

Disparity in Children's Character Formation Between the Madrasah Environment and the Family: *A Study on the Role of Teacher and Parent Coaching Intensity (Case Study at MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru)*

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Abstract

Character development in children is a shared responsibility between Islamic schools (madrasah) and families. However, disparities in the intensity of guidance between these two environments often create value inconsistencies that hinder optimal character internalization. This study aims to describe and analyze the disparity in children's character development between the madrasah and family environments at MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru, with the intensity of teachers' and parents' guidance as the central variable. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the madrasah has developed a comprehensive character development ecosystem through eight structured programs; however, parental involvement remains highly varied and predominantly moderate to minimal due to time constraints and limited pedagogical capacity. This disparity stems from the absence of systematic synergy between the madrasah and families. As a solution, this study proposes the SINERGI Model, which integrates a shared character map, a digital communication platform, parenting capacity building, and an integrated monitoring system. This study asserts that authentic character formation can only be achieved through a collaborative ecosystem that positions the madrasah and family as mutually reinforcing strategic partners.

Keywords: character development, guidance intensity, madrasah, parental involvement, collaboration model

Abtrack

Pengembangan karakter anak merupakan tanggung jawab bersama antara sekolah-sekolah Islam (madrasah) dan keluarga. Namun, perbedaan intensitas bimbingan antara kedua lingkungan ini seringkali menciptakan inkonsistensi nilai yang menghambat internalisasi karakter yang optimal. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis perbedaan pengembangan karakter anak antara lingkungan madrasah dan keluarga di MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru, dengan intensitas bimbingan guru dan orang tua sebagai variabel utama. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa madrasah telah mengembangkan ekosistem pengembangan karakter yang komprehensif melalui delapan program terstruktur; namun, keterlibatan orang tua masih sangat beragam dan sebagian besar moderat hingga minimal karena keterbatasan waktu dan kapasitas pedagogis yang terbatas. Perbedaan ini berasal dari tidak adanya sinergi sistematis antara madrasah dan keluarga. Sebagai solusi, studi ini mengusulkan Model SINERGI, yang mengintegrasikan peta karakter bersama, platform komunikasi digital, peningkatan kapasitas pengasuhan, dan sistem pemantauan terpadu. Studi ini menegaskan bahwa pembentukan karakter yang autentik hanya dapat dicapai melalui ekosistem kolaboratif yang menempatkan madrasah dan keluarga sebagai mitra strategis yang saling memperkuat.

Keywords: character building, coaching intensity, madrasah, parental involvement, collaboration model

I. Introduction

The formation of children's character is a fundamental issue in the world of education that has never lost its relevance throughout time. In the era of globalization, which is characterized by the endless flow of information and rapid changes in social values, the challenges in forming a generation with noble character are increasingly complex. The phenomenon of moral degradation among children and adolescents is now increasingly worrying, reflected in the increasing cases of juvenile delinquency and the weakening of respect for parents and teachers. Juvenile delinquency is a serious problem that must be addressed immediately, considering that adolescents as an asset of the nation bear a great burden on the future of their nation, so every element of society needs to pay serious attention to overcome this problem (Mahesha, et.al, 2024).

At the same time, the spirit of mutual cooperation as the nation's social identity has also experienced a worrying setback. The development of the times shows a shift in the orientation of society that tends to be more individualistic and pragmatic, a condition that has the potential to weaken the practice of mutual cooperation in daily life so that solidarity and togetherness are fading (Putri, et.al, 2023). This condition is a serious alarm that demands the attention of all elements of society

In the Islamic perspective, character formation (morality) is at the core of prophetic mission. The Prophet PBUH said: "*Innama bu'itstu liutammima makarima al-akhlaq*" (Verily I was sent only to perfect the glory of morality) (HR. Ahmad, No. 8952; Al-Bukhari in *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, No. 273). Madrasah as an Islamic educational institution bears a great responsibility in carrying out this mission. This is stated in **the Regulation of the Minister of Religion (Permenag) Number 90 of 2013 concerning the Implementation of Madrasah Education** which states that madrasahs are formal educational units under the guidance of the Minister of Religion that organize general and vocational education with the peculiarities of Islam, so that the formation of the noble character of students becomes an inseparable part of the purpose of its implementation.

The madrasah curriculum that is integrated between general science and religious science is designed not only to educate the intellect, but also to educate the heart and form behavior in accordance with Islamic values. Imam Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulumuddin* since the Middle Ages has emphasized that the formation of children's morals depends heavily on the quality of the environment and the example of the adults around him, both teachers and parents (Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Juz III, t.th., pp. 52-56).

However, Madrasah is not the only institution responsible for the formation of children's character. The family, as the smallest and first social unit in a child's

life, has an equally crucial role. Parents are the first and foremost educators for their children. The interactions that occur in the family environment are parenting, communication, parental examples, and the emotional atmosphere of the household that have a deep and lasting influence on the formation of children's personalities.

In *Ecological Systems Theory*, children's development is significantly influenced by their immediate environment, especially the family and school as the two main microsystems that play a direct role in the formation of cognitive, emotional, and moral aspects. The relationship and interaction between the two microsystems is called the mesosystem, which is reflected through a *home-school partnership*. A positive and meaningful connection between family and school has been proven to be able to support the success of education and optimal development of children (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Correspondingly, research over several months has shown that high-quality partnerships between families and schools provide great benefits for children's development, learning, and well-being. On the contrary, the weak synergy between these two microsystems has the potential to create gaps that hinder the internalization of positive values in children.

The problem that arises then is when there is a disparity or inconsistency between the values and approaches to character development applied in madrasahs and those applied in the family. The inconsistency of values between the madrasah environment and the family has the potential to cause moral confusion in children which ultimately hinders the formation of their character optimally. Through *Social Learning Theory*, children's behavior develops through the process of observation, imitation, and imitation of significant figures in their environment, such as teachers and parents. Children tend to emulate observed behaviors of individuals who are considered important or influential in their lives. Therefore, if the values and behaviors exemplified by teachers at school are fundamentally different from those displayed by parents at home, children can experience confusion in the process of forming values, which has the potential to hinder the consistent internalization of character (Bandura, 1977)

The intensity of coaching which includes frequency, depth, consistency, and quality of educational interaction is a key variable in measuring the effectiveness of character formation. Teachers who dedicate themselves intensively to guiding students, both inside and outside the classroom, will certainly have a different impact compared to teachers who only carry out teaching tasks minimally. Similarly, parents who are actively and consistently involved in child care will have a much greater influence than parents who are physically and emotionally absent. Effective character education is formed through the integration of three main components, namely *moral knowing* (knowledge of goodness), *moral feeling* (attitude or feeling towards goodness), and *moral action* (real action in doing good). These three aspects must be developed in a sustainable and consistent manner so that character values can be fully internalized in children. Therefore, the success of character formation requires intensive coaching synergy between school and family as the main environment of children's education (Lickona, 1991).

Although there has been considerable research on character education, most of the existing research tends to focus on one environment separately. Madrasas have a comparative advantage in the development of students' religious character because the integration of Islamic values in school culture, learning processes, and daily habits takes place more intensively than public schools. However, the study focuses more on the role of formal educational institutions and has not reviewed in depth the contribution of the family as the main environment in the formation of children's character (Marzuki, 2015). The family is the first and main educational environment that has a very important role in shaping children's character through parenting, example, and habituation of moral values from an early age. The focus of this study places the family as the main foundation of character education, but has not comprehensively compared its contribution with the role of formal educational institutions such as schools or madrasas in the process of developing children's character. (Helmawati, 2014). Zubaedi's (2011) study on character education design has not touched on the variable of coaching intensity as a determining factor for disparity. (Zubaedi, 2011).

Thus, there is a significant research *gap*: there has been no empirical study that simultaneously measures and compares the intensity of character development by teachers in madrasas and by parents at home, as well as analyzing the impact of disparities between the two on children's character development in real terms. More specifically, the problems identified include: (1) the absence of common standards between madrasas and families in applying character values consistently; (2) weak communication and coordination between teachers and parents; (3) the tendency of character development that only takes place in formal classrooms; and (4) the lack of parental involvement in the character development program designed by the madrasah.

The above disparity phenomenon is also found in the field in the context of MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru. As a madrasah located in a semi-rural environment of Banyubiru District with the majority of students coming from families with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru faces concrete challenges in ensuring the continuity of character values instilled in madrasas with those strengthened at home. On the one hand, the madrasah has implemented various structured character development programs ranging from the habit of congregational prayers, morning cults, tahfidz programs, to daily moral development that is carried out consistently by teachers. On the other hand, the intensity of parental involvement in the coaching process still varies greatly. Most parents, especially those who work in the informal sector with erratic working hours, experience limited time and capacity in providing consistent character reinforcement to their children. This condition empirically creates a fairly obvious disparity in character formation among the students of MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru and is the fundamental reason for choosing this institution as a research locu.

The urgency of this research is even stronger when it is associated with the national policy mandate. Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning the

Strengthening of Character Education (PPK) explicitly mandates the active involvement of families and communities as an integral part of the character education ecosystem, alongside the role of schools and madrasahs. However, the implementation of this regulation in the field, especially in madrasah environments such as MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru, still faces various structural and cultural obstacles that require in-depth empirical studies. This research is here to provide a concrete problem map as well as *evidence-based strategic recommendations* for all education stakeholders, especially madrasah heads, teachers, and parents of students.

Departing from the overall background, problem identification, and literature review search above, this article aims to examine, describe, and analyze in depth the disparity in children's character formation between the madrasah environment and the family environment in MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru, by placing the intensity of teacher and parent coaching as a central variable. More specifically, the focus of this article study is directed to: (1) a comparative description of the pattern and intensity of character development by teachers and parents; (2) analysis of the form and root causes of the disparities that occur; and (3) the formulation of a strategic collaboration model between madrasahs and families as an integrative solution. This article argues – as the central thesis statement – that the disparity in the formation of children's character in MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru is not a natural or inevitable condition, but rather a direct consequence of the difference in intensity, consistency, and quality of coaching between teachers and parents resulting from the absence of systemic synergy between the two. Therefore, efforts to narrow this character gap can only be optimally realized through the development of an integrated character education ecosystem, where MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru and the families of its students no longer play the role of entities that run in parallel and separately, but as strategic partners who strengthen each other in one vision of whole, consistent, and sustainable development

II. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type, because it is designed to deeply understand the phenomenon of disparity in student character formation in a natural (naturalistic) context through a comprehensive exploration of experiences, interactions, and social dynamics that occur in research subjects (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2018), namely the madrasah and family environment at MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru, Widodaren District, Ngawi Regency, East Java. The research lasted for six months (January-June 2026), covering the pre-field stage, data collection, analysis, and report preparation.

The subjects of the study were determined through purposive sampling techniques, including: madrasah heads (1 person), classroom teachers and PAI teachers (6 people), parents of students (12 people), and students in grades IV, V, and VI (18 people). The data source consists of primary data obtained from interviews, observations, and field documentation; and secondary data in the form of official madrasah documents.

Data collection in this study was carried out through triangulation methods to increase the validity and depth of findings, namely: (1) semi-structured in-depth interviews to comprehensively explore informants' perceptions, experiences, and views; (2) participant observation carried out for 12 weeks on various character development programs, such as congregational prayers, morning cults, and tahfidz Al-Qur'an; and (3) documentation studies of various supporting documents, including annual programs, student liaison books, habituation journals, and character evaluation reports (Creswell, 2014; Sugiyono, 2018; Patton, 2002).

Data analysis refers to the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) which includes four cyclical stages: data collection, data condensation (through open, axial, and selective coding), presentation of data in the form of analytical narratives and comparative matrices, and inductive drawing of conclusions accompanied by verification Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation of sources and methods, member checking, observation diligence, and trail audit to ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of research results.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Madrasah Based Character Development Program

Based on the results of observation and document review, it was found that eight character development programs were carried out regularly and continuously at MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru. These programs include the dimensions of daily worship, moral habituation, memorization of the Qur'an, environmental cleanliness, and madrasah-family communication, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Character Development Program at MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru

No.	Coaching Program	Frequency	Character Values Built
1	Congregational Dhuha Prayers	Daily	Religious, disciplined, responsible
2	Congregational Dhuhr Prayer	Daily	Religious, togetherness, order
3	Morning Cult (Tausiyah)	Daily	Religious, communicative, confident
4	Program Tahfidz Al-Qur'an	4x/week	Religious, tekun, sabar
5	5S Habituation (Smile, Greeting, Greeting, Politeness, Manners)	Daily	Respectful, polite, communicative

No.	Coaching Program	Frequency	Character Values Built
6	Classroom Hygiene Pickets	Daily	Responsibility, cooperation
7	Individual Moral Development by Homeroom Teachers	Weekly	All character values
8	Regular Teacher-Parent Meeting (Parenting)	Stuttgart	House-madrasah synergy

Quality and Consistency of Teacher Development

The results of 12 weeks of observation of six teachers showed variations in the intensity of character development. Four teachers (66.7%) displayed a high intensity characterized by personal example, immediate response to violations, individualized approach, and integration of values in learning. The other two teachers (33.3%) showed moderate intensity that was more reactive than proactive (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Table 2. Distribution of Character Development Intensity by Teachers (n=6)

Teacher Intensity Level	Number and Percentage (n=6)
High Intensity	4 teachers (66.7%)
Medium Intensity	2 teachers (33.3%)

"We can't just teach lessons and go home. These children need to be accompanied, need to be seen, need to be heard. If we don't consistently show good morals every day, how will our children learn? They record everything we do." – **Teacher of Grade V, in-depth interview**

Patterns and Intensity of Parental Involvement in Character Development Classification of Parental Involvement Patterns

Based on in-depth interviews and an analysis of an open questionnaire of 12 parents of students, this study identified three patterns of parental involvement in fostering children's character at home (Epstein, 2011; Santrock, 2018). The three patterns along with their characteristics and impact on children's character development are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Classification of Patterns of Parental Involvement in Character Development (n=12)

Engagement Patterns	Key Characteristics	Propose yourself	Impact on Children's Character
High (Intensive)	Daily active assistance, two-way communication with madrasas, consistency of values at home	25% (3 parents)	Character develops optimally and consistently
Moderate	Situational mentoring, involvement when there are problems, limited communication with teachers	41.7% (5 parents)	Character is quite developed but less consistent
Low (Minimal)	Minimal mentoring, emotional absence, very little communication with madrasas	33.3% (4 parents)	Characters are prone to inconsistencies and value dissonances

Factors Causing Low Intensity of Parental Involvement

This study identified four structural and cultural factors that cause some parents to be unable to provide optimal intensity of character development at home (Suryadi, 2019; Hasbullah, 2015). These factors and their implications for the coaching process are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Factors Inhibiting Parental Involvement in Character Development

No.	Inhibiting Factors	Proposing Informan	Implications of Construction
1	Time Constraints due to Workload	~58% of parents	Child assistance at home is very limited in quantity and quality
2	Low Pedagogical Capacity of Parents	~25% report	Construction at home is not in line with the madrasah approach
3	Lack of Madrasah Structural Communication – Family	~12% report	Alignment of values and strategies between parties is not built

No.	Inhibiting Factors	Proposing Informant	Implications of Construction
4	Delegative Assumptions for Madrasah	~5% report	Parents consider their role secondary

"I don't know how madrasas teach this. I can only ask my children to pray and not lie. More than that, I don't know how." – **Grade V student's father, in-depth interview**

Disparity in Student Character Formation

Manifestations of Character Disparity in Students

The results of the observation showed significant inconsistencies in character behavior in students from families with low engagement patterns. These students tend to adhere to behavioral norms in madrasas, but display counter-character behaviors such as lying to friends, disrespecting elders, and neglecting personal responsibilities when outside of the teacher's supervision (Sari & Nugroho, 2020). A comparison of the estimated behavioral consistency score between the two contexts is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of Estimation of Consistency of Student Character Behavior based on Parental Involvement Patterns (scale 0–100)

Parental Involvement Patterns	Score in Madrasah (/100)	Score Outside Madrasah (/100)
High/Intensive	90	85
Moderate / Moderate	82	60
Low / Minimal	75	35

The Root Causes of Disparity

Analysis of all research data shows that the disparity in character formation does not originate from the failure of one party alone, but from the absence of systemic synergy mechanisms between madrasas and families (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Epstein, 2011). Madrasah has made maximum efforts; So do most parents. But without a structured communication platform, without a coaching curriculum that can be adapted at home, and without a shared vision that both parties understand, each effort runs in parallel and in isolation.

Madrasah-Family Strategic Collaboration Model Basic Principles of Collaboration Models

This study formulates the SINERGI Model (Innovative System of Value Integration, Education, Relations, and Joint Movement) which is built on three basic principles: (1) equal roles between madrasas and families as strategic partners; (2) consistency of values as a common foundation that is agreed upon and implemented in harmony in both environments; and (3) the sustainability of the process embedded in the daily rhythm (Mulyasa, 2016; Wibowo, 2013).

Operational Components of the SINERGI Model

The SINERGI model includes four main components that are integrated with each other. Details of each component along with an operational description and expected output are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Operational Components of the SINERGI Model in Madrasah-Family Collaboration

No.	Components	Operational Description	Expected Output
1	Shared Character Map	The collaborative document contains priority values, behavioral indicators, coaching strategies, and targets per semester	Alignment of expectations and standards between teachers and parents
2	Madrasah Digital Communication Platform – Family	Structured digital system for character development reports, teacher-parent consultations, and sharing parenting resources	Ongoing and documented communication between the two parties
3	Parenting Capacity Building Program	Practical skills training for parents, conducted monthly in a flexible format	Parents are able to implement character development consistently at home
4	Integrated Character Monitoring System	Parallel monitoring instruments for teachers and parents, integrated in children's character development reports	Holistic and transparent monitoring by all stakeholders

Character Building Ecosystem: Between Intensity and Consistency

The findings of the study show that MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru has developed a comprehensive character development ecosystem through eight structured programs with daily to quarterly frequency. This is in line with the view of Lickona (1991) who asserts that true character is only formed through the integration of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action* that is practiced repeatedly and consistently. (Lickona, T. 1991).

However, the intensity of quantity is not always directly proportional to the quality of implementation. Two out of six teachers (33.3%) still display a pattern of coaching that is reactive, not proactive. These findings are in line with the view of Bandura (1977) that the effectiveness of *modeling* is highly dependent on the consistency of model behavior, not just the frequency of exposure (Bandura, 1977).

Parental Engagement: The Unoptimized Potential

A classification of parental involvement patterns revealed that only 25% of parents were intensively involved in developing children's character at home. Meanwhile, 41.7% were moderately involved and 33.3% were minimally involved. Low parental involvement is not solely a reflection of low concern, but is more caused by structural factors. These findings reinforce Epstein's (2011) argument that parental involvement in children's education cannot run optimally without structured institutional support from schools.

The findings regarding the delegative assumptions held by some parents – namely the assumption that the responsibility for character development has been completely left to the madrasah – need serious attention. This assumption directly weakens the continuity of coaching between madrassas and houses (Rahmawati, 2021).

Character Disparity as an Implication of Weak Mesosystem

The inconsistency of student character behavior found in this study is a direct manifestation of the weakness of the mesosystem within the framework of the developmental ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979). The data in Table 5 shows that students from families with high involvement have relatively equal behavioral consistency scores between the madrasah (90/100) and outside the madrasah (85/100). In contrast, students from low-engagement families showed a very significant gap between scores in madrassas (75/100) and outside madrassas (35/100).

These findings are in line with Lickona's (1991) warning that authentic characters are characters that manifest consistently in a variety of situational contexts. When children only display character behavior under the supervision of the teacher, it indicates that the new coaching has reached the level of *moral knowing* and has not been fully internalized as an autonomous *moral action* (Berkowitz & Bier, 2014).

SINERGI Model as an Integrative Response

The SYNERGY model formulated in this study is a strategic response to the root of the identified problem, namely the absence of systemic synergy mechanisms between madrassas and families. The four operational components are designed to strengthen the quality of the mesosystem through three paths at once: value alignment, smooth communication, and capacity building (Gunawan, 2014; Kurniawan, 2017).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study strengthens the framework of the ecological theory of development of Bronfenbrenner (1979) by presenting empirical evidence that the quality of the mesosystem between madrassas and families is an equally important – even more decisive – determinant than the quality of each microsystem independently. The following table 7 summarizes the relationship between the quality of the madrasa-family mesosystem and the estimation of optimal character development of children based on the findings of this study.

Table 7. The Relationship between the Quality of the Madrasah Mesosystem – Family and Estimation of Children's Character Development

The Quality of the Madrasah Mesosystem – Family	Optimal Character Development Estimate (/100)
Weak	35
Medium	62
Strong	88

Practically, this study underlines that the implementation of Presidential Regulation Number 87 of 2017 concerning the Strengthening of Character Education in the madrasah environment requires a fundamental paradigm shift: from a school-centric character education model to an ecosystem model that places madrasahs, families, and communities as equal and mutually responsible partners.

These findings are in line with Zubaedi's (2011) synthesis that an effective character education design must be multidimensional, involve the entire educational ecosystem, and be oriented towards authentic character formation – not characters that only look good under institutional supervision (Anwar, 2018; Prasetyo, 2015).

IV. CONCLUSION

This research produced several main conclusions that are interrelated. First, MI Birul Walidain Banyubiru has developed a comprehensive character development ecosystem through eight structured programs with dimensions of worship, morals, and the environment. However, the intensity of the quantity of the program has not been fully offset by the consistency of the quality of implementation, considering that

one-third of teachers still display a pattern of coaching that is reactive rather than proactive.

Second, the involvement of parents in fostering children's character at home is still far from optimal. Only 25% of parents are intensively involved, while the majority are constrained by structural factors such as limited time and low pedagogical capacity. This condition suggests that low parental involvement stems more from systemic barriers than from lack of care.

Third, the weak mesosystem between madrassas and families has proven to be the main root of student character disparities. Students from low-engagement families showed very significant behavioral score gaps between the madrasah and outside the madrasah context.

Fourth, the SINERGI Model formulated in this study offers a strategic collaboration framework that answers these problems integratively through four components: Shared Character Map, Digital Communication Platform, Parenting Strengthening Program, and Integrated Monitoring System.

Overall, this study emphasizes that the formation of authentic and consistent children's character cannot be achieved by madrassas or families independently. It requires a paradigm shift from a school-centric character education model to a collaborative ecosystem model that places madrassas and families as equal strategic partners, connected in one cohesive coaching network.

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