. There's also a hadrah (Islamic reading) extracurricular activity. The researcher will describe this below: (Yatim Mandiri, n.d.)

Table 1. Jember Independent Orphanage Education Curriculum

Program for teaching and learning activities and guidance of boarding school students		
No	KBM/ Construction	Information
1	Psychological Counseling	Students receive counseling services with a psychologist upon their arrival or this is held periodically once a year..
2	Learning Activities in Class	The academic, religious (diniyah) and Al-Quran learning processes are carried out based on a schedule determined by the center, following the schedule of each educational unit, or adjusted to local conditions and policies.
3	Outdoor Learning	Learning outside the classroom is carried out once a week to create a fresher and more enjoyable learning atmosphere for students..
4	Extracurricular	Extracurricular activities are carried out to the maximum twice a week, according to interests and potential students. Examples include the art of hadrah, martial arts, and others.
5	Construction Independence	Students are trained to develop independent attitudes directly under the guidance of the dormitory head. Values instilled include responsibility, cooperation, politeness, and discipline.
6	Construction	These activities include morning exercise, community service cleaning the dormitory, and a monthly student holiday schedule. The maximum budget for these activities is Rp 50,000 per student from available funds..

Thus, researchers can conclude that this blend of traditional and modern curricula is an educational strategy within the curriculum of the Jember Independent Orphanage, as outlined in its teaching and learning programs and guidance. This unique combination, of course, aims to ensure that the institution's vision, mission, and programs can produce the best possible education for the orphans cared for at the Jember Independent Orphanage.

Based on the above findings, the curriculum in the boarding school is designed rationally and dynamically in accordance with scientific developments, balancing mastery of general knowledge with religious values. This curriculum reflects the classification of knowledge that has evolved with the times and is based on rational and philosophical thinking. Furthermore, the madrasa curriculum functions to optimize students' intellectual potential through contextual and systematic learning, while integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects

to create a balance between thinking skills and the practice of Islamic values. (A. E. Cahyani & Cahyani, 2025)

Implementation in the Formation of Independent Character

Education is a series of activities consciously carried out by educators for students with the aim of developing all aspects of personality, both physically and spiritually. This process occurs continuously through formal, informal, and non-formal education channels, with the primary focus on achieving happiness and internalizing noble values, both humanitarian and religious. In this context, education plays a crucial role in character formation and instilling a sense of responsibility in students. Therefore, education is the primary tool for preparing a generation capable of living optimally and purposefully in order to achieve their life goals. (Kobandaha, 2019)

According to the Ministry of National Education's Language Center, character encompasses traits, heart, nature, disposition, disposition, temperament, soul, personality, noble morals, behavior, and personality. Individuals with character exhibit personality and behavior that reflect these values. F.W. Foerster, a German pedagogue, pioneered the introduction of the concept of character in education in the late 18th century. This concept emphasizes normative, values-based education, which not only shapes individuals but also drives social change. Character is understood as the internalization of good values reflected in behavior. Personality refers to the distinctive characteristics of an individual or group, including values, morality, and the ability to face challenges. (Na'imah & Bawani, 2021)

According to the character education theory proposed by Thomas Lickona (1992), character formation is not only achieved through formal classroom learning, but also through habituation, role modeling, and the support of a conducive social environment. In this context, the Islamic boarding school curriculum, which integrates the Islamic boarding school curriculum and the general curriculum, serves as an effective means of developing the character of students comprehensively and sustainably. (Salindry et al., 2025)

Based on the above understanding of education and character, it can be concluded that character education is a conscious process in education that aims to instill and develop values, morals, ethics and personality in students, so that it is reflected in behavior and forms individuals who are responsible and able to contribute to social change.

The six-year period of elementary school is a crucial period for character development, as it provides sufficient time to form the foundation of students' personalities before they enter adolescence. The age range of 7–12, which marks the end of the period, is *golden age*. According to Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development, students are in the concrete operational stage. At this stage, children begin to think logically about real objects and situations. Because character is demonstrated through concrete actions, real-life experiences in the educational environment become an effective means of internalizing moral values and character. (Nurhayati & Langlang Handayani, 2020)

Entin also expressed a similar sentiment, stating that character education is particularly appropriate for children aged 6–11 years, as this age range experiences rapid development, both in motor skills and other aspects such as personality, morals, language, emotions, and intellect. Character education is

grounded in ethical values, including caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and respect for oneself and others. (Kurniatin, 2021)

In character education, independence is an important value that must be developed. Independence refers to an individual's ability to act without relying on others. Independent character education aims to shape the personality, morals, and mentality of students so they can complete tasks independently. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), independence means being able to stand alone, while independence encompasses three main aspects: emotional, behavioral, and moral, each of which reflects the ability to manage emotions, make responsible decisions, and understand the values of right and wrong independently. (Dwi Rita Nova & Widiastuti, 2019)

In line with the explanation previously presented, the program run by the Jember Independent Orphanage shows strong alignment, especially in terms of focusing on character development for children. This dormitory focuses on developing children between the ages of 7 and 12, which is a crucial period in the formation of basic life values, such as discipline, independence, responsibility, and noble character. According to the dormitory caretaker, there are currently 7 students living in the dormitory. They are between the ages of 8 and 12 and are in grades 3 through 6 of elementary school. (Syukur, 2025) Development is carried out comprehensively, both through religious activities, academic learning, and social activities designed to foster empathy and cooperation among each other. This approach is expected to be able to form a strong and characterful personality from an early age.

The implementation of independent character education at the Jember Yatim Mandiri dormitory can be seen in the curriculum program that has been designed by the independent orphan dormitory, namely as follows:

Counseling and psychology services

Achieving optimal educational quality requires synergy between three main components: administrative management and leadership, implementation of instructional and curricular activities, and student development through guidance and counseling services oriented toward developing independence.

If the educational process solely focuses on administrative and teaching aspects, ignoring the role of guidance, it will likely produce individuals who excel academically but who have not fully developed in the psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. Therefore, Guidance and Counseling services have a strategic and integral role in efforts to achieve national education goals as a whole (Noya & Salamor, 2020).

To optimally shape the character of the students, the dormitory caretakers and teachers implement a number of strategies aligned with the psychological approach recommended by experts. These strategic steps include: First, conducting psychological and intelligence tests to identify each student's character, temperament, and dominant type of intelligence. This mapping allows for early identification of individual potentials and weaknesses. One method used is a fingerprint-based intelligence test. Second, implementing a personal approach by caretakers and teachers to foster emotional closeness with the students, thus creating warm interpersonal relationships and enabling a deeper understanding of each student's needs. Third, providing learning related to moral values, particularly those related to positive behavior, commendable attitudes, morals, and etiquette in

daily life. This material is integrated into the morality subject, which is part of the diniah curriculum (Asrama & Mandiri, 2022). Fourth, making caretakers and teachers role models, given their role as role models in the dormitory environment. Their attitudes, appearance, and behavior directly serve as concrete examples of the internalization of character education among the students (Nida & Usiono, 2022).

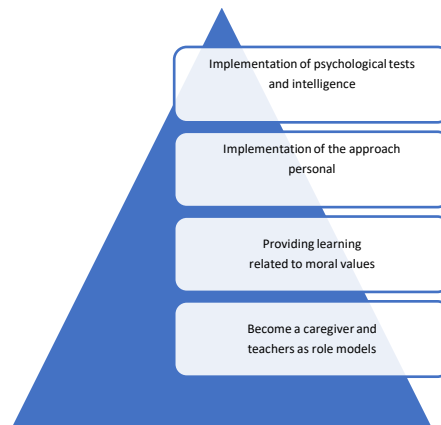


Figure 1. Counseling and Psychology Services

Classroom Learning Activities

Independence is an essential value that plays a significant role in shaping an individual's character. Fostering the value of independence in students not only provides a strong moral foundation but also reinforces ethical values such as responsibility, discipline, and honesty, which will guide their future behavior. These values are not limited to academics alone but encompass all aspects of life. In this context, the role of teachers is crucial, not just as transmitters of material learning, but also as a character and moral builder for students (Sari & Rachmadtullah, 2024).

The teaching and learning process at this institution is divided into two main categories: diniah classes and genius classes. The diniah classes are held in the evening and cover subjects such as Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Akhlaq (morality), Aqidah (belief), and Tarikh (Islamic tradition). They aim to deepen students' understanding of religious practices, character building, divine values, and Islamic history. Meanwhile, the genius classes are held in the afternoon, specifically covering mathematics and other general subjects. To support effective learning, learning modules are systematically structured to align with the curriculum objectives of both diniah and genius classes..(Thanksgiving, 2025)

Outdoor Learning

Outdoor learning is a learning method conducted outside the classroom to create a more engaging and enjoyable atmosphere. Through direct student involvement, this method provides real-life experiences that help strengthen understanding and connect theory to practice. Furthermore, this learning also creates a deep emotional connection to the material being studied (Manungki & Manahung, 2021).

In line with the statement above, Ichsanudin explained that the outdoor

learning method is a method of learning conducted outside the classroom, utilizing the surrounding environment as a learning resource. Through this method, students can directly observe objects in the open air, making the learning process more engaging and less boring. Furthermore, outdoor learning can improve the quality of learning and help address various problems that frequently arise in teaching and learning activities. (Abimanyu et al., 2024)

At the Manidri Orphanage, students are routinely invited to participate in learning activities outside the classroom at least once every two weeks to once a month to create a more refreshing learning atmosphere and prevent boredom caused by the dormitory routine. Learning locations vary, from city parks to mini zoos to the town square town squares, museums, and even dormitory courtyards. These activities are usually packaged in the form of educational games such as multiplication and division exercises, or question-and-answer quizzes as a fun and interactive means of assessing knowledge. (Laily, 2025)

Extracurricular (Extracurricular)

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 62 of 2014, extracurricular activities are activities carried out by students outside of intracurricular learning hours with guidance and supervision from the educational unit. According to Wahjosumidjo (2007), extracurricular activities are activities carried out by students outside of class hours, both at school and outside of school, to develop knowledge, talents, interests, and increase faith, national awareness, and noble morals. Based on this understanding, extracurricular activities refer to an important part of education that provides opportunities for students to develop experiences, shape character, and explore their potential outside of academic learning. (Agustina et al., 2023)

Extracurricular activities are an integral part of the student development program, conducted outside of formal school hours and tailored to individual interests and talents. Their primary function is to provide enrichment and remedial support to curriculum achievement, with an emphasis on character development. Some activities, such as hadrah and martial arts, are specifically designed to instill the values of discipline, independence, and responsibility. (Syukur, 2025)

These activities are scheduled once a week, with hadrah art held every Friday and martial arts on Saturday. Although non-academic, these extracurricular activities remain focused and do not interfere with the students' academic achievement. Instead, through active involvement in these activities, students are trained to be responsible for their assigned tasks. For example, in hadrah art, students who serve as vocalists are required to develop their voices and maintain harmonious tones, while those who play the instruments are responsible for maintaining the rhythm to produce a solid harmony in each performance. Thus, extracurricular activities help shape a solid collective character and good cooperation skills among students. (Basofi, 2025)

Based on the extracurricular activities undertaken by the students mentioned above, in line with Dyah Putri's statement, extracurricular activities play a crucial role in supporting character education because they provide hands-on experiences that can develop students' affective aspects. Through appropriate guidance, these activities serve as a means for students to develop character, mental resilience, and leadership skills. (Ekowati et al., 2021)

Independence Development

Independence can be understood as an individual's attitude and ability to act autonomously, without dependence on others. This aspect includes courage in taking initiative, self-management skills, and responsible problem-solving. Through intrinsic motivation and supportive environmental support, students are guided to make wise decisions based on personal considerations that align with their rights and obligations. This process aims to develop strong, resilient, and empowered individuals, with active guidance from caregivers and teachers within the dormitory (Herawati, 2023).

According to Erikson, independence is the process by which an individual reduces dependence on others to discover their identity and become a self-sufficient individual. According to Mulyaningtyas, independence is characterized by courage, a willingness to learn and experiment, the ability to learn from experience, a clear sense of purpose, and a responsible pursuit of those goals. (Fadil et al., 2022)

Efforts to foster independence at the Mandiri Orphanage are realized through various collective activities, such as congregational prayers, group religious studies, daily duty schedules, community service, religious education classes, and activities at the Genius Studio. These activities are designed to internalize the values of independence, which are then reflected in the students' sense of responsibility and discipline. The duty schedule is one concrete form of this habituation. Where students are directly involved in managing the cleanliness and order of the dormitory environment.

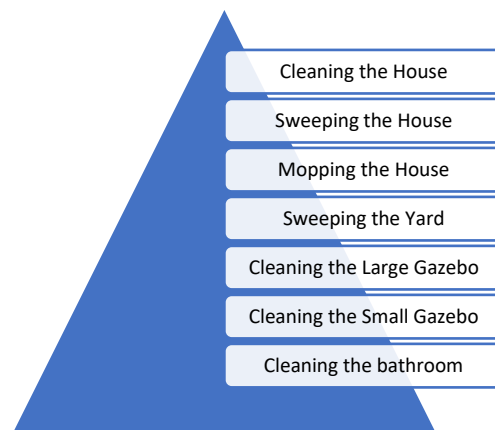


Figure 2. Development of Independence

The implementation of the clean, neat, orderly, organized, and well-maintained independence development program, reflected in the dormitory cleaning independence activities, not only aims to create a clean and organized environment, but also plays a role in fostering character values in students. Through these activities, students are encouraged to understand and apply attitudes of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and concern for the surrounding environment. These values are important elements in character education that need to be instilled from an early age so that students can develop into individuals with positive and responsible behavior in their daily lives. (Kirasti et al., 2026)

Travel and Recreational Activities

Rihlah (الرحلة) (in Arabic means "journey") and is one of the activity programs carried out by the students of the Jember Independent Orphanage. This activity aims primarily to improve the quality of faith through reflection and gratitude for the creation of Allah SWT. In addition to the spiritual aspect, rihlah also provides various social and emotional benefits, such as strengthening solidarity, strengthening Islamic brotherhood, improving the quality of worship, fostering concern for others, and building love for the environment (Said, 2023). This rihlah activity is generally carried out periodically, namely once every two weeks, once a month, or once a year, with various locations, ranging from tourist attractions around Jember to areas outside the city such as Banyuwangi. The following table contains information regarding the implementation time, distance, and purpose of the rihlah or recreation activities of the Jember Independent Orphanage students (Syukur, 2025):

Table 2. Student Recreational Activities

Time of Implementation	Frequency	Distance Traveled	Rihlah Destination
Once every two weeks	Routine	1-5 km	Sumbersari City Park, Jember Square, pond swimming, Zaiaro Assistant KH. Ahmad Siddiq
Once a month	Periodically	10-15 km	Mini Zoo, Jember beach, village durian
Once a year	Special	50-100 km	Pantai Banyuwangi, Banyuwangi Night Amazinng, pilgrimage to the saint Habib Sholeh Tanggul

The notes from the table above are: the purpose of the pilgrimage is chosen based on considerations of educational value, natural environment, and ease of access. The distance is estimated and adjusted to the location of the dormitory. The annual pilgrimage usually involves spiritual activities and joint reflection.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Based on observations and interviews, supporting factors for the implementation of independent character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage include both internal (from within the child) and external (from outside the child). Psychologically, a child's inner state of joy and comfort during certain activities facilitates the internalization of religious character values. Therefore, continuous habituation, accompanied by role models and advice, is necessary to firmly instill these values and shape the religious character of the students.

Instilling character education focuses not only on imparting knowledge but also on shaping students' attitudes and behaviors. This process requires time, consistency, and the involvement of various parties, including schools, families, and the community. Furthermore, character education needs to be supported by role models and ongoing practice so that positive values can be instilled and applied in everyday life. (Wahyuni, 2021)

External supporting factors in the implementation of independent character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage include five main aspects (Merliana et al., 2023):

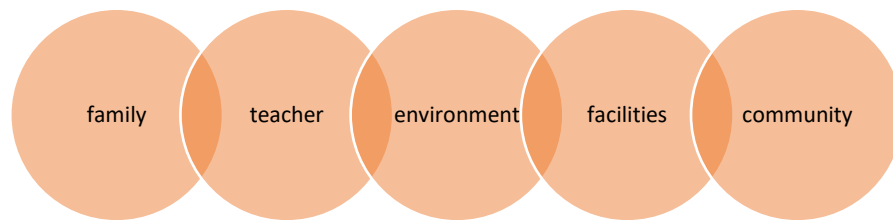


Figure 3. External Supporting Factors

Family: The family is the main foundation in instilling moral and ethical values that will shape a child's personality. Through daily interactions, parents have a great opportunity to instill values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and empathy. (Alfi & Kasanah, 2025) (Alfi & Kasanah, 2025) Family background plays an important role in shaping a child's independence. Children who have been accustomed to being responsible and doing their own chores at home are more easily able to adapt to the independent character building program in the dormitory.

Teacher Teachers play a crucial role in educating and shaping students' character. In addition to being educators, teachers are also mentors, role models, and good listeners for students. Teachers not only teach knowledge but also nurture students to become good, wise, and useful individuals for themselves and their environment. (Tanaka et al.,

(2023) Teachers are not only sources of knowledge but also role models for independence. They guide students through daily tasks, provide trust, and encourage independent decision-making in various activities.

Environment: Strengthening a character-based school culture is an important effort to create a learning environment that supports and is conducive to the development of students' character. A school culture that is built positively can be an effective means of instilling and strengthening various character values, such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and a spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance in everyday life. (Alfi & Kasanah, 2025). A school/boarding environment that supports independence—through a structured activity schedule, a system of individual and group responsibility, and a disciplined atmosphere—encourages students to develop initiative and a sense of responsibility.

Facility: The facilities provided by the dormitory, such as study rooms, cleaning equipment, and personal equipment, enable students to practice independence in managing daily activities without relying on others.

Public: Society as a social environment has an important role in the process of forming individual character from an early age. Through various social interactions, customs, traditions, and norms that develop in the community, children

and adolescents learn about various positive values, such as cooperation, tolerance, mutual respect, and honesty that become guidelines in everyday life. (Alfi & Kasanah, 2025) A social environment that encourages active interaction, both inside and outside the dormitory, also strengthens children's ability to socialize, make decisions, and act independently in everyday life.

Based on observations and interviews, the implementation of independent character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage faces several obstacles, both internal and external. Internal factors (from within the students), differences in character, educational background, experience, and the students' home environment also influence the extent to which children are able to accept and implement independent character development. Some students demonstrated readiness and skills in self-management, but some still have difficulty being responsible, taking initiative, and completing tasks without direct guidance. External factors (from outside the student), several external factors also pose challenges in implementing an independent character, including:

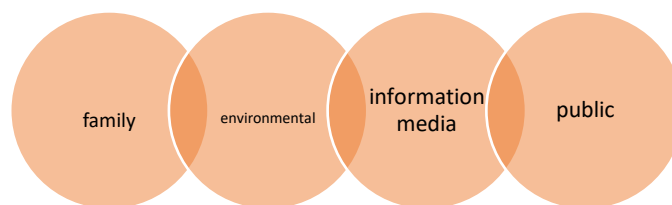


Figure 4. External Inhibiting Factors

Family: Lack of habituation to independent living from within the family environment can cause children to become dependent on others and have difficulty adapting to the fostering pattern in the dormitory.

School/Boarding Environment: Disharmony in coordination between the dormitory head, teachers, and students can hinder the character building process, especially in terms of discipline and responsibility.

Information Media: In the digital era, social media has become a means that is easily accessible to almost everyone to obtain and share information. The development of social media provides convenience, freedom, and diversity of access to information without many restrictions. Therefore, increasingly rapid technological advances require every individual to be able to adapt so as not to be left behind by the times. (Purnamasari, 2025) Free access to technology such as mobile phones and the internet without adequate supervision can divert students' focus from independent activities, foster a passive attitude, and reduce productivity. Phenomena such as cyberbullying, social media addiction, and access to negative content have become serious problems that affect the psychological well-being, morals, mental health, and social relationships of the younger generation. This shows that technological advances not only bring benefits, but also require special attention in moral and ethical education. (Paramansyah et al., 2024)

Public: A social environment that does not encourage an independent attitude or actually strengthens dependency can weaken the process of internalizing the values of independence that have been instilled in the dormitory.

The implementation of independent character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage is influenced by internal and external factors. Internally,

the child's positive psychological state, consistent habits, and role models from the surrounding environment support the process of developing independent character. Meanwhile, external supporting factors include the role of family, teachers, the dormitory environment, the availability of facilities, and interactions with the community, which encourage children to be responsible, take initiative, and be independent. However, this process also faces obstacles. Internal factors such as differences in student character and background mean that not all children are ready to undergo optimal independence development. External obstacles include a lack of independent habits at home, poor coordination, and less effective in the dormitory environment, negative influence of information media, and a social environment that does not support strengthening the values of independence.

Conclusion

Thus, researchers can conclude that the combination of traditional and modern curriculum is an educational strategy in the curriculum of the Jember Independent Orphanage which is stated in the teaching and learning programs and guidance. So that a unique combination occurs, of course, with the aim that the vision and mission of the institution with its programs can produce the best education for orphans who are fostered at the Jember Independent Orphanage. Character education is a conscious process in education that aims to instill and develop values, morals, ethics and personality in students, so that they are reflected in behavior and form responsible individuals and are able to contribute to social change.

Character building at the Jember Independent Orphanage is carried out in an integrated manner through informal and formal approaches. Guidance is carried out comprehensively, both through religious activities, academic learning, and social activities designed to foster empathy and cooperation among others. This approach is expected to be able to shape strong and characterful individuals from an early age. The implementation of independent character education at the Jember Independent Orphanage can be seen in the curriculum program that has been designed by the independent orphanage, namely: counseling and psychological services, in-class teaching and learning, outdoor learning (outdoor classes), extracurricular activities (ekkul), independence development and travel and recreation activities.

The supporting and inhibiting factors for independent character education in Jember's independent orphanage are influenced by both internal and external factors. Internally, the children's positive psychological well-being, consistent habits, and role models from the surrounding environment support the process of developing independent character. Meanwhile,

Supportive external factors include the role of family, teachers, the dormitory environment, the availability of facilities, and interactions with the community, which encourage children to be responsible, take initiative, and be independent. However, this process also faces obstacles. Internal factors such as differences in student character and background mean that not all children are ready to undergo optimal independence development. External obstacles include a lack of independence habits at home, ineffective coordination within the dormitory environment, the negative influence of information media, and a social environment that is less supportive of strengthening independence values.

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