

## INTEGRATION OF PESANTREN-BASED ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN STRENGTHENING THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF MAHASANTRI

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### Abstract

Islamic higher education is required to produce graduates who combine academic competence with strong Islamic character. This study examines the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum in strengthening mahasantri character in line with the vision of Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan: developing santri-oriented leaders, entrepreneurs grounded in *rahmatan lil-'alamin*, graduates with a global outlook, and individuals with *akhlak al-karimah*. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving curriculum administrators, Arabic language lecturers, and mahasantri. Data were analyzed using an interactive model of data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that pesantren values are systematically integrated through the alignment of institutional vision, learning outcomes, contextual teaching materials, and lecturers' role modeling. This integration strengthens santri leadership through *maharah al-kalam*, fosters an entrepreneurial mindset oriented toward *maslahah*, enhances global awareness through academic Arabic proficiency, and internalizes *akhlak al-karimah* through ethical learning practices. The study confirms that a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum serves as a strategic instrument for holistic character formation in Islamic higher education.

**Keywords:** *Arabic language education, pesantren-based curriculum, character education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

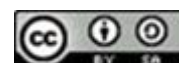
Islamic higher education in Indonesia is currently confronted with increasingly complex challenges in the context of globalization and the development of a knowledge-based society. Universities are not only expected to produce graduates who excel academically and possess

strong professional competencies, but also individuals who demonstrate religious character, academic ethics, and a solid Islamic personality. A growing body of research indicates that higher education systems that overly emphasize cognitive achievement and technical skills risk marginalizing the affective and moral dimensions of student development, thereby contributing to ethical issues and value degradation within academic life (OECD, 2020; Fullan et al., 2021). This condition underscores the need for models of Islamic higher education that integrate academic excellence with character formation in a balanced and sustainable manner.

One approach considered relevant and contextually appropriate is the integration of pesantren values into the Islamic higher education system. Pesantren, as the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, possess a long-standing tradition of character formation through moral exemplification (*uswah*), habituation (*ta'lim wa ta'wid*), and the internalization of values such as sincerity, discipline, simplicity, responsibility, and respect for scholarly authority (Nata, 2021; Zarkasyi, 2020). The integration of pesantren traditions within higher education institutions has given rise to the concept of *mabasantri*, referring to university students who simultaneously undergo formal academic education and character development grounded in pesantren culture. This model offers a holistic educational approach that connects academic, moral, and spiritual dimensions within a unified educational ecosystem (Azra, 2020; Hasan, 2021).

Within this framework, Arabic Language Education (PBA) occupies a strategic position in strengthening *mabasantri* character. Arabic is not merely understood as a means of communication, but also as the language of religion and scholarship that provides access to Islamic sources and the classical intellectual heritage (*turath*). In pesantren contexts, Arabic language learning functions as a medium for internalizing Islamic values through the study of classical texts, religious practices, and the habituation of daily religious life (Madkur, 2019; Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2021). Recent studies indicate that integratively designed Arabic language instruction can significantly contribute to the simultaneous development of students' cognitive, affective, and spiritual competencies (Jiang et al., 2022; Alrabadi & Alshumaimeri, 2021).

Therefore, the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum holds strong potential as a strategic instrument for strengthening *mabasantri* character in Islamic higher education. The urgency of character education is also aligned with national educational policy, particularly Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education, which emphasizes the integration of character values into curricula, learning processes, and institutional culture. From the perspective of Islamic education, the primary objective of education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but the formation of morally upright individuals (*the good and virtuous person*) (Al-Attas, 2020; Halstead, 2021). In this regard, contemporary scholarship



highlights that effective character education must be embedded within the curriculum and everyday educational practices rather than delivered as a separate subject (Berkowitz & Bier, 2021; Arthur et al., 2022). An integrative approach enables character values to be consistently internalized through learning materials, pedagogical interactions, and the moral exemplification of educators.

Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan (UNSUDA), as a pesantren-based university, provides a distinctive institutional context for implementing such integration. Grounded in the vision of Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat, UNSUDA is committed to producing graduates who embody a santri identity, demonstrate moral integrity, possess an entrepreneurial spirit inspired by *rahmatan li al-'alamīn*, and maintain a global outlook. The Arabic Language Education program serves as a strategic arena for realizing this vision through learning processes that extend beyond formal classroom instruction and are reinforced by pesantren activities such as classical text studies, muhadastah, and the habituation of Islamic ethics in the daily lives of *mabasantri*.

This context positions UNSUDA as a relevant empirical setting for examining the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum within the practice of Islamic higher education. Previous studies on Arabic Language Education have largely concentrated on linguistic aspects, instructional strategies, and learning media, while research on character education has often been conducted independently of language curriculum studies (Rahman, 2020; Mahmud & Sanusi, 2021). Empirical research that specifically examines the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum in strengthening *mabasantri* character at the higher education level remains limited. Moreover, studies that connect curriculum planning, instructional implementation, and students' meaning-making processes within a single integrated analytical framework are still scarce. This situation indicates a clear research gap that warrants further scholarly investigation.

In response to this gap, the present study focuses on the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education curriculum at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan and its contribution to strengthening *mabasantri* character. This study not only analyzes curriculum documents and instructional practices, but also explores how such integration is understood and internalized by *mabasantri* within both academic and pesantren contexts. Accordingly, this research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of integrative Arabic language curriculum studies and practically to the advancement of pesantren-based models of Islamic higher education that are responsive to contemporary educational challenge.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### **A. Integrated Curriculum in Islamic Education**

An integrated curriculum refers to an educational approach that systematically connects learning objectives, content, instructional methods, and assessment into a coherent and unified system. This approach avoids fragmented learning and promotes contextual and meaningful understanding for students (Sanjaya, 2021). In Islamic education, curriculum integration extends beyond academic coherence. It integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions to develop students' intellectual competence and religious character simultaneously (Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2022).

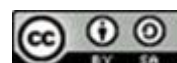
Philosophically, the integrated curriculum is grounded in the Islamic concept of tawhid, which views knowledge as a unified entity originating from Allah. Therefore, separating religious knowledge from general sciences contradicts Islamic epistemology (Al-Attas, 2020). This paradigm integrates revelation, rational inquiry, and empirical experience as complementary sources of knowledge and emphasizes moral values as the primary goal of education (Rahman et al., 2023). Empirical studies demonstrate that integrated curricula enhance conceptual understanding and strengthen the internalization of Islamic values in students' daily lives (Yusuf et al., 2024). The main characteristics of an integrated curriculum include holistic development, interdisciplinary integration, character orientation, and contextual relevance. This model emphasizes both academic mastery and character formation through meaningful learning experiences (Sanjaya, 2021; Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2022).

### **B. Pesantren Curriculum and Its Educational Values**

The pesantren curriculum represents a distinctive Islamic educational system designed to develop religious scholarship and moral character. It evolves through traditions, teaching practices, and value systems transmitted across generations (Nata, 2021). Its primary characteristics include spiritual development, mastery of classical Islamic texts, the central role of the kiai as a role model, and character formation through residential life (Suharto, 2020).

Pesantren education emphasizes core values such as sincerity, simplicity, independence, brotherhood, and respect for teachers. These values shape students' moral integrity, discipline, and social responsibility (Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2022). Previous studies confirm that the internalization of pesantren values contributes significantly to students' religious character and academic ethics (Yusuf et al., 2024).

Value internalization occurs through both formal instruction and daily habituation. Traditional learning methods, such as sorogan, bandongan, and halaqah, function not only as instructional techniques but also as character-building mechanisms (Suharto, 2020). In addition,



the hidden curriculum, reflected in teachers' role modeling and the pesantren environment, plays a crucial role in shaping students' character (Rahman et al., 2023).

In the context of Islamic higher education, the pesantren curriculum provides a relevant model for integrating academic competence and character development. This integration supports the production of graduates who possess both intellectual capability and strong Islamic character (Hidayat & Nata, 2021).

### **C. Curriculum Integration as a Strategy for Strengthening Mahasantri Character**

The integration of a pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum aims to combine linguistic competence with Islamic character development. Arabic serves not only as a communication tool but also as the language of Islamic teachings and scholarship (Nata, 2021). Therefore, Arabic language instruction should integrate linguistic skills with Islamic values. Curriculum integration is reflected in learning objectives, materials, teaching methods, and assessment. Learning objectives include language proficiency and character formation. Instructional materials incorporate Islamic texts, allowing students to learn language and values simultaneously (Suharto, 2020).

Instructional strategies combine traditional pesantren methods with modern communicative approaches. This combination enhances both language proficiency and intellectual attitudes (Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2022). Assessment evaluates both linguistic competence and character development (Yusuf et al., 2024). Curriculum integration in Arabic language education plays a strategic role in character development. Arabic provides direct access to Islamic sources, which strengthens students' religious awareness and spiritual commitment (Hidayat & Syafe'i, 2022). In addition, Arabic learning promotes discipline, responsibility, and independent learning through structured academic processes (Yusuf et al., 2024). Academic activities, such as Arabic text discussions, enhance critical thinking and intellectual engagement (Rahman et al., 2025).

Pesantren-based curriculum integration also develops students' social and leadership skills. The pesantren environment promotes cooperation, ethical communication, and moral integrity (Suharto, 2020). Therefore, integrating a pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum represents an effective strategy for developing graduates who possess both academic competence and strong Islamic character.

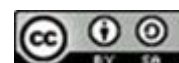
Despite the growing body of research on pesantren-based education and Arabic language instruction, significant gaps remain in the literature. Most existing studies address either linguistic dimensions of Arabic language learning or character education as separate fields of inquiry (Rahman, 2020; Mahmud & Sanusi, 2021). Studies that specifically examine the integration of a

pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum at the higher education level particularly within the institutional context of a pesantren-affiliated university are notably limited. Furthermore, while prior research has explored curriculum planning or instructional strategies in isolation, studies that connect curriculum design, classroom implementation, and students' internalization of values within a unified analytical framework remain scarce (Filando et al., 2025; Hanifa & Mad Ali, 2025). The present study addresses this gap by examining how pesantren values are systematically integrated across all curricular dimensions at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan and how this integration is experienced and internalized by mahasantri. This study therefore contributes both a contextually grounded empirical account and a theoretical model of integrative Arabic language curriculum development in Islamic higher education.

### 3. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum in strengthening the character of *mahasantri* at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan. A qualitative case study was selected to gain an in-depth and contextual understanding of curriculum integration as it occurs in its natural institutional setting, particularly in relation to values internalization and character formation. The research site was Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan, a pesantren-based higher education institution that integrates pesantren traditions into its academic system. The research was conducted during the 2024/2025 academic year, spanning the period from February to May 2025. The participants were selected through purposive sampling, involving individuals who were directly engaged in the design, implementation, and experience of the curriculum. They consisted of Arabic Language Education lecturers, curriculum developers or program administrators, and mahasantri enrolled in the Arabic Language Education program. Additional participants, such as pesantren caregivers or student activity supervisors, were involved when necessary to enrich the data. Participant selection continued until data saturation was achieved. In total, the study involved 18 participants: 6 Arabic Language Education lecturers, 3 curriculum administrators or program coordinators, and 9 mahasantri from the second and fourth semesters of the Arabic Language Education program.

Data were collected through triangulated techniques, including in-depth semi-structured interviews, classroom and activity observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted to capture participants' perspectives and experiences regarding curriculum integration and character development. Observations focused on teaching-learning interactions, pesantren-based learning practices, and character-building activities. Documents analyzed included curriculum frameworks, course syllabi, lesson plans, institutional policies, and learning materials



related to Arabic language instruction and pesantren activities. Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The process was conducted concurrently with data collection to allow continuous refinement of emerging themes. Data credibility was ensured through methodological and source triangulation, member checking, and systematic documentation of the research process to maintain trustworthiness and analytical rigor

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

This section presents the research findings obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis related to the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum in strengthening the character development of students at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan. Data analysis was conducted using a source triangulation approach involving three groups of research participants, namely curriculum administrators, lecturers of Arabic Language Education, and students of the Arabic Language Education (PBA) study program. This approach enabled the researcher to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the planning, implementation, and impacts of curriculum integration from policy, pedagogical, and learning experience perspectives.

##### **A. The Integration of the Arabic Language Education Curriculum as an Instrument for Realizing the Pesantren Vision**

The research findings indicate that the integration of the pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan functions not only as a means of academic reinforcement but is also strategically directed toward realizing the vision of the pesantren. This vision emphasizes the formation of future leaders with a santri-oriented personality, an entrepreneurial spirit grounded in the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, global insight, and noble moral character (*akhlak karimah*). Based on interviews with curriculum administrators, the integration of pesantren values into the PBA curriculum is perceived as an essential instrument for shaping the identity of students as prospective leaders. The cultivation of a santri personality is manifested through the emphasis on ethical conduct in the pursuit of knowledge, discipline, responsibility, and academic communication ethics across all Arabic language courses. These findings demonstrate that Arabic language learning is positioned as a medium for the internalization of leadership values grounded in exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*).

Furthermore, the analysis of curriculum documents and course syllabi reveals that the orientation toward entrepreneurship based on the principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* is reflected in the selection of instructional materials and contextual learning activities. The Arabic texts

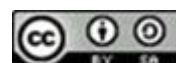
employed do not merely address classical religious themes but also encompass contemporary social issues, the economic empowerment of the Muslim community, and Islamic leadership. This indicates that the Arabic Language Education Curriculum is deliberately designed to foster students' productive, solution-oriented perspectives and their commitment to promoting public benefit (*maslahah*). The aspect of global insight is reflected in the emphasis on Arabic communication competence as an international language of the Muslim world. Curriculum administrators emphasized that Arabic language proficiency is not solely intended to serve the local needs of the pesantren, but also to equip students with the ability to engage with global scholarly discourses, both through contemporary Arabic literature and international academic forums. This finding is further supported by the presence of learning outcomes that target students' abilities in textual analysis and academic communication across diverse contexts.

Meanwhile, *akhlak karimah* emerges as the most dominant dimension in the integration of the pesantren-based PBA curriculum. Interview and observational data indicate that PBA lecturers function not only as instructors but also as role models in terms of attitudes, ethics, and academic behavior. Students perceive that Arabic language learning has a direct influence on the development of polite conduct, academic integrity, and personal responsibility, which constitute the foundational elements of santri character formation. Overall, the findings of this study confirm that the integration of the pesantren-based PBA curriculum serves both pedagogical and ideological functions in realizing the vision of the Pesantren and Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan. The curriculum operates not merely as an administrative framework, but as a strategic medium for shaping students into prospective leaders who embody santri values, entrepreneurial spirit, global awareness, and noble moral character (*akhlak karimah*).

Table of Affirmed Findings on the Integration of the Arabic Language Education Curriculum and Pesantren Vision:

**Table 1**  
**Integration of the Arabic Language Education Curriculum in**  
**Realizing the Pesantren Vision**

<b>Pesantren Vision Dimensions</b>	<b>Forms of Integration in the Arabic Language Education Curriculum</b>	<b>Their Impact on Student Character</b>
Santri Personality	Integration of values of <i>adab</i> , discipline, and scholarly ethics into Program Learning Outcomes (CPL), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), and <i>maharab</i> learning materials	The development of polite attitudes, rule compliance, and ethical conduct in the learning process
Santri Leadership	<i>Maharab al-kalam</i> materials emphasizing leadership, responsibility, and ethical communication	Increased self-confidence and the ability to communicate responsibly
Entrepreneurship Based on <i>Rahmatan lil</i>	Development of texts and language-based tasks addressing pesantren	The growth of productive, solution-oriented, and



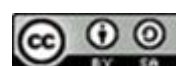
<i>'Alamin</i>	economic independence and social da'wah	<i>maslahah</i> -oriented mindsets
Global Insight	Strengthening academic Arabic language competence and comprehension of contemporary Arabic texts	Students are able to engage with global Islamic discourse and modern Arabic literature
Akhlikul Karimah	Lecturer role modeling and habituation of Islamic ethics in Arabic language learning	The development of academic integrity and personal responsibility

The findings indicate that the integration of the pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum is aligned with an integrative character education approach that combines academic learning with character formation (Nucci et al., 2020). The incorporation of values such as adab, discipline, and scholarly ethics into Program Learning Outcomes (CPL), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), and Arabic materials demonstrates that the curriculum functions as a systematic instrument for shaping santri character. In terms of leadership, the integration of leadership themes and ethical communication within maharah al-kalam corresponds with transformational leadership theory in education, which emphasizes the development of students' self-confidence and responsibility (Leithwood, 2021). Meanwhile, the entrepreneurial orientation grounded in the principle of rahmatan lil 'alamin reflects the framework of social entrepreneurship education, which promotes independence, social responsibility, and public benefit (Hockerts, 2021; OECD, 2023).

The strengthening of academic Arabic competence supports the concept of global competence in higher education, particularly in enabling students to engage with cross-cultural scholarly discourse (OECD, 2020; Deardorff, 2022). Furthermore, the prominence of akhlaq karimah highlights the significance of lecturer role modeling as an effective strategy for character education (Koesoema, 2020; Lickona & Davidson, 2021). Overall, the integration of the pesantren-based ALE curriculum constitutes a holistic educational model that effectively realizes the pesantren vision through the development of character, leadership, entrepreneurship, global awareness, and moral integrity.

### **B. Implementation of the Integration of the Pesantren-Based Arabic Language Education Curriculum in Learning Activities**

The research findings indicate that the development of instructional materials for the courses maharah al-kalam, maharah al-qira'ah, and maharah al-kitabah does not rely solely on standardized textbooks, but is contextually designed by Arabic Language Education (PBA) lecturers. The materials are developed by integrating themes, values, and distinctive characteristics of Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat as the foundational content of Arabic language learning.



Based on interviews with PBA lecturers, material development is carried out through the selection and adaptation of texts, dialogues, and language tasks that incorporate pesantren-related themes, santri leadership, pesantren economic self-reliance, and the values of akhlaq karimah. This approach is intended to ensure that the acquisition of Arabic language skills proceeds in parallel with the internalization of pesantren values that constitute the institution's identity. In the maharah al-kalam course, lecturers develop conversational (*himar*) materials and speaking practices centered on santri life, social ethics, leadership, and pesantren entrepreneurial activities. These materials encourage students not only to develop speaking fluency but also to habituate the use of Arabic within the value-laden and cultural context of the pesantren.

Meanwhile, in the *maharah al-qira'ah* course, lecturers design and select Arabic reading texts related to the history of Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat, biographies of pesantren figures, the values of *da'wah rahmatan lil 'alamin*, and socio-religious issues. These texts function as a means of strengthening students' reading comprehension while simultaneously instilling Islamic values and global insight.

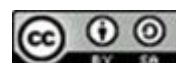
In the *maharah al-kitabah* course, material development is directed toward descriptive, narrative, and argumentative writing exercises grounded in pesantren themes. Students are assigned to write reflections, short essays, and reports on pesantren activities in Arabic. These findings indicate that writing skills are positioned not merely as linguistic competence but also as a medium for expressing values, ideas, and santri identity.

Overall, the instructional materials developed by PBA lecturers can be categorized as context-based, teacher-developed materials rooted in pesantren culture. This practice demonstrates that the integration of the pesantren-based PBA curriculum is not limited to the planning stage but is concretely manifested in the learning content directly experienced by students.

The table below presents the research findings on the development of *maharah* learning materials in the Arabic Language Education (PBA) study program:

**Table 2**  
**Development of Pesantren-Based Instructional Materials in the Arabic Language Education Program**

Course	Forms of Material Development	Pesantren-Specific Themes	Impact on Student Character
Maharah al-Kalam	<i>Himar</i> , role play, presentations	Santri life, leadership, pesantren entrepreneurship	Self-confidence, communicative competence, ethical speaking
Maharah al-Qira'ah	Adaptive and contextual texts	History of Sunan Drajat, <i>da'wah rahmatan lil 'alamin</i>	Value comprehension, global awareness



Maharah al-Kitabah	Essays, reflections, reports	Pesantren activities, <i>akhlak karimah</i> values	Responsibility, academic integrity
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The findings indicate that the development of *maharah* instructional materials in the pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) program adopts a contextual and integrative learning approach, in which language skill acquisition is closely aligned with value internalization and character formation (Nucci et al., 2020). The use of *hikmah*, role play, and presentations in *maharah al-kalam* corresponds with communicative language teaching, promoting students' self-confidence, communicative competence, and ethical speech (Richards, 2021). Meanwhile, the use of adaptive texts in *maharah al-qira'ah* reflects a critical literacy perspective that enhances value comprehension and global awareness (Luke, 2021), while reflective writing tasks in *maharah al-kitabah* align with the concept of writing as meaning-making, fostering responsibility and academic integrity (Hyland, 2022). Overall, these findings affirm that pesantren-based *maharah* material development strengthens a holistic model of Arabic language learning oriented toward character development in line with the pesantren vision.

### C. The Contribution of Pesantren-Based Arabic Language Education Curriculum Integration to the Strengthening of Student Character

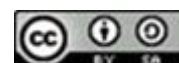
The research findings indicate that the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum contributes significantly to the strengthening of mahasantri character as part of efforts to realize the vision of Pondok Pesantren and Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan. From the mahasantri's perspective, Arabic language learning that is integrated with pesantren values is not solely oriented toward the mastery of linguistic competencies, but also toward the formation of attitudes, habitual practices, and value awareness within both academic and religious life. Mahasantri perceive Arabic not merely as an academic subject, but as a medium for the internalization of values such as *adab* (ethical conduct), discipline, and responsibility. Learning practices including the habituation of polite Arabic language use, lecturers' role modeling in ethical behavior, and the selection of instructional materials containing moral and Islamic values directly contribute to the development of mahasantri personalities characterized by *akhlak al-karimah*. These findings affirm that the integration of the Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum functions as a cultural instrument that bridges pesantren traditions with the higher education system.

The contribution to character strengthening is particularly evident in the implementation of specific courses, one of which is Nahwu. Based on observations and interviews with lecturers and mahasantri, Nahwu instruction is designed not only to develop students' understanding of Arabic grammatical rules, but also to cultivate discipline, meticulousness, and academic responsibility. The process of analyzing sentence structures and determining *i'rab* requires mahasantri to be

Careful, patient, and deliberate. Errors in understanding a single grammatical rule are recognized as having implications for overall meaning, thereby encouraging mahasantri to engage in systematic and responsible learning practices. In addition, Nahwu instruction also cultivates attitudes of humility (*tawadu'*) and intellectual openness. Mahasantri become accustomed to receiving corrections from lecturers and peers during classroom discussions, which aligns with pesantren values emphasizing respect for scholarly authority and academic ethics. Accordingly, the Nahwu course contributes not only to the strengthening of linguistic competence but also to the formation of mahasantri character marked by ethical conduct and moral integrity.

The reinforcement of leadership character and self-confidence is also evident in the learning of *maharab al-kalam*. Lecturers develop Arabic speaking materials around themes of leadership, ethical communication, social responsibility, and the distinctive values of Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat. Through presentations, dialogues, and Arabic-language discussions, mahasantri are encouraged to participate actively, communicate effectively, and express their ideas confidently yet respectfully. These practices foster self-confidence, leadership qualities, and ethically grounded communication skills, in line with the pesantren's vision of producing future leaders with a santri-based character and a global outlook. Within the framework of the vision to cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit grounded in *rahmatan lil-'alamin* values, the integration of the Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum also promotes productive and solution-oriented mindsets. Mahasantri reported that several Arabic language learning materials are linked to themes of self-reliance, social service, and public benefit (*maslahah*). This finding indicates that the Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum not only fosters religious character but also instills social awareness and an orientation toward meaningful contributions to society.

Nevertheless, this study also identifies several challenges in the process of character strengthening. Some mahasantri experience limitations in language proficiency and difficulties in adapting to pesantren-based learning methods, particularly those without prior pesantren educational backgrounds. This condition suggests that character formation through curriculum integration requires continuous pedagogical support, consistent habituation, and adaptive instructional strategies that accommodate the diversity of students' educational backgrounds. Overall, the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum is proven to make a tangible contribution to shaping mahasantri character characterized by ethical conduct, discipline, communicative competence, responsibility, and orientation toward public benefit. This contribution is consistent with the vision of Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat and Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan to produce graduates with a santri identity, leadership capacity, global insight, and *akhlaq al-karimah*. However, the optimization of this contribution is



highly dependent on the consistency of curriculum implementation and the availability of well-planned and sustainable pedagogical support.

The findings of this study regarding the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum and the strengthening of mahasantri character are presented as follows:

**Table 3**  
**Findings on the Integration of a Pesantren-Based Arabic Language Education (PBA) Curriculum and the Strengthening of Mahasantri Character**

Focus of Findings	Curriculum Integration Practices	Formed Character Values	Relevance to the Vision of the Pesantren and the University
Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum planning	Alignment of the university's vision and mission, graduate profile, and Program Learning Outcomes with pesantren values; the incorporation of <i>adab</i> and moral values into learning objectives	<i>Adab</i> , responsibility, academic ethics	Developing graduates with a santri-based identity and <i>akhlak al-karimah</i>
Implementation of Arabic language learning	Integration of pesantren values through instructional materials, teaching methods, and lecturers' role modeling	Discipline, responsibility, religiosity	Strengthening santri character within the higher education system
Nahwu course	Analysis of grammatical rules and <i>I'rab</i> based on <i>turat</i> texts distinctive to Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat	Meticulousness, patience, academic honesty, <i>tawadu'</i>	Forming disciplined, ethical, and academically oriented santri
Nahwu course	Analysis of grammatical rules and <i>I'rab</i> based on <i>turat</i> texts distinctive to Pondok Pesantren Sunan Drajat	Meticulousness, patience, academic honesty, <i>tawadu'</i>	Forming disciplined, ethical, and academically oriented santri

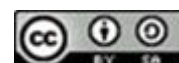
The findings of this study indicate that the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum plays a strategic role in strengthening mahasantri character through a systematic process ranging from curriculum planning to instructional implementation. The alignment of the university's vision and mission, graduate profile, and Program Learning Outcomes with pesantren values underscores the function of the Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum as an instrument for cultivating *adab*, responsibility, and academic ethics. At the implementation level, pesantren values are embedded through instructional materials, teaching methods, and lecturers' role modeling, thereby reinforcing discipline, religiosity, and academic responsibility. Specifically, Nahwu instruction based on the analysis of grammatical rules and *I'rab* using *turats* texts fosters meticulousness, patience, academic honesty, and *tawadu'*, while *maharah al-kalam* learning contributes to the development of self-confidence, communicative competence, and leadership through themes of ethical

communication and social responsibility. Furthermore, the integration of Arabic Language Education (PBA) materials with themes of self-reliance and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) promotes social awareness and an entrepreneurial mindset grounded in *rahmatan lil-'alamin* values. Nevertheless, challenges related to diverse educational backgrounds and varying levels of language proficiency among mahasantri highlight the need for sustained pedagogical support and consistent curriculum implementation to ensure the optimal internalization of santri character.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative analytical framework that simultaneously examines curriculum design, instructional implementation, and students' meaning-making processes within a single pesantren-based Islamic higher education context. While previous research has tended to address Arabic language pedagogy and character education as distinct domains, this study demonstrates that they are mutually constitutive when embedded within a coherent institutional vision and pesantren culture. This finding advances existing scholarship by providing empirical evidence that a language curriculum can function as a primary vehicle for holistic character formation not merely as a supplementary activity. Furthermore, by situating the analysis within the specific institutional ecology of Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan, this study contributes a distinctive model of pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum integration that extends theoretical frameworks of integrative Islamic education and offers a transferable institutional model for other Islamic higher education institutions seeking to align academic competence with character development in their Arabic language programs.

## 5. CLOSING

This study concludes that the integration of a pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum at Universitas Sunan Drajat Lamongan functions strategically as an instrument for strengthening mahasantri character while simultaneously realizing the vision of the pesantren and the university. The alignment of the institutional vision and mission, graduate profile, and Program Learning Outcomes with pesantren values demonstrates that the ALE curriculum is not solely oriented toward the development of linguistic competence, but also toward the internalization of *adab*, responsibility, and academic ethics. Consequently, Arabic language learning serves as a medium for shaping a santri identity characterized by moral integrity, leadership orientation, and global insight. Furthermore, the implementation of the pesantren-based Arabic Language Education (PBA) curriculum is concretely reflected in instructional practices, particularly in the Nahwu and *maharab al-kalam* courses, which contribute to the development of meticulousness, patience, academic honesty, *tawadu'*, self-confidence, and leadership. The integration of learning materials addressing self-reliance and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) also fosters social awareness and an entrepreneurial mindset grounded in *rahmatan lil-*



*'alamin* values. Nevertheless, the optimization of character strengthening through curriculum integration requires sustained pedagogical support and consistent implementation to accommodate the diversity of mahasantri's educational backgrounds and language proficiency levels.

These findings carry several practical implications. For Arabic language lecturers in Islamic higher education, this study underscores the importance of designing instructional materials and pedagogical interactions that consciously integrate pesantren values and character formation objectives into every stage of the language learning process, rather than treating character development as peripheral to linguistic competence. Lecturers are encouraged to serve not only as instructors but as role models of academic ethics and Islamic conduct, as their exemplary behavior constitutes one of the most influential channels of character formation. For educational managers and curriculum developers at pesantren-based universities, the findings suggest the need for a systematic institutional mechanism that ensures the alignment of institutional vision, graduate profiles, program learning outcomes, and course-level materials with character formation goals. Institutional policies that provide structured support for lecturers in developing contextually grounded, pesantren-based materials will be essential in sustaining the quality and consistency of curriculum integration. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal designs to track the long-term impact of pesantren-based Arabic language curriculum integration on graduates' character development after leaving the academic environment. Comparative studies across different pesantren-affiliated universities would also be valuable in identifying transferable models and contextual variables that influence the effectiveness of curriculum integration. Additionally, research exploring student-centered perspectives through more participatory methods, such as focus group discussions or reflective journals, could yield deeper insights into the internalization processes of mahasantri and contribute to the refinement of integrative Arabic language curriculum frameworks in Islamic higher education.

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