

Evaluating Aswaja and Ke-NU-an Education as a Quality Improvement Strategy for Student Character Development in Madrasah

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ABSTRACT

Education quality in madrasah is not only reflected in students' academic achievement but also in the development of religious, moderate, tolerant, and respectful character. This study evaluates Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education as a quality improvement strategy for student character development at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda. The study employed a quantitative correlational design involving 12 students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS through validity, reliability, normality, and Pearson correlation tests. The reliability test showed that the Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education instrument was highly reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.812, while the student character instrument was also reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.695. The normality test indicated that the data were normally distributed ($p = 0.200$). The Pearson correlation test revealed a positive and significant relationship between Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character ($r = 0.620$; $p = 0.031$). This correlation coefficient indicates a strong relationship between the two variables. These findings demonstrate that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education functions as an effective quality improvement strategy in strengthening student character in madrasah, particularly in developing religious attitudes, moderation, tolerance, and respect for diversity.

Keywords: Aswaja education, Ke-NU-an, quality improvement, student character, madrasah.

ABSTRAK

Mutu pendidikan di madrasah tidak hanya tercermin dari pencapaian akademik siswa, tetapi juga dari pembentukan karakter religius, moderat, toleran, dan menghargai perbedaan. Penelitian ini mengevaluasi pendidikan Aswaja dan Ke-NU-an sebagai strategi peningkatan mutu dalam pengembangan karakter siswa di MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional yang melibatkan 12 siswa yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan angket dan dianalisis dengan bantuan SPSS melalui uji validitas, reliabilitas, normalitas, dan korelasi Pearson. Hasil uji reliabilitas menunjukkan bahwa instrumen pendidikan Aswaja dan Ke-NU-an memiliki reliabilitas tinggi dengan nilai Cronbach's Alpha sebesar 0,812, sedangkan instrumen karakter siswa juga dinyatakan reliabel dengan nilai Cronbach's Alpha sebesar 0,695. Uji normalitas menunjukkan bahwa data berdistribusi normal ($p = 0,200$). Hasil uji korelasi Pearson menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif dan signifikan antara pendidikan Aswaja dan Ke-NU-an dengan karakter siswa ($r = 0,620$; $p = 0,031$). Nilai koefisien korelasi tersebut menunjukkan hubungan yang kuat antara kedua variabel. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Aswaja dan Ke-NU-an berfungsi sebagai strategi peningkatan mutu yang efektif dalam memperkuat karakter siswa di madrasah, terutama dalam membentuk sikap religius, moderat, toleran, dan menghargai keberagaman.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Aswaja, Ke-NU-an, peningkatan mutu, karakter siswa, madrasah.

INTRODUCTION

Education quality in madrasah should not be understood only through academic achievement, cognitive competence, or examination results. A more comprehensive understanding of educational quality also includes the ability of schools to develop students' character, religious awareness, moral responsibility, social sensitivity, tolerance, and respect for diversity. In Islamic educational institutions, character development is particularly important because education is expected to produce students who are not only intellectually capable but also spiritually mature and morally responsible (Ma'arif et al., 2024; Z.R et al., 2018).

In the Indonesian Islamic education context, Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah (Aswaja) and Ke-NU-an education has an important role in shaping students' character. Aswaja and Ke-NU-an values emphasize religious moderation, tolerance, balance, justice, respect for differences, and commitment to peaceful social life. These values are highly relevant in strengthening character education because students live in a plural society where they need to develop not only religious commitment but also social responsibility and inclusive attitudes (Masturin, 2023).

MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda integrates Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education into learning activities and religious practices. This integration is expected to strengthen students' religious character, moral behavior, discipline, and respect for others. The madrasah context is important because character education is not only delivered through formal instruction but also through school culture, religious habituation, teacher modeling, and daily practices (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Rijal et al., 2023). In this sense, Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education can be viewed as part of a quality improvement strategy in madrasah, particularly in the area of student character development.

Previous studies on character education in Islamic schools have generally emphasized curriculum implementation, teacher strategies, religious habituation, and moral development. However, empirical studies that specifically measure the relationship between Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character remain limited, especially in the context of madrasah quality improvement. Therefore, this study seeks to provide empirical evidence on whether Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education is significantly related to student (Indah et al., 2018; Syarnubi et al., 2021).

This study is guided by the assumption that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education contributes positively to student character development. If a significant relationship is found, then Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education can be positioned not only as a religious subject or ideological identity but also as a measurable quality improvement strategy in madrasah education. Based on this background, this study aims to evaluate the relationship between Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. The correlational design was used because the study aimed to examine the relationship between two variables: Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education as the independent variable and student character as the dependent variable. This design was considered appropriate because the research did not aim to manipulate variables, but rather to measure whether a statistically significant relationship existed between the two variables.

The research was conducted at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda. The participants consisted of 12 students selected using purposive sampling. This sampling technique was used because the respondents were selected based on their relevance to the research objectives, namely students who had received Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education in the madrasah context. Although the sample size was limited, the data were analyzed carefully through instrument testing and statistical procedures.

Data were collected using questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of items measuring students' perceptions of Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and items measuring student character. Each variable initially consisted of 10 statement items. The instruments were tested

for validity and reliability before being used in further analysis. Validity testing was conducted by comparing the calculated correlation value of each item with the r-table value. Items with r-count greater than r-table were considered valid and used for subsequent analysis.

The validity test showed that, out of 10 items in the Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education variable, 5 items were valid, namely items 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Meanwhile, out of 10 items in the student character variable, 3 items were valid, namely items 6, 9, and 10. These valid items were then used in the next stage of analysis. The reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability value for the Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education variable was 0.812, while the reliability value for the student character variable was 0.695. These results indicate that both instruments were reliable and appropriate for use in the study.

Before conducting the correlation test, the data were tested for normality and homogeneity. The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a significance value of 0.200, which was greater than 0.05. This means that the data were normally distributed. The homogeneity test showed a significance value of 0.170, which was also greater than 0.05. This indicates that the data had homogeneous variance. Since the assumptions of normality and homogeneity were fulfilled, Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character.

The data were analyzed using SPSS. The main statistical analysis used in this study was Pearson Product Moment correlation. The correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables, while the significance value was used to determine whether the relationship was statistically significant.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education has a positive and significant relationship with student character at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda. The Pearson correlation test produced a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.620$ with a significance value of $p = 0.031$. Since the significance value was smaller than 0.05, the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant. The correlation coefficient of 0.620 indicates a strong positive relationship. This means that the better the implementation and internalization of Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education, the stronger the character development among students. The positive direction of the correlation indicates that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education is associated with improvement in student character. In practical terms, this finding suggests that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education can function as a character quality improvement strategy in madrasah (Mujahid, 2021).

The reliability results also support the credibility of the instruments used in this study. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.812 for Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education indicates high reliability. This means that the items used to measure this variable were internally consistent. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.695 for student character also indicates acceptable reliability. Therefore, the instruments were considered adequate for measuring the intended variables. The validity test showed that not all questionnaire items were valid. Only 5 items were valid for the Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education variable, while 3 items were valid for the student character variable. This finding indicates that some items may need to be revised in future research. Invalid items may have been caused by unclear wording, overlap between indicators, students' limited understanding of the statements, or the small number of respondents. Nevertheless, the valid items were sufficient for further statistical analysis in this study. The normality test result of $p = 0.200$ indicates that the data were normally distributed. This is important because Pearson correlation requires the data to meet normality assumptions. The homogeneity test result of $p = 0.170$ also indicates that the variance between the variables was homogeneous. These assumption tests strengthen the appropriateness of using Pearson correlation in this study.

From the perspective of education quality improvement, the finding of a strong and significant correlation is important. It indicates that character development can be evaluated empirically through measurable indicators. In other words, character education in madrasah should not only be treated as a normative or moral discourse but also as an area that can be monitored, evaluated, and improved through systematic educational strategies. Aswaja and Ke-NU-an

education contributes to character development because it contains values that are directly related to students' moral and social behavior. Values such as tawassuth, tasamuh, tawazun, and i'tidal encourage students to develop moderate, tolerant, balanced, and fair attitudes. These values are important in building religious character that is not rigid or exclusive, but open, peaceful, and respectful toward diversity (Huda et al., 2022).

The implementation of Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda is not limited to classroom learning. It is also supported by religious habituation and school culture. Based on the research data, character-building activities include polite behavior, the use of good speech, praying before learning, performing dhuha prayer, reciting the Qur'an, memorizing short surahs, and performing congregational prayer. These activities show that student character is developed not only through cognitive learning but also through repeated religious practices and school-based habituation (Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022).

This finding supports the idea that quality improvement in madrasah should include both instructional and cultural dimensions. Instructional quality refers to how learning materials are taught, while cultural quality refers to how values are practiced in daily school life. Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education becomes more effective when it is not only taught as a subject but also lived through the daily routines of the madrasah community. The strong correlation found in this study also indicates that religious moderation-based education can strengthen student character. Aswaja and Ke-NU-an values help students understand Islam as a religion that promotes balance, tolerance, social harmony, and respect for others. In the current educational context, these values are highly relevant because students need to be prepared to live in diverse communities and respond wisely to differences in religious, social, and cultural life (Kuswara et al., 2021; Masripah & Mohammad, 2025).

However, this study also has limitations. The sample consisted of only 12 students, which means that the findings cannot be generalized broadly to all madrasahs. The small sample size may also affect the stability of the statistical results. Therefore, future studies should involve a larger number of respondents from different grade levels or different madrasahs. In addition, future research may use mixed methods by combining questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document analysis to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education shapes student character (Nasir & Rijal, 2020).

Another limitation is the number of valid questionnaire items. Since only some items were valid, future studies should refine the research instruments by developing clearer indicators, conducting expert validation, and testing the instrument with a larger pilot sample. A stronger instrument would provide more accurate measurement of both Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide meaningful evidence that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education can be considered a quality improvement strategy in madrasah. The significant correlation between Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education and student character suggests that religious values, when systematically integrated into learning and school culture, can support the development of students' character. Therefore, madrasah leaders, teachers, and curriculum developers should strengthen the implementation of Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education through structured learning, religious habituation, teacher modeling, and continuous evaluation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education has a positive, strong, and significant relationship with student character at MTs Al Mujahidin 2 Samarinda. The Pearson correlation test showed a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.620$ with a significance value of $p = 0.031$. This indicates that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education is significantly associated with student character development.

The findings demonstrate that Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education can function as a quality improvement strategy in madrasah, particularly in strengthening students' religious,

moderate, tolerant, and respectful character. The integration of Aswaja and Ke-NU-an values through classroom learning, religious activities, and school culture supports the development of student character in a measurable way.

This study recommends that madrasahs strengthen Aswaja and Ke-NU-an education not only as a subject but also as part of a broader character quality improvement system. Teachers should integrate Aswaja values into learning activities, school routines, and student guidance. Madrasah leaders should also conduct continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure that character education is implemented effectively.

Future research should involve larger samples, broader research sites, and more comprehensive instruments. Further studies may also use mixed-method designs to explore more deeply how Aswaja and Ke-NU-an values are internalized in students' daily behavior.

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