

# Strengthening Character Education in the Era of Globalization Through Pesantren Kilat at SDN Sekaran 1

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| Article Info                                                                           | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>Keywords:</b> Character education, Globalization, Intensive Islamic boarding school | This study aims to analyze the role of crash courses in strengthening character education among elementary school students in the era of globalization. Globalization brings both opportunities and challenges, especially in terms of moral degradation and identity crises among the younger generation. For this reason, character education is a very important foundation for building responsible and moral citizens. This qualitative study conducted at SDN Sekaran 1 uses interview and documentation techniques to explore the implementation and impact of intensive Islamic boarding schools on students' behavior and values. The findings indicate that this annual program held during the month of Ramadan is effective in fostering values such as discipline, responsibility, piety, and politeness. Teachers, parents, and religious instructors collaboratively support the program, ensuring it runs smoothly and is integrated into daily learning through thematic instruction and character-based evaluation. The study also highlights how the school has successfully maintained character-building practices beyond the Ramadan period, demonstrating the relevance of religion-based education in addressing modern challenges. This study contributes to the field of education by offering an empirical model of contextual and culturally rooted character education that can be adapted in other elementary school settings, especially amid the ongoing influence of globalization. |

## INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization is a period of integration into the global scope where human life and nations around the world become open and interdependent on one another, accompanied by advancements in various fields, namely technology, information, and communication (Mulatsih et al., 2021). The wave of globalization provides ease of access for retrieving information or networking on the internet, thereby expanding horizons and practically facilitating long-distance communication due to the presence of mobile technology (Tranggono et al., 2023). However, globalization can also present challenges in the form of identity crises (Dewi et al., 2023), such as

the shifting phenomenon of cultural values where the current generation is more familiar with foreign cultures than local ones; westernized lifestyles should instead be replaced by a golden generation anchored in morals as the foundation of the nation's character. In this context, the younger generation is in a position vulnerable to identity crises and moral decline if they lack the provision of character education reinforcement from an early age. Character education is the root of a growing golden generation; it is vital for all of us to prioritize character education in developing a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses a noble character (Hamdani et al., 2022).

Schools, as formal educational institutions providing teaching and learning activities under the supervision of teachers, certainly possess a strategic role in reinforcing character through the curriculum and non-academic activities (Rosadi et al., 2024). Character education is an essential component of the learning process because it aims to shape learners into individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess noble character, responsibility, honesty, and care for others (Samsinar et al., 2022). The Indonesian government itself has integrated character education into the national curriculum as a systematic effort to form the Pancasila student profile, which functions and aims to strengthen students' character by internalizing Pancasila values—such as honesty, responsibility, and social care while developing 21st-century skills like critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication through a contextual and holistic project-based learning approach (Anggelia et al., 2024). However, in practice, character education is frequently still understood normatively and has not been fully implemented through a contextual approach that touches upon the spiritual aspects of learners.

One potential contextual approach in reinforcing character education is through religious activities in schools, such as the intensive Islamic boarding school program (*pesantren kilat*). The *pesantren kilat* is a religious cultivation program generally executed during the month of Ramadan, designed to deepen students' understanding of Islamic teachings and instill moral values such as discipline, responsibility, empathy, and honesty (Irfan et al., 2023). In various elementary schools, this activity becomes an important part of shaping students' religious and social character, although it has not been extensively studied specifically within the framework of formal character education. The emerging problem is the limited number of scientific studies evaluating the extent to which *pesantren kilat* activities can contribute significantly to student character building, particularly in confronting the challenges of the globalization era. Furthermore, there is a lack of in-depth research examining the implementation of *pesantren kilat* within the context of public elementary schools in urban areas, such as SDN Sekaran 1, which features diverse social and cultural characteristics. Conducting this study is essential so that the activity does not merely become a seasonal routine but possesses a clear direction in supporting sustainable student character reinforcement.

Several previous studies indicate that the *pesantren kilat* has a positive impact on the formation of students' morals. Husen et al. (2022) suggest that character education must encompass three primary components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, all of which can be developed through activities based on religious values. Giddens states in a journal article written by Beresaby (2021) that globalization can trigger an identity crisis if the younger generation lacks a solid moral foundation. A study by Rohmat and Dewi (2022) concludes that the *pesantren kilat* is capable of enhancing students' spiritual awareness and discipline. Nevertheless, most of these studies have not specifically examined the relationship between the *pesantren kilat* and character reinforcement within the context of globalization, nor have they highlighted how public elementary schools run this program in a structured manner. More profound research is required to explore the role of the *pesantren kilat* in shaping the character of public elementary school students amidst the continuously evolving challenges of globalization.

However, limitations still persist in research deeply examining the effectiveness of the *pesantren kilat* in reinforcing character education, especially in public elementary schools within urban areas like SDN Sekaran 1. This activity is generally still viewed as a seasonal routine that has

not been optimally integrated with the character-building curriculum. In fact, the pesantren kilat holds great potential to serve as a medium for directly internalizing moral and spiritual values into learners (Hidayah et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the pesantren kilat implemented at SDN Sekaran 1 can contribute to the reinforcement of students' character education in the era of globalization. This study also examines structural implementation aspects of the activity and the sustainability of the instilled values. It is anticipated that the results of this study can provide a deeper understanding of the strategic role of seasonal religious activities in shaping student character and serve as a reference for the development of similar programs in other elementary schools.

## METHODS



**Figure 1.** Interview with the Principal of SDN Sekaran 01, Mr. Santoso

This study employed a qualitative approach aiming to understand the meaning, processes, and perspectives of the participants in depth. Qualitative research does not focus on numerical data, but rather on descriptive data in the form of spoken or written words from the observed subjects (Niam et al., 2024). This approach was utilized to explore more broadly and deeply the role of the intensive Islamic boarding school program (pesantren kilat) in reinforcing character education at SDN Sekaran 1. This qualitative research was conducted naturalistically, with the primary data sources derived from interviews and documentation. The data collection techniques were carried out as follows.



**Figure 2.** Interview with the Grade 3 Homeroom Teacher of SDN Sekaran 01, Mr. Maftuhin

According to (Romadona, 2025), interviews are an essential technique in qualitative research that enables researchers to obtain in-depth data regarding individual experiences or perspectives, despite presenting challenges such as potential bias and demanding communication skill requirements. Documentation is a data collection technique carried out by gathering and examining various documents, both written and non-written, such as photographs and archives related to student grade results.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze how the intensive Islamic boarding school program (pesantren kilat) contributes to the reinforcement of character education among elementary school students amidst the challenges of the globalization era. The results of the interview with the Principal of SDN Sekaran 1, Mr. Santoso, revealed that character education is highly crucial to be instilled from an early age, as children today are easily influenced by rapidly developing technology and information. He stated, “The character of today's children is very easily influenced by technology and information; therefore, character education is highly essential to be shaped from an early age.” This statement aligns with the opinion of (Toni & Harahap, 2020), who state that character education is a conscious effort to help individuals understand, feel, and practice moral values. In the context of globalization, Giddens asserts in a journal article written by (Beresaby, 2021) that identity and moral crises pose a real threat if they are not balanced with education rooted in cultural and religious values. The pesantren kilat program at SDN Sekaran 1 has been conducted routinely every month of Ramadan for the past six years. However, in 2025, the duration of its execution was only two days due to an efficiency directive from the Department of Education. Nevertheless, the activities proceeded smoothly and encompassed various endeavors such as religious lectures, communal fast-breaking (buka puasa bersama), the commemoration of Nuzulul Qur'an, and congregational Tarawih prayers. According to Mr. Maftuhin, the Grade 3 homeroom teacher, students were highly enthusiastic about participating in the series of activities, particularly during the communal fast-breaking. He remarked, “The children were extremely enthusiastic about the fast-breaking activity with their peers. All students definitely participated; even though some felt tired, they were allowed to rest briefly and then return to the hall.”

In terms of instilling character values, the pesantren kilat focuses on enhancing faith and devotion (iman dan takwa). More broadly, however, this activity also shapes students' discipline, responsibility, and politeness traits. Teachers explained that students are taught to bring their own worship equipment, arrive on time, and adhere to the regulations enforced during the activity. This reflects the formation of independent and responsible attitudes, aligning with the character indicators outlined in the Kurikulum Merdeka. Mr. Maftuhin also stated, “Indirectly, this activity teaches children not to use foul language, but rather to speak softly, gently, and politely.” This indicates a positive behavioral transformation following participation in the activity. The involvement of teachers and educational staff plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth execution of the program. Teachers act as student facilitators, while the material is delivered by ustaz and ustazah (Islamic teachers) from a nearby Islamic boarding school. Nonetheless, challenges persist, such as maintaining a conducive atmosphere and ensuring that students remain focused. Mr. Santoso noted that, “The biggest challenge is managing the students so that the situation remains conducive,” highlighting the importance of a flexible and humanistic approach throughout the program.

Aside from teachers, parents also demonstrated high support for the pesantren kilat program at SDN Sekaran 1. They actively prepared various equipment required by their children, such as Islamic attire, worship tools, and food for the communal fast-breaking event. This involvement indicates a robust synergy between the school and families in shaping student character, particularly regarding discipline, independence, and responsibility. Parental support not

only facilitates the progression of the activities but also reinforces the character values instilled during the program. This reinforces Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as put forward in a journal article by (Mahmudah & Indarti, 2022), which emphasizes that a child's character is shaped through mutually influencing interactions between the school, family, and community environments. The active involvement of parents in this program serves as tangible evidence that effective character education requires collaboration from various stakeholders within the child's developmental ecosystem.

One of the strengths of the pesantren kilat implementation at SDN Sekaran 1 is the school's success in integrating the values taught into daily learning on a sustainable basis. Values such as religiosity, discipline, and responsibility are not only taught while the program takes place but also become part of thematic learning processes and students' character habituation in class. After the month of Ramadan, the school routinely holds joint reflection sessions to strengthen students' understanding of the religious material they have received. Religious themes are also consistently embedded into Civic Education (PPKn), Indonesian Language (Bahasa Indonesia), and Arts and Culture (Seni Budaya) subjects, ensuring that students remain connected to the pesantren kilat values throughout the academic year. Furthermore, the school has compiled a structured, indicator-based character evaluation instrument that encompasses students' spiritual, social, and emotional aspects. Evaluations are conducted periodically by teachers and recorded in each student's character development report, allowing the impact of the activities to be measured objectively and utilized as a baseline for future program improvements.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the pesantren kilat at SDN Sekaran 1 yields a tangible contribution to the reinforcement of character education. This activity not only instills religious values but also shapes students' discipline, responsibility, and politeness attitudes. With the support of teachers and parents, alongside reinforcement in evaluation aspects and value integration, the pesantren kilat holds the potential to become an effective model for contextual character learning amidst the wave of globalization.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the pesantren kilat at SDN Sekaran 1 provides a tangible contribution to reinforcing students' character education in the era of globalization through the instillation of religious values, discipline, responsibility, and politeness. This activity, executed routinely every month of Ramadan, not only shapes spiritual character but also builds synergy among the school, teachers, and parents in supporting comprehensive student personality development. The implementation of the pesantren kilat has been carried out systematically through teacher facilitation, the involvement of ustaz/ustazah from Islamic boarding schools, and the integration of character values into thematic learning and character indicator-based evaluations. These findings answer the research problem regarding the role of the pesantren kilat in character education and demonstrate that contextual religious activities can serve as an effective strategy to counter identity crisis challenges amidst the wave of globalization. This study contributes to the advancement of educational sciences, particularly in the field of character education, by reinforcing empirical evidence that a local culture-based spiritual approach such as the pesantren kilat can be adopted as a contextual, collaborative, and relevant character learning model for 21st-century generational needs.

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