Adaptive-Integrative Management Model for Religious Character Building in Boarding Schools in the Era of Value Disruption

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Boarding schools have long been recognized as effective in shaping the religious character of students. However, in the post-pandemic era of disruption, the managerial adaptation of these institutions has not yet been conceptually mapped out, resulting in value-building practices that tend to be partial and inconsistent. Previous research has primarily described religious routines and teacher role modeling, but has not offered a systematic management framework capable of integrating academic, spiritual, and technological innovation aspects. Therefore, this study aims to formulate a conceptual model of strategic educational management that is responsive to the challenges of value disruption in religious-based boarding schools. This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to academic publications and policy documents from the last five years (2020–2025), which are analyzed using content analysis techniques to identify patterns in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of religious character education strategies. The analysis resulted in an Adaptive-Integrative Management Model with four main dimensions: (1) structured program planning, (2) internalization of values through religious practices and role modeling, (3) creation of a holistic–spiritual boarding school environment, and (4) technology-based managerial responsiveness. This model contributes theoretically to the development of value-based educational management while providing practical recommendations for Islamic educational institutions to strengthen the continuous development of students' religious character in the era of disruption.

INTRODUCTION

The global transformation caused by the pandemic crisis and accelerated digitalization has had a significant impact on the world of education, not only in academic aspects but also in the formation of religious character among the younger generation.(UNESCO, 2022) notes that social restrictions and the shift to online learning have weakened spiritual interaction between teachers and students, making it increasingly difficult to consistently internalize religious character values. A similar phenomenon is reinforced by a report from the Central Statistics Agency ((BPS), 2023), which shows a 3.1% decline in youth participation in religious activities over the past three years. This situation indicates a serious challenge for the national education system in maintaining consistency in the cultivation of moral and spiritual values amid the globalizing tide of values.

In this context, boarding schools, especially those based on Islamic boarding schools, are often referred to as an alternative educational model that is able to integrate academic and religious aspects through a comprehensive supervision system. A study by (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) demonstrates that students in boarding school environments exhibit higher levels of religiosity compared to students in regular schools, due to daily religious practices and the exemplary behavior of teachers and supervisors. Research by (Bray et al., 2023) on faith-based boarding schools in the United States also found that collective religious routines play a significant role in strengthening students' spirituality. However, most of these studies still emphasize the descriptive aspects of religious practices rather than examining how the educational management strategies behind such success are systematically designed.

In Indonesia, research (Muhammad Abqoriy, Andi Suhardi, 2023) highlights that the planning of religious education programs in boarding schools is still weak and poorly integrated with the academic curriculum. Meanwhile, research (Islam, 2023) reveals a spiritual gap following the transition from online learning to the boarding school system, marked by a weakening of emotional bonds between teachers and students. These findings indicate that boarding schools face new challenges: how to maintain religious traditions while adapting to the demands of technological innovation and changes in post-pandemic interaction patterns.

From this literature review, it is clear that previous research has not offered an adaptive and integrative conceptual framework for management. The gap lies in the absence of an educational management model that can systematically combine religious habits, role models, a conducive boarding school ecosystem, and digital adaptation as a unified strategy. In other words, religious education practices to date have tended to be partial and case-specific, lacking a conceptual framework that can be widely adapted to the boarding school context in the era of disruption.

To strengthen the global argument, several international studies confirm that religious character education in the digital age requires not only moral exemplarity but also the support of an integrative value-based management system (Lickona, 1996); (Sanderse, 2020). Additionally, international (Lang, 2023); (Bekele et al., 2023) indicates that the integration of digital literacy, the strengthening of spiritual ecosystems, and technology-based management are key factors in the success of character education in the post-pandemic context. These findings suggest that the urgency of adaptive management models is not only relevant in Indonesia but also on a global scale.

Therefore, this article attempts to fill this gap by presenting a conceptual synthesis through a systematic literature review of religious value-based educational management strategies in boarding schools. The main contribution of this research lies in the development of an Adaptive-Integrative Management Model that combines strategic planning, religious indoctrination, the creation of a spiritual ecosystem, and technological adaptation as a response to post-pandemic educational challenges and value disruption. This conceptual framework is expected not only to enrich the national literature but also to expand the discourse on Islamic educational management in the international arena, particularly in the study of value-based educational management and post-pandemic educational innovation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of character education in boarding schools or Islamic boarding schools has received increasing attention in national and international education circles, especially after the social, economic, and technological changes that occurred as a result of the global crisis and the era of digital disruption. Modern character education models require the integration of religious values, the strengthening of digital literacy, and the creation of an adaptive learning ecosystem (Lang, 2023). (Lickona, 1996) states that strong character is formed through synchronization between the instillation of values, direct instruction, habituation, and a coherent learning environment. These principles are also emphasized by (Berkowitz, Marvin W. Bier, 2005),, who highlights the need for the involvement of the entire school ecosystem—teachers, parents, the community, and the management system—in shaping the religious character of students.

In the context of boarding schools in Indonesia, research (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) confirms that the superiority of the boarding school model is reflected in the institution's ability to integrate academic and religious curricula. The practice of worship, communal routines, and the exemplary role of teachers and supervisors are the main pillars in the internalization of religious values in the boarding school environment. Similar conditions were also found by (Bray et al., 2023) in a study of faith-based boarding schools in the United States, which concluded that collective religious routines significantly enhance students' spiritual sensitivity and morality.

However, various global and national literature identify new challenges: the gap between normative character-building policies and the need for real adjustments in the era of digital transformation and globalization of values (Bekele et al., 2023); (Merry, 2007). (Qorib et al., 2022) highlight that today's santri are part of the digital native generation, where interaction, learning, and even spiritual dimensions are beginning to shift toward online/hybrid patterns. This situation necessitates managerial innovation and technological integration in character development.

The direction of educational management can no longer rely on traditional bureaucratic patterns. (Bush, Tony, Glover, 2014) emphasizes the urgency of an adaptive, reflective, and synergistic school leadership model, in which various stakeholders collaborate to ensure the sustainability of religious character as well as the digital and social excellence of students.

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the importance of a more holistic evaluation of character. (Sallis, 2002) dan (Narvaez, Darcia, Lapsley, 2008) conclude that the paradigm of character success evaluation must move from mere cognitive testing to multidimensional assessment involving behavioral observation, social projects, self-reflection, and the involvement of parents and the community in monitoring student character development.

Several meta-analyses in the global character education literature also emphasize that efforts to build moral resilience in the digital age are greatly influenced by the ability of institutions to transform innovation, cross-disciplinary collaborative practices, and the use of technology platforms for monitoring character development (Sanderse, 2020); (Baze et al., 2023).

Based on this literature review, it is clear that the research gap lies in the absence of a character education management model that is truly adaptive, integrative, and responsive to the challenges of the era of value disruption, both in Indonesian boarding schools and in international literature. This study addresses this gap by proposing an Adaptive-Integrative Management Model for the development of religious character based on a synthesis of systematic literature reviews (SLR) of key studies over the past five years, thereby enriching the theoretical and practical body of knowledge on Islamic education management in the contemporary era.

Thus, this article explicitly contributes to the development of a globally applicable theory of value-based educational management and offers a conceptual foundation that can be adapted by various educational institutions, both national and international, in developing relevant strategies for religious character development in the digital age.

METHOD

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to identify, select, and synthesize relevant literature related to educational management strategies in shaping religious character in boarding schools in an era of value disruption. SLR

was chosen because it can produce a systematic, transparent, and replicable conceptual synthesis, thereby clarifying the construction of the framework of thinking in this study.

The literature search was conducted through four main databases, namely Scopus, DOAJ, SINTA, and Google Scholar. To obtain truly relevant articles, a combination of keywords such as "strategic educational management," "religious character formation," "faith-based boarding schools," "value internalization strategies," and "post-pandemic educational challenges" was used with the logical operators AND/OR. The search process was limited to journal articles published between 2020 and 2025, discussing the topic of character education management in boarding schools or faith-based educational institutions, available in Indonesian or English, and published in peer-reviewed or indexed journals.

The exclusion criteria applied include articles that are opinions, popular essays, or non-academic news, articles that only highlight formal curricula without managerial strategy dimensions, duplicates or case studies with too narrow a scope, and articles that have not undergone peer review.

The initial identification process yielded 150 articles from the entire database. After selecting titles and abstracts, 40 articles were filtered as relevant according to the inclusion criteria. Next, after a full text review, 25 articles were selected that specifically discussed aspects of character education management in boarding schools. Each selected article was data-extracted, particularly focusing on strategic planning, program implementation, boarding school environment, religious practices, integration of technological innovations, and post-pandemic educational challenges.

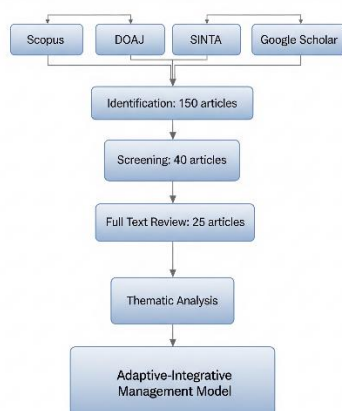**In summary, the flow of the article selection process is illustrated in Figure1.**

Figure 1. Flowchart of the Article Selection Process (Systematic Literature Review)

Next, all data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. Thematic analysis was conducted in stages through a process of data coding according to the main categories, namely planning, implementation, evaluation, challenges, and innovation in boarding school management. Following this, thematic patterns were identified, and a synthesis was conducted to formulate the Adaptive-Integrative Management Model as the primary conceptual output of this study. This method ensures that the research direction is not merely descriptive but also produces a systematic and valid conceptual synthesis for the development of Islamic education management in the context of boarding schools during the era of value disruption.

To ensure transparency and accuracy in the review process, this study also follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) reporting principles as recommended in international SLR studies (Ilma et al., 2023). To enhance the credibility of the synthesis results, validation was conducted through light peer debriefing among researchers at each main stage (coding, identification, integration). A thematic analysis approach based on (Kayi, 2024) was used to ensure consistent identification of main themes and sub-themes, reinforce findings, and prevent bias in literature interpretation.

FINDINGS

This study produced the Adaptive-Integrative Religious Character Management Model, a conceptual framework formulated through a systematic literature review (SLR) of 25 reputable national and international scientific journal articles published over the past five years. This model fundamentally transcends the conventional narrative that positions boarding schools as mere "strongholds of religious character." Instead, it offers a theoretical and practical synthesis designed to address three critical challenges simultaneously: massive digital disruption, post-pandemic social ecosystem changes, and increasing demands for more adaptive graduates in the contemporary era.

Synthesis Foundation: Adaptive Vision and Contextual Stakeholder Analysis

SLR findings indicate that the effectiveness of religious character building today is highly dependent on shifts in managerial foundations. There are three pillars of foundation that must be established. First, an Adaptive Institutional Vision. Vision no longer functions as a static document but must become a dynamic manifesto that explicitly addresses current issues such as learning loss, digital penetration, and the redefinition of parental expectations post-pandemic. This vision serves as a strategic compass for all policy derivatives (Mirnawati, 2025) (Bush, Tony, Glover, 2014). Second, Analysis of the Profile of Students as Digital Natives. Character development programs will lose their relevance if they fail to understand that today's students are a generation living in a digital ecosystem, where their social interactions and spiritual practices are greatly influenced by technology (Qorib et al., 2022). Third, Calibration of Parents' and Society's Expectations. Stakeholder demands have evolved; they no

longer merely expect graduates who are ritually devout but also resilient, creative, and digitally literate individuals (Desfita et al., 2023) (Sallis, 2002).

Synthesis Process: The Trias Manageria Character Model as a Conceptual Innovation

As the core of this research finding, the proposed model emphasizes that the superiority of boarding schools in the era of disruption no longer relies on the number of programs, but rather on systematic managerial cohesion and synergy. This conceptual innovation is presented in the Trias Manageria Character Model, which consists of the following three main processes:

• Integrated Strategic Planning.

This process requires total integration between all aspects, namely the academic curriculum, boarding school guidance, and human resource development, into a single goal of character building. (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) emphasize the importance of synergy between the academic curriculum and religious guidance to prevent planning from being fragmented, as well as the need for clear and measurable SOPs for worship and classroom etiquette design. Meanwhile, (Desfita et al., 2023) highlight that the active involvement of teachers, supervisors, and parents in every stage of planning is crucial to ensure that social service programs and value instillation run optimally and have transformative power.

• Technology-Based Implementation and Leadership.

This pillar is a synthesis of high-tech and high-touch approaches. (Islam, 2023) demonstrates that the use of technology, such as worship monitoring applications, accelerates accountability and the measurability of character development. (Muhammad Abqoriy, Andi Suhardi, 2023) add that digital character portfolios and effective communication platforms with parents encourage the continuous internalization of values in both the dormitory and family environments. However, the main spirit of the implementation remains centered on the intensive exemplary behavior provided by teachers and musyrif as role models for spiritual guidance (Mirnawati, 2025).

• Holistic-Collaborative Evaluation.

This model shifts the evaluation paradigm from summative and cognitive to a more holistic multidimensional assessment. (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) emphasizes the importance of observing authentic behavior and assessing social projects in evaluating student character. Additionally, (Sallis, 2002) asserts that self-reflection journals, as well as collaborative analysis of digital portfolios—involving teachers, peers, mentors, and families—can expand the dimensions of evaluation to encompass spiritual, social, and psychological aspects

comprehensively. The three processes in the Trias Manageria Character Model do not run linearly but form a dynamic cycle that enables the growth of students' character to occur continuously and adaptively to changes in the times.

Model Output: Graduate Profile as an "Adaptive Muslim"

The ideal output of this model's implementation is the formation of a graduate profile referred to as an "Adaptive Muslim."

This profile is characterized by three integral competencies:

• Spiritual and Mental Resilience:

Individuals who possess the resilience of faith to filter information in the digital age and emotional intelligence to manage mental and psychological stress, as outlined (Islam, 2023) and supported (Sallis, 2002) in reflections on the formation of religious character.

• Integrated Competence:

A figure who is not only religiously intelligent but also capable of integrating academic knowledge, digital literacy, and social-emotional skills to solve real-world problems, as explained (Mirnawati, 2025).

• Contributors and Agents of Social Change:

Graduates who are independent, proactive in building social networks, and act as drivers of positive change in the community, not merely passive products of the boarding school system. This is explained by (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) from the perspective of social integration in the boarding school environment, and is also reinforced by (Qorib et al., 2022) who emphasize the importance of religious habitus in the boarding school community.

Practical Implications for Boarding School Administrators

This model offers three practical implications that can be followed up by boarding school administrators. First, Reformulation of Strategic Policies. Institutional leaders need to conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan (Renstra) to ensure explicit integration between character building targets and digital literacy programs and community involvement. Second, Human Resource Capacity Development. Teachers and supervisors must receive comprehensive training to enhance their roles as spiritual coaches and technology facilitators, based on proven modules and best practices. Third, Evaluation System Transformation. The character reporting system must shift from a quantitative-based system (numerical scores, memorization counts) to a qualitative reporting system in the form of descriptive narratives, portfolios of work, and students' self-reflection notes.

Visualization of the Conceptual Model

To provide a more comprehensive understanding, the relationships between the elements in this model are visualized in the following figure:
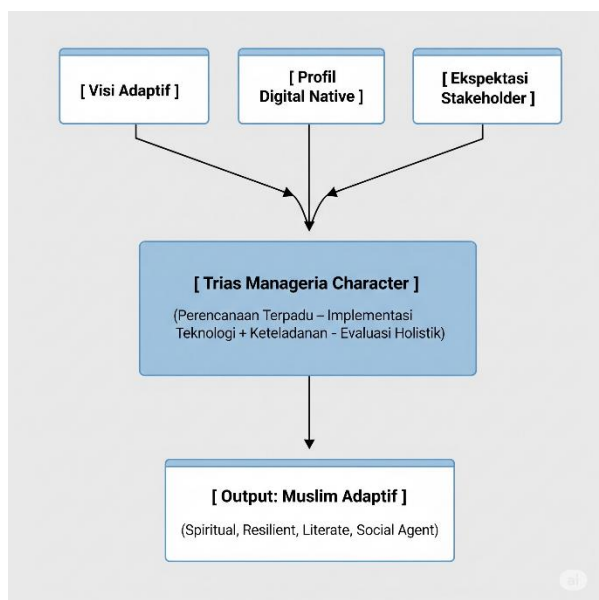

Figure 2. Conceptual Model of Adaptive-Integrative Religious Character Management (Note: This model is a synthesis formulated from the results of a systematic literature review of key literature in the fields of Islamic education management and educational psychology).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that the effectiveness of religious character building in boarding schools, especially in times of disruption, does not only depend on worship routines or strict supervision, but also on the existence of a systematic, adaptive, and integrative management framework. This section discusses the position of the Adaptive-Integrative Management Model offered in this study, as well as its theoretical, practical, and global implications.

Confirmation and Differences from Previous Research

This study reinforces the findings of (Syafruddin, S. Arfah, M. Andayani, E. Sirojuddin, A. Yolanda, 2022) dan (Mirnawati, 2025) that religious worship habits and teacher role modeling are important foundations for religious character education. However, unlike previous studies that tend to be descriptive, this research offers a conceptual framework in the form of the Trias Manageria Character Model, which

outlines three managerial pillars: technology-based implementation and exemplary behavior, holistic-collaborative evaluation, and outcomes in the form of an "Adaptive Muslim" graduate profile. Thus, the novelty of this research lies in developing a conceptual synthesis that can be replicated and tested in a broader context.

Theoretical Contributions

Theoretically, this study bridges the research gap that has long separated religious indoctrination, academic management, and technological innovation. The Adaptive-Integrative Model proposes a new perspective that the strength of boarding schools is not solely determined by the number of training programs but by managerial cohesion that ensures synergy between planning, implementation, and evaluation. This enriches the study of value-based educational management as proposed by (Lickona, 1996) and (Bush, Tony, Glover, 2014).

Practical Implications

From a practical standpoint, this model presents an innovation in the form of a combination of high-tech and high-touch. On the one hand, the use of technology such as worship monitoring applications, digital portfolios, and parent communication platforms (Islam, 2023); (Muhammad Abqoriy, Andi Suhardi, 2023) provides accountability and measurability in character building. On the other hand, intensive guidance by ustadz/musyrif as role models keeps the spiritual essence alive. Another innovation is the shift toward holistic-collaborative evaluation, involving various stakeholders (teachers, peers, families, and even the dormitory community), enabling a more comprehensive assessment of students' spiritual, social, and emotional dimensions.

Limitations and Directions for Further Research

The main limitation of this study lies in its nature as a systematic literature review (SLR) that relies on the availability and validity of previous publications. The risk of interpretive bias remains, as the data is secondary. Therefore, further research is needed to empirically test this model in various boarding school contexts in Indonesia and other countries. Cross-cultural comparative research could also provide stronger validation regarding the relevance of the Adaptive-Integrative model.

Global Relevance

The model offered in this study is not only relevant in the local context of boarding schools in Indonesia, but also contributes to global discourse, such as multicultural education, moral resilience in the digital age, and post-secular education management (Bray et al., 2023); (UNESCO, 2022). Thus, boarding schools can be viewed not merely as traditional institutions, but as centers of value-based educational

innovation capable of contributing to international debates on the role of religious education in addressing the challenges of 21st-century disruption.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the success of boarding schools in shaping the religious character of students in the era of disruption is largely determined by adaptive and integrative management. Through a systematic literature review, the Trias Manageria Character Model was formulated, encompassing technology-based implementation and exemplary leadership, holistic-collaborative evaluation, and strengthening the graduate profile as Adaptive Muslims capable of integrating spiritual, academic, digital, and social-emotional competencies. This model also contributes a new conceptual framework to the global discourse on values-based educational management. However, since this study is limited to a literature review, further empirical research is recommended to test its validity and applicability across various boarding school contexts and other religious educational institutions

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