

## Strengthening santri character education through the learning of the kitab taklim muta'alim at pondok pesantren ulil albab ngawi

Sumarno <sup>a.1,\*</sup>, Widiyanto <sup>b.2</sup>, Mudofir <sup>c.3</sup>, Yusuf Rohmadi <sup>d.4</sup>, Nemer Alotaibi <sup>e.5</sup>

<sup>a</sup>\* STIT Muhammadiyah Ngawi, Indonesia; <sup>b</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Madani Yogyakarta, Indonesia; <sup>d</sup> UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia; <sup>e</sup> Islamic University of Medinah, Saudi Arabia

<sup>\*1</sup> gusmarno1912@gmail.com; <sup>2</sup> widiyanto.icbb@gmail.com; <sup>3</sup> mudhofir1527@gmail.com; <sup>4</sup> yusuf.rohmadi23@gmail.com; <sup>5</sup> nemeralotibiy@gmail.com

\*Correspondent Author

Received: 03-04-2025

Revised: 13-05-2025

Accepted: 30-06-2025

### KEYWORDS

Character of Santri;  
Book of Taklim Muta'alim;  
Islamic Boarding School.

### ABSTRACT

Character education is a primary focus in the development of the educational system at Pesantren Ulil Albab Ngawi. As an Islamic educational institution, it implements the learning of the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim as a means to strengthen the character education of its santri (students). This research aims to analyze how learning the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim can contribute to reinforcing character values. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach, where data was obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation. The research results indicate that learning the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim not only teaches religious aspects but also shapes positive attitudes and behaviors such as politeness, humility, honesty, responsibility, and discipline among the pesantren community, which form the foundation of santri character. To further strengthen character education through the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim at Pesantren Ulil Albab Ngawi, recommendations include: developing teacher training programs, integrating experience-based learning, and establishing assessment and monitoring mechanisms.

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-SA license.



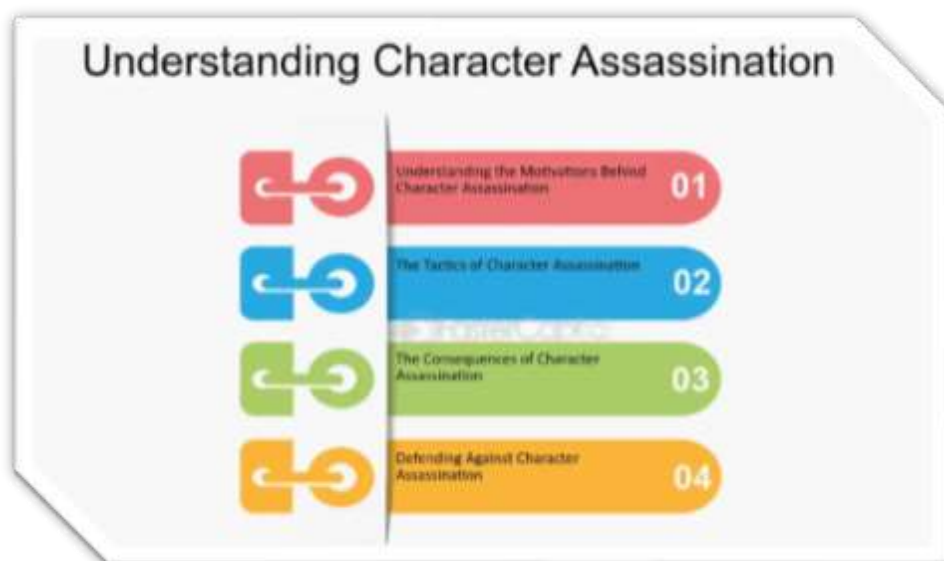
## Introduction

Character education is a fundamental aspect of Islamic education, especially within the pesantren system in Indonesia. (Hidayat et al., 2022) Amidst the strong currents of digital information and the onslaught of global culture, we often witness concerning phenomena. In various places like stalls, cafes, and other locations, we can see how young people's fingers dance nimbly across gadget screens. Yet, sometimes they are easily provoked into spreading false news, posting hateful comments on social media, or even participating in online bullying of their peers. (Hazyimara et al., 2023) In the real world, we observe the fading of politeness towards elders, an instant gratification mentality that overcomes hard work, and sometimes an indifferent attitude towards the difficulties of others or environmental sustainability.

Pesantren aims to produce not only knowledgeable individuals but also individuals with strong moral and ethical foundations. In this context, the Book of Taklim Muta'alim, a classic text written by Imam Al-Zarnuji, is widely used in Indonesian pesantren as a guide for students on how to acquire knowledge with proper behavior and ethics. (Rachman, 2021) This book emphasizes the importance of adab (*etiquette, manners*) as crucial to the success and benefits of learning. This study focuses on Pesantren Ulil Albab Ngawi and its specific approach to utilizing the Book of Taklim Muta'alim to strengthen students' character. The superiority of the Book of Taklim Muta'alim in Indonesian pesantren indicates a strong tradition of prioritizing character development alongside

academic learning in these institutions. (Dalimunthe & Siregar, 2023) Various materials mention the widespread use of this book in pesantren that still maintains the teaching of the yellow book (classical Islamic texts). This indicates that the book is considered a fundamental text for learning ethics within the framework of traditional Islamic education in Indonesia. The emphasis on manners that exceed even extensive knowledge highlights cultural values in Islamic boarding schools that are in line with the goals of character education.

The problem occurring today relates to the decline in students' character values, almost as if character in Indonesia is undergoing an assassination. Character assassination is a term that describes deliberate and malicious attempts to tarnish someone's reputation. This is a dangerous game that can destroy a person's life, career, and relationships. The prevalence of social media has made it easier for people to engage in character assassination, and the consequences can be devastating. Ranging from political campaigns to personal vendettas, character assassination can occur in various forms. It may be difficult to defend oneself against such attacks, and the damage they cause can be long-lasting. In this section, the author discusses the concept of character assassination in more detail and examines some ways it can manifest.



Picture 1. Understanding the Motivations Behind Character Assassination

From the image above, it can be understood that character assassination is often motivated by a desire for power, revenge, or simply the desire to hurt someone. In some cases, <sup>1</sup> it is part of a larger political or social agenda. Whatever the motivation, character assassination is a highly unethical act and damages the character of students. In this research, it is hoped that *santri*, as the nation's next generation, will be able to possess the positive character traits that are key to their success. This image shows how important the character values are that a *santri* must possess.

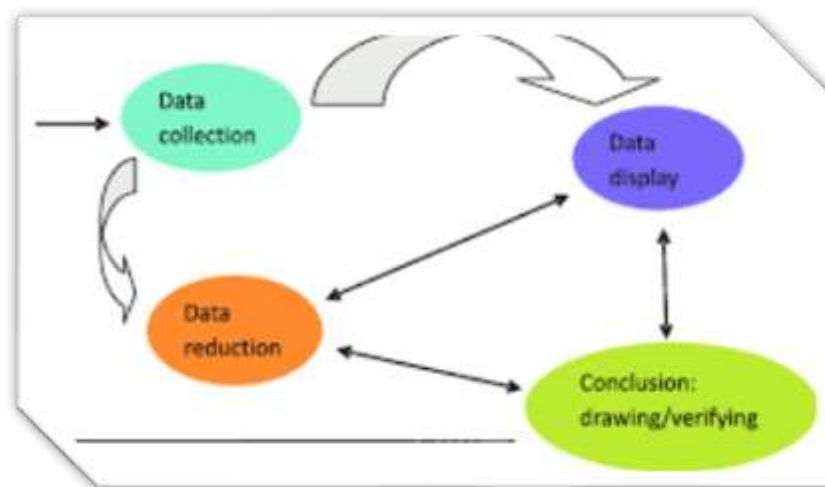


Picture 2. 15 examples of character traits

From the image above, *santri* as the next generation should possess several character traits, including: Ambitious, Creative, Compassionate, Conscientious, Courageous, Flexible, Honest, Humble, Honorable (Integrity), Loyal, Patient, Persistent, Resilient, Disciplined, and Curious. (This means the *santri* possess characters that are Ambitious, Creative, Compassionate, Conscientious, Courageous, Flexible, Honest, Humble, Honorable (Integrity), Loyal, Patient, Persistent, Resilient, Disciplined, and Curious)

## Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method that aims to provide an in-depth description of the strengthening of character education through learning the Taklim Muta'alim book at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School. The qualitative approach was chosen by researchers to understand social phenomena in a broader and more complex context. (Creswell, John W.J., 2018)



Picture 3. Components of Data Analysis: Interactive Model

Data were collected through several techniques, namely in-depth interviews with pesantren leaders/caregivers (*pengasuh*), teachers, and *santri* (students), as well as direct observation of the learning process in class. Interviews were conducted with 10 respondents, consisting of 5 leaders/caregivers (*pengasuh*) and 5 *santri*, with the aim of exploring their understanding of the importance of character education in the context of *kitab* (book) learning. Additionally, observation was carried out to record interactions between teachers and *santri* and the application of character values in daily activities at the pesantren. (Khilmiyah, 2016) The obtained data were then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, where the researcher(s) identified the main themes emerging from the collected data. Documentation also formed an important part of this research, where the researcher(s) collected teaching materials, curriculum, and activity records at the pesantren. This aimed to strengthen the data obtained from interviews and observations. (Sugiyono, 2013) Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of character education in pesantren through the learning of the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim.

## Result and Discussion

The book Taklim Muta'alim was written by a prominent scholar, namely Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji who is also known by the title Burhanul Islam. His full name is Shaykh Tajuddin Nu'man bin Ibrahim bin al-Khalil Al-Zarnuji. He was a writer in Bukhara at that time. This book is considered to be the only literary work of Imam Zarnuji that has come down to us today. (Ridwan & Abdurrohman, 2022) This book consists of 13 chapters (*fashls*) which are preceded by an introduction

(muqaddima). Muqaddima stated that this work was written to "straighten out" ethics in acquiring knowledge. This book provides life guidelines for seeking practical knowledge and the pleasure of Allah (mardhatillah). The main themes discussed include the nature and primacy of science and jurisprudence, intention to study, choosing knowledge, teachers and friends, respect for knowledge and scholars, sincerity and perseverance, the correct order of study, trust, study period, love and advice, taking lessons, awareness when studying, factors that influence memorization, and matters related to fortune and age. This book emphasizes the importance of ethics (adab) beyond just science. (Mihrajuddin & Muqowwim, 2022) This book also includes practical advice on how to acquire beneficial knowledge and increase one's fortune. This book has been widely read, understood, and commented on by many scholars in various Islamic countries since the lifetime of Al-Zarnuji. This book is considered an advanced text on ethics. (Suwandi et al., 2020)

The comprehensive nature of the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim, which covers various aspects of a student's life from intentions to practical matters such as sustenance, underlines his holistic approach to education and character building. The thirteen chapters detailed in various materials deal not only with the intellectual and ethical aspects of seeking knowledge but also the practical and spiritual dimensions of a student's journey. This shows that Al-Zarnuji intended the book to be a complete guide for students, forming their character in a holistic manner that encompasses all aspects of their existence. Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji died in 1200 CE. (Islam & Jakarta, 2020)

### 1. Instilling Character Through Muta'alim Taklim in Islamic Boarding Schools

Based on the general teachings of the Taklim Muta'alim Book for the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School, it has a positive impact on the character of the students. The character values that can be instilled in the students of the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School include the following:

- a. Religiosity, namely emphasizing a sincere intention to seek Allah's pleasure in learning, fostering piety (wara'), and promoting tawakal.
- b. Respect and Appreciation, namely fostering a deep respect for knowledge, teachers, and scholars, including special etiquette towards teachers.
- c. Perseverance and Tenacity, namely encouraging sincerity, perseverance, and continuous efforts in seeking knowledge, as well as patience in the learning process.
- d. Humility (Tawadhu'), namely promoting a humble attitude towards teachers and knowledge.
- e. Good Behavior (Akhlak Karimah), namely emphasizing the importance of politeness, etiquette, and ethical behavior in all aspects of a student's life.
- f. Responsibility, namely Cultivating a sense of responsibility towards learning and utilizing knowledge for good.
- g. Friendship and Socializing Skills, namely Guiding students in choosing good friends and fostering positive relationships.
- h. Gratitude, namely Encouraging students to be grateful for the ability to seek knowledge.
- i. Self-Discipline, namely Promoting discipline in learning habits and compliance with Islamic boarding school regulations.
- j. High Ideals, namely Encouraging students to have noble goals in seeking knowledge. (Mihrajuddin & Muqowwim, 2022)

The character values instilled through Taklim Muta'alim at Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School are in line with the core teachings of Islam and aim to develop individuals who are knowledgeable and have a strong moral and ethical compass. The values listed above are consistently emphasized in the teachings of Taklim Muta'alim as highlighted in various materials. These values are fundamental to Islamic ethics and are essential for the holistic development of students in the Islamic boarding school environment. The focus on religiosity, respect, perseverance, and humility aims to create individuals who are knowledgeable and have high

morals.

The decline in character (Azizah et al., 2024) of students at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School cannot be separated from various factors, both internal and external. In this case, the researcher conducted an interview with Ustadz Muhammad Yusuf as the caretaker of the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School regarding the factors that influence the lack of student morals. In the interview, he said that *"..., there are several factors. One of them is the influence of the external environment. Students are often exposed to modern culture which tends to prioritize unlimited freedom. In addition, education at home is also very influential. If the values of manners and morals are not instilled from an early age, it will be difficult for students to apply them in Islamic boarding schools."* (interview, 2025)

The implementation of the Taklim Muta'alim Book for character education (Mochammad Ircham Maulana, 2022) in Islamic boarding schools is not without challenges, especially those arising from language barriers, varying levels of understanding and commitment of students, the influence of external factors, and the need for effective pedagogical approaches and teacher training. The obstacles identified in the various materials highlight the complexity of translating the timeless wisdom of classical texts into practical character development in a contemporary context. Factors such as language differences, the digital era, and evolving social norms (Widiatmaka et al., 2023) can pose challenges to the effective implementation of the book's teachings.

## **2. Upaya Pesantren Ulil Albab Ngawi untuk Meningkatkan Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Taklim Muta'alim**

The efforts made by Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School to Improve Character Education Through Taklim Muta'alim are by implementing several strategies to optimize the role of the Taklim Muta'alim Book in character education, including;

- a) Integrating the teachings of Taklim Muta'alim into the daily life and activities of the Islamic boarding school.
- b) Providing consistent role models and guidance by teachers who embody the values of the book.
- c) Using a variety of teaching methods to accommodate various learning styles and increase student involvement.
- d) Emphasizing the practical application of the ethical principles of the book in real-life situations.
- e) Providing additional explanations and interpretations of texts in local languages.
- f) Implementing rules and regulations within the Islamic boarding school that reinforce the values taught in the book.
- g) Offering counseling and guidance to students regarding the development of ethics and morals.
- h) Organizing activities and programs that promote the internalization of character values.
- i) Repeating the study of the book to deepen understanding and internalization. (Islamic Boarding School Curriculum, 2025)

To optimize the role of the Taklim Muta'alim Book in character education, Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School has the potential to focus on strategies that bridge the gap between classical texts and the contemporary experiences of students, ensuring that ethical principles are not only understood intellectually but also internalized and practiced in their daily lives. Effective optimization will involve a multi-faceted approach that combines traditional teaching methods with innovative pedagogical strategies, teacher training, and a supportive Islamic boarding school environment that consistently reinforces the values espoused in Taklim Muta'alim. (Rachman, 2021)

In this case, the researcher also conducted an interview with Ustadz Abdul Qohar as the caretaker of the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic boarding school regarding the efforts of the Islamic boarding school to deal with the problem of declining manners. In this case, he stated that *"... In*



*the Islamic boarding school, we have several programs that aim to increase awareness of manners. First, we hold routine coaching that discusses morals and manners in everyday life. We also involve senior students to be role models for new students, so that they can learn directly from the good behavior shown by their seniors."* (interview, 2025)

The Taklim Muta'alim book remains a valuable and relevant resource in shaping the character of the future generation of Muslim scholars and leaders. By adopting an innovative and responsive approach to the needs of contemporary students, Islamic boarding schools such as Ulil Albab Ngawi can continue to optimize the role of this book in instilling eternal ethical and moral values. (Syahid, 2022)

*Table 1. Main Themes and Character Values in the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim*

<b>Chapter of Kitab Taklim Muta'alim</b>	<b>Character Values Emphasized</b>
The Nature of Knowledge, Fiqh, and Their Virtues	Love of Knowledge, Awareness of the Virtue of Knowledge
Intention in Learning	Sincerity, Seeking Allah's Pleasure, Eliminating Ignorance
Choosing Knowledge, Teacher, Friend, and Steadfastness	Wisdom in Choosing, Good Friendship, Patience, Perseverance
Glorifying Knowledge and Scholars	Respect for Knowledge and Teachers, Appreciation for Scholars
Earnestness, Continuity, and Enthusiasm	Earnestness, Perseverance, High Spirit, Noble Aspirations
The Beginning of Learning, Its Amount, and Its Order	Good Learning Planning, Prioritizing Beneficial Knowledge
Tawakal (Reliance on God)	Trust in Allah, Not Being Overly Worried about Sustenance
Productive Time in Learning	Good Use of Time, Lifelong Learning
Compassion and Advice	Compassion, Care, Mutual Advising, Avoiding Enmity
Taking Lessons	Openness to Knowledge from Various Sources, Humility
Being Wara' (Pious/Cautious) While Learning	Caution, Avoiding Doubtful and Useless Matters, Choosing a Good Environment
Causes of Memorization and Forgetfulness	Earnestness, Perseverance, Avoiding Sin, Peace of Mind
Things That Bring and Ward Off Sustenance, and Lifespan	Awareness of Allah's Laws, Striving through Halal Means, Not Being Overly Attached to Worldly Matters

### **3. Learning Objectives of the Muta'alim Taklim Book**

The purpose of studying the Book of Taklim Muta'alim is to guide students in obtaining knowledge with appropriate behavior. (Muhammad Ilham et al., 2024) This book aims to help students understand themselves and their environment in seeking knowledge, choosing teachers, subjects, and friends. In addition, this book aims to foster students to have noble character, good manners, and respect teachers, friends, and parents. This book also provides students with basic morality in learning, helps them achieve the benefits and blessings of knowledge, develops a counseling approach based on Islamic values, straightens out ethics in obtaining knowledge, helps

students understand the importance of manners before knowledge, ensures that students who are serious about seeking knowledge also succeed in obtaining it and benefit from it, and explains to students about the correct ethics and procedures when seeking knowledge, so that they can obtain knowledge that is blessed and useful.

The learning objectives of the Kitab Taklim Muta'alim go beyond academic achievement to focus on the ethical and spiritual development of the students, emphasizing the cultivation of virtue and proper behavior in all aspects of their lives. The objectives stated in the various materials consistently highlight the importance of manners and ethical behavior in seeking knowledge.(Musdalifa, Aminullah, 2024) The goal is not only to obtain information but to become highly moral individuals who can benefit from and apply their knowledge in a way that is pleasing to Allah and beneficial to society. In this case, the researcher also conducted an interview with Ustadz Khoirul as the caretaker of the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic boarding school regarding whether there were any visible changes after the guidance on manners was carried out. In this interview, he said that *"... Yes, I see positive changes. Although the process is not instant, we are starting to see students who respect their teachers more and are more sensitive to ethics in interacting. One indicator of our success is the increase in student participation in religious and social activities that we hold."* (interview, 2025).

4. Relevance of the Muta'alim Taklim Book to Character Education

This book emphasizes that manners are more important than knowledge itself. It provides guidance on developing good morals and the correct way to seek knowledge. It aims to produce graduates who are knowledgeable in religious and worldly knowledge, have strong moral character, and are equipped with essential life skills.(Mihrajuddin & Muqowwim, 2022) This book offers solutions to educational problems, especially regarding teacher and student ethics. This book is very relevant to character education because it collects learning guidelines that emphasize the importance of manners in seeking knowledge. This book teaches students about commendable morals and the correct procedures for seeking knowledge, with the hope that the knowledge they gain will be useful when they serve in society. The content of this book about the procedures for students in seeking knowledge is very relevant to today's world of education. This book offers alternative solutions to educational problems, especially regarding teacher and student ethics that are increasingly being squeezed by worldly elements that are increasingly neglectful. This book emphasizes the importance of good morals in achieving success in learning. This book is considered the main reference in the teaching and learning process among students, emphasizing aspects of moral values, both external and internal character in the learning process. This book teaches that education is not just a transfer of knowledge and skills, but most importantly the transfer of moral values.(Mushofa, 2023)

The enduring relevance of the Book of Taklim Muta'alim to character education lies in its age old wisdom regarding the ethical and moral prerequisites for truly beneficial learning, addressing fundamental aspects of human behavior and interaction in the context of education. The emphasis on adab as a prerequisite for beneficial knowledge remains relevant in contemporary society, where ethical considerations in education are increasingly important.(Ridwan & Abdurohim, 2022) This book's detailed guidance on the student-teacher relationship, intentions, and personal behavior provides a framework for character development that transcends time and cultural context.

Table 2. Educational Programs and Focus at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School, Ngawi

Education Level/Program	Program Focus and Objectives
SMP (Junior High School)	Strong academic foundation, character development, in-depth religious knowledge (Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Akhlak)

SMK (Vocational High School)	Practical skills for the workforce, vocational programs (Computer & Network Engineering, Office Administration, Accounting)
Tahfidz Program	Ability to read, memorize, and translate the Qur'an well, integration of religious and academic education
Language Program	Ability to read, speak, and understand texts in Arabic and English, intensive training
Science Program (MIPA)	Development of skills and knowledge in Mathematics and Natural Sciences (IPA) systematically
Entrepreneurship Program	Development of entrepreneurial skills, business fundamentals, innovation, management, practical training

Table 3. Perbandingan Pendekatan Pendidikan Karakter

Character Education Approach	Basic Principles	Main Focus	Pedagogical Methods
Taklim Muta'alim	Islamic religious and moral values, ethics of seeking knowledge	Development of character through understanding and application of adab in the learning process	Textual teaching (bandongan, sorogan), advice, role modeling
Other Islamic Ethics Texts	Broader Islamic moral and ethical values	General moral development (akhlak) in various aspects of life	Textual teaching, discussion, implementation in daily activities
Modern Secular Approach	Universal values (honesty, responsibility, etc.)	Character development not tied to a specific religion	Project-based learning, ethical dilemma discussions, community service activities
Experiential Learning	Learning through action and reflection	Character development through direct experience and social interaction	Extracurricular activities, community service, simulations

## 5. Changes in the Character of Students at Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School after Studying the Muta'alim Taklim Book

### a. Increasing Students' Motivation to Learn

Islamic boarding schools as traditional Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia have an important role in shaping the character and intellectuality of students. One crucial aspect in the success of education in Islamic boarding schools is the enthusiasm of students to learn. High enthusiasm for learning will encourage students to be diligent, persistent, and proactive in seeking knowledge. Students of Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School Ngawi showed higher motivation in participating in teaching and learning activities. They were more active in asking questions, discussing, and doing the assignments given. This is believed to be influenced by the understanding of the importance of sincere intentions in



seeking knowledge, as emphasized in Ta'lim Muta'allim. Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School Ngawi, as one of the Islamic boarding school educational institutions, realizes the importance of instilling noble values in the learning process of students. The implementation of the study of the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book is expected to have a positive impact on the enthusiasm for learning of students. Therefore, this study aims to examine in depth how the study of the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book affects the enthusiasm for learning of students at Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School Ngawi. The spirit of learning is an internal and external drive that drives individuals to be actively and enthusiastically involved in the learning process. The spirit of learning is reflected in high motivation, perseverance, great interest in the subject matter, and efforts to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

In this case, the author conducted an interview with one of the caretakers of the Islamic boarding school, namely Ustadz Kisbullah, regarding changes in the students' learning motivation after they studied the Ta'lim Muta'allim book. In this interview, he said that; *"... Alhamdulillah, I saw quite a significant change in the students' learning motivation after they studied Ta'lim Muta'allim. Before studying this book, sometimes there were some students who seemed less enthusiastic, complained easily, or were less focused on studying. However, after we studied the teachings in Ta'lim Muta'allim, especially those related to sincere intentions, the virtue of knowledge, and how to achieve it, I noticed a quite encouraging improvement.* (Interview, 2025).

Furthermore, the author also conducted an interview with Ustadz Fahri as the caretaker at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School regarding concrete examples of increasing learning motivation through studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book. From the results of this interview, he said *"... Of course. For example, in terms of attendance at the science assembly. In the past, sometimes there were students who were late or even absent without a clear reason. But now, after they understand how important it is to value knowledge and time, as taught in Ta'lim Muta'allim, their attendance has become better and more punctual. In addition, in the learning process in class, they also seem more enthusiastic in asking questions, discussing, and doing assignments. There is a greater initiative from themselves to actively seek knowledge.* (Interview, 2025).

In addition to interviews regarding this, the author also documented the enthusiasm of students to learn at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School after studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book as shown in the following picture;



Picture 4. *Changes in the Learning Spirit of Ulil Albab Ngawi Students*

b. Improving Student Discipline

Students become more disciplined in following the study schedule, completing assignments on time, and obeying the rules of the pesantren. The emphasis on manners

and etiquette in Ta'lim Muta'allim is believed to contribute to this increase in discipline. One of the key factors underlying this increase in discipline is the strong emphasis in Ta'lim Muta'allim on the importance of manners and etiquette in seeking knowledge. This book explicitly teaches about a student's obligations to his teacher, to knowledge itself, and to time. The concept of respecting the teacher as a source of knowledge, as explained in various chapters of Ta'lim Muta'allim, indirectly instills an awareness of the importance of obeying all directions and rules set by the pesantren as a representation of the teacher's authority. Students who understand and internalize this value tend to be more obedient and disciplined in carrying out instructions. Furthermore, Ta'lim Muta'allim also emphasizes effective time management and avoiding all forms of laziness and procrastination. The teachings about the importance of making the best use of time in seeking knowledge, as well as the negative consequences of negligence, are believed to have had a significant psychological impact on students. Awareness of the value of time and responsibility as a *thalibul ilmi* (seeker of knowledge) encourages them to be more organized and disciplined in carrying out their daily routines at the Islamic boarding school.

In addition, the Ta'lim Muta'allim study also instills a deeper understanding of the goals and benefits of seeking knowledge. When students understand that discipline is one of the main prerequisites for achieving success in learning and gaining useful knowledge, their internal motivation to be disciplined will increase. They no longer see discipline as merely a rule that must be obeyed, but as an integral part of their efforts to achieve their ideals and gain Allah's pleasure through the knowledge they learn. This change in disciplined behavior is also seen in the students' social interactions. Understanding the importance of maintaining order and respecting others, which is also mentioned in Ta'lim Muta'allim in the context of socializing with study friends, contributes to the creation of a more conducive and orderly pesantren environment. Students become more responsible for their actions and are aware of the impact of indiscipline on themselves and the pesantren community. In this case, the author interviewed Ustadz Khoirul Musthofa as the supervisor of discipline about his views on the level of student discipline before and after the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book study program. In the interview, he said that;

*"... Frankly, we see quite significant changes. Before the students intensively studied Ta'lim Muta'allim, the challenges in enforcing discipline were more pronounced. There were only minor violations such as being late for activities, being untidy in dress, or being undisciplined in maintaining cleanliness. However, after this book was taught systematically, thank God, we felt quite real improvements. (Interview, 2025).*

The following documentation of changes in the students' disciplinary attitudes after studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book provides a strong philosophical foundation about the importance of order and obedience in seeking knowledge. This book teaches about a student's manners towards his teacher, towards knowledge, and towards time. When students understand that discipline is part of manners and is a requirement for obtaining useful knowledge, they become more motivated to be disciplined. The emphasis on

respecting teachers, for example, indirectly fosters obedience to the rules set by the Islamic boarding school.



Figure 5. Disciplinary Attitude of Ulil Albab Ngawi Students

Although this study shows an increase in discipline after the Ta'lim Muta'allim study, it is important to note that other factors in the pesantren environment, such as the role model of the ustadz, a consistent system of supervision and sanctions, and a positive learning culture, also contribute to the formation of students' discipline. However, this finding provides a strong indication that the values contained in Ta'lim Muta'allim have a significant role in instilling awareness and internal motivation for students to be more disciplined.

c. Awareness of the Importance of Knowledge and Manners of Santri.

Studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book fosters a deeper awareness in students of the importance of knowledge accompanied by noble manners. They understand that knowledge without manners will not provide optimal benefits. The findings of this study significantly highlight an increase in awareness among students of Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School regarding the essential integration of knowledge and manners after they studied the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book. Observations and in-depth interviews revealed a change in students' perspectives that were more holistic towards educational goals, where mastery of subject matter was no longer seen as separate from the formation of character and behavior with noble morals. This awareness was manifested in more intrinsic learning motivation, more polite social interactions, and deeper self-reflection regarding their goals in seeking knowledge.

The Ta'lim Muta'allim book plays a central role in instilling a deep understanding of the urgency of combining knowledge and manners. Imam Az-Zarnuji not only discusses effective methods of acquiring knowledge, but also places strong emphasis on the ethics of a seeker of knowledge. He explains that knowledge without manners will be empty, and even has the potential to have a negative impact on oneself and others. On the contrary, good manners will be the right place for knowledge to develop and provide optimal benefits. These teachings open the students' horizons about the true nature of knowledge, which is not only limited to the cognitive aspect but also includes moral and spiritual dimensions. After studying Ta'lim Muta'allim, the students of Ulil Albab Ngawi showed a more comprehensive understanding of their purpose in being in the Islamic boarding school. They are no longer merely oriented towards achieving academic grades, but also realize the importance of forming noble character as an integral part of the process of seeking knowledge. This awareness is reflected in their attitudes that value the learning

process more, respect teachers and fellow students, and have greater responsibility for themselves and the Islamic boarding school environment.

In order to understand more deeply about the problems of santri's manners in the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School environment, we conducted an interview with Ustadz Kisbullah, as the caretaker of the boarding school. This interview aims to obtain his views and perspectives on the issues of manners faced by students today. In this interview, the researcher asked the main problem about the importance of manners "What does Ustadz Kisbullah see as the main problem related to santri's manners today.

*"... The main problem we face is the lack of awareness of students about the importance of manners in everyday life. Many students come from different backgrounds, who sometimes have a lack of understanding of the norms of manners that are upheld in Islamic boarding schools. This causes impolite behavior, both towards teachers and fellow students." (interview, 2025)*

Furthermore, the researcher also conducted an interview with Ustadz Fahri Wafa as the caretaker of the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic boarding school regarding what are the hopes for the development of the students' morals in the future. In this interview he said that *"... My hope is that all students in this Islamic boarding school can become individuals who not only understand religious knowledge, but also excel in morals. I want them to be role models in society. Thus, it is hoped that they can become ambassadors of da'wah who bring good Islamic values." (interview, 2025)*

In addition to the interview above, the author also documented the Awareness of the Importance of Knowledge and Manners of Students at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School after studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book as shown in the following picture;



Figure 6. The Importance of Knowledge and Manners of Ulil Albab Ngawi Students

Furthermore, the Ta'lim Muta'allim study also highlights the dangers of knowledge that is not accompanied by manners. The stories and advice in this book provide a clear picture of how knowledge that is not managed properly can lead to arrogance, disputes, and abuse of power. This understanding encourages students to be more humble, avoid the attitude of feeling the most correct, and always try to practice the knowledge they have acquired in a good and useful way. The increased awareness of the importance of knowledge and manners also has an impact on the social interactions of students inside and outside the pesantren environment. They become more sensitive to norms of politeness, respect differences of opinion, and are able to communicate effectively based

on good ethical values. The knowledge they learn becomes the foundation for their actions and words, thus reflecting a person who is knowledgeable and has noble morals.

d. Better Relationships with respect for Teachers.

Understanding the importance of respecting teachers, as taught in Ta'lim Muta'allim, contributes to the creation of a more harmonious relationship between students and ustadz. Students become more polite and appreciate the guidance given. One of the significant findings in this study is the improvement in the quality of the relationship between students of Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School and their teachers after participating in the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book study program. Observations and interviews showed positive changes in the interactions between students and ustadz, which were marked by increased respect, compliance with advice, and appreciation for the role and knowledge shared by educators. These changes were not only formal in the context of teaching and learning activities in the classroom, but were also reflected in informal interactions outside the classroom.

The Ta'lim Muta'allim book explicitly and repeatedly emphasizes the importance of respecting teachers as one of the keys to success in seeking knowledge. Imam Az-Zarnuji outlines various manners and ethics of a student towards his teacher, starting from listening attentively when the teacher speaks, not refuting the teacher's opinion without a strong reason, to showing humility and gratitude for the guidance given. These teachings become a strong philosophical foundation for students to build positive and respectful relationships with their educators. After studying Ta'lim Muta'allim, Ulil Albab Ngawi students showed a deeper understanding of the position of teachers in the Islamic scientific tradition. They no longer only see teachers as conveyors of lesson materials, but also as figures who have knowledge, experience, and wisdom that are worthy of respect and emulation. This awareness fosters a polite attitude in communicating, both verbally and non-verbally. Students become more careful in speaking, avoid words or actions that can offend the teacher's feelings, and show enthusiasm in accepting the guidance given. Next, the author conducted an interview with the caretaker of the Islamic boarding school, Ustadz Muhammad Yusuf, to find out more about the dynamics of the relationship between students and teachers at the Ulil Albab Islamic Boarding School, Ngawi, before and after the emphasis on the study of the Ta'lim Muta'allim Book. In the interview, he said that;

*'... I see a significant change towards a more positive direction. Before this book became an important part of the curriculum, the interaction between students and teachers was sometimes still formal and limited to instructional relationships in the classroom. However, after students studied Ta'lim Muta'allim, especially the chapters that discuss student etiquette towards teachers, I felt an increase in respect, obedience, and even better emotional closeness. (interview, 2025)*

In addition to the interview above, the author also documented this study on Good Relationships with Respect for Teachers of Students at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic



Boarding School after studying the Ta'lim Muta'allim book as shown in the following picture;



*Figure 7. Good Relationship with respect for Teachers*

Furthermore, Ta'lim Muta'allim also teaches about the importance of praying for teachers and trying to please them. Understanding the spiritual value of this action is believed to have encouraged students to care more about the welfare and ease of teachers in carrying out their duties. A proactive attitude to help teachers in small matters, showing concern for their condition, and praying for their well-being are concrete manifestations of deep respect. Improving the quality of relationships with teachers has significant positive implications for the teaching and learning process. When a harmonious and trusting relationship is established, communication between teachers and students becomes more effective. Students feel more comfortable asking questions, discussing, and consulting with teachers about their learning difficulties. Teachers are also more motivated to give their best in educating and guiding students. This conducive and supportive learning environment ultimately contributes to improving the overall quality of education.

In addition, instilling the value of respect for teachers through Ta'lim Muta'allim studies also shapes the character of students to be more civilized and respectful of older people or those with more knowledge. This value is not only relevant in the context of relationships with teachers in Islamic boarding schools, but also becomes valuable provisions for students in interacting with the wider community in the future. However, it should be considered that the effectiveness of instilling the values of Ta'lim Muta'allim is also influenced by the teaching methods applied by the ustadz. Teachers who are able to exemplify an attitude of respect and affection towards students will be more effective role models. In addition, in-depth dialogue and discussion regarding the content of Ta'lim Muta'allim will help students to better understand and internalize the values taught. This finding is in line with the view that universal values in Ta'lim Muta'allim are still very relevant in shaping character and increasing students' enthusiasm for learning, especially in Islamic boarding schools. This study strengthens the argument that education based on classical Islamic values can make a positive contribution in facing the challenges of modern education.

## Conclusion

From the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that the Taklim Muta'alim Book plays an important role in character education at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School with a focus on instilling ethical and moral values that underlie the process of seeking knowledge. The Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School adopts a holistic educational approach that integrates religious studies, academic learning and modern skills development. In terms of the available



materials providing specific details about the implementation of Taklim Muta'alim in this Islamic boarding school, it does not use traditional methods such as bandongan and sorogan to teach the book, but with a lecture teaching method and implementing it directly with an emphasis on values such as politeness, religiosity, respect, perseverance, humility, and good behavior.

To further strengthen character education through the Taklim Muta'alim Book at the Ulil Albab Ngawi Islamic Boarding School, there are several recommendations that can be considered, namely; first, Development of Teacher Training Programs, namely Developing teacher training programs that focus on the pedagogy of Taklim Muta'alim and its application in character development. This training can include strategies to overcome language barriers, use innovative teaching methods, and facilitate meaningful discussions about the practical application of the teachings of the book. Second, Integration of Experience-Based Learning, namely Integrating experience-based learning activities that reinforce the ethical principles taught in the book. This can include community service projects, role simulations, or reflection activities that encourage students to apply the values of the book in real-life situations. Third, Assessment and Monitoring Mechanisms, namely Establishing mechanisms to assess and monitor the impact of Taklim Muta'alim on the character development of students. This can involve behavioral observations, surveys, or portfolios that document the ethical and moral growth of students.

## References

- Azizah, M., Hasan, M. S., & Syaie, A. N. K. (2024). Ta'lim Muta'allim: Solutions for Forming the Ta'dzim Attitude of Generation Z Students towards Teachers. *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman*, 13(1), 15–28. <https://doi.org/10.54437/urwatulwutsqo.v13i1.1334>
- Amirudin, N. (2020). Konsep Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim Karangan Imam Az-Zarnuji. *Tamaddun*, 21(2), 161-182.
- Creswell, John W.J., D. C. (2018). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Fifth Edition*. SAGE Publications.
- Dalimunthe, I. S., & Siregar, M. (2023). Rekontekstualisasi Isi Kandungan Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim dalam Membentuk Akhlak Belajar Santri di Masa Kini. *JKIP: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(1), 208–219.
- Fajrin, S. (2021). Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Akhlak Dalam Kitab Ta'limul Muta'alim Untuk Meningkatkan Kedisiplinan Belajar Di Pondok Pesantren Nasruddin. Kabilah: *Journal of Social Community*, 6(2), 88-101.
- Hazyimara, K., Suwarni, W. S. D., Indriani, F., & Rosdiana. (2023). Peran Guru dalam Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik Sebagai Respon Terhadap Degradasi Moral. *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5(2), 1057–1068. <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v5i2.421>
- Hidayat, M., Rozak, R. W. A., Hakam, K. A., Kembara, M. D., & Parhan, M. (2022). Character education in Indonesia: How is it internalized and implemented in virtual learning? *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 41(1), 186–198. <https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v41i1.45920>
- Hakim, A. R., Zohrani, Z., Yazid, M., Kudsiah, M., & Alwi, M. (2021). Pengaruh Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Perkembangan Emosional dan Akhlak Peserta Didik. *Jurnal DIDIKA: Wahana Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 7(1), 149-162
- Islam, F. A., & Jakarta, U. M. (2020). *Syeikh Az- Zarnuji Dalam Kitab Ta ' Lim*. 1–100.
- Khilmiyah, A. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Metode Penelitian Kualitatif.
- Mihrajuddin, A., & Muqowwim, M. (2022). Kontekstualisasi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim. *TARBAWI: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 7(02), 186–203. <https://doi.org/10.26618/jtw.v7i02.4792>
- Mochammad Ircham Maulana. (2022). Teachers' Enactments of Character Education: A Case Study from Indonesia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 13(2), 122–132.
- Muhammad Ilham, Darraz, M. A., & Fatimah, A. (2024). Concepts of self-control and zuhud in character education: A perspective of stoicism and sufism. *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(1), 110–119. <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v6i1.668>

- Musdalifa, Aminullah, F. (2024). *At Turots : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam seorang pendidik*. 6(1), 42–52. doi: <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v6i1.554>
- Mushofa, M. (2023). Kandungan Kitab Ta'lim Muta'alim dan Relevansinya Dengan Pendidikan Kontemporer. *Indonesian Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 22–33. <https://doi.org/10.56916/ijess.v2i1.355>
- Rachman, F. (2021). Konsep Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Ta'Limul Muta'Allim Karya Imam Az-Zarnuji Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Kurikulum 2013. *Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam Fakultas Ilmu Agama Islam Universitas Islam Indonesia* .
- Ridwan, I., & Abdurohim. (2022). Pengaruh Pembelajaran Kitab Ta'lim Al - Muta'allim Terhadap Pembentukan Etika Belajar Santri Pondok Pesantren Ath-Thohariyah Desa Sindanghayu Kecamatan Saketi Kabupaten Pandeglang. *Jawara: Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 8(1), 50–72. <https://jurnal.untirta.ac.id/index.php/JAWARA/index%0APengaruh>
- Roziqin, M. K., & Hasbullah, I. W. (2023). Implementasi Pembelajaran Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim Dalam Membina Akhlak Santri Bahrul 'Ulum Tambakberas Jombang. *Jurnal Education And Development*, 11(1), 121-127.
- Ridwan, I., & Abdurohim, A. (2022). Pengaruh Pembelajaran Kitab Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim Terhadap Pembentukan Etika Belajar Santri Pondok Pesantren Ath-Thohariyah Desa
- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*. Alfabeta CV.
- Suwandi, E., Priyatna, O. S., & Kamalludin, H. (2020). Pembelajaran Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim Terhadap Perilaku Santri. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Sosial Humaniora*, 5(2), 93-98.
- Sindanghayu Kecamatan Saketi Kabupaten Pandeglang. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter JAWARA (Jujur, Adil, Wibawa, Amanah, Religius, Akuntabel)*, 8(1). 50-72
- Suwandi, E., Priyat, O. S., & Kamalludin, H. (2020). Pembelajaran Kitab Ta'Lim Muta'Allim Terhadap Perilaku Santri. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Sosial Humaniora*, 5(2), 3–8.
- Syahid, N. (2022). *Peranan Ta'Limul Muta'Allim Dalam Pembelajaran Modern*. 4, 55–73.
- Widiatmaka, P., Mujahidah, N., Rahmap, R., & Arifudin, A. (2023). Pendidikan karakter melalui karang taruna untuk membangun karakter sosial pada generasi digital native. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 14(1), 32–41. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpka.v14i1.57036>