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## Vol. 2 No. 1 (2024): Educational Transformation and Character Development



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## Producing a Generation of Character: Transforming Responsibility, Discipline, and Society Through Tapak Suci in Primary Schools

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**Keywords:** Responsibility, Discipline, Social Character, Character Education

### ABSTRACT

This research focuses on strengthening the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students through extracurricular activities of Tapak Suci. The background of this research is the phenomenon of weak implementation of character values in the formal education environment, such as unpunctuality, incomplete attributes, and lack of student responsibility for assignments. This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study to deeply understand the influence of Tapak Suci activities on the formation of students' character. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with madrasah heads, coaches, and students; direct observation during the implementation of activities; and documentation analysis. The data analysis technique uses the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that Tapak Suci activities contribute significantly in shaping responsibility through the habit of being present on time, wearing complete attributes, and complying with training rules. The character of discipline is formed through structured routines, such as opening prayers, core exercises, and closing salutes. In addition, students' social character is strengthened through pair exercises that emphasize cooperation, empathy, and concern for friends. The implication of this study is that the Tapak Suci program can be used as a model for holistic character education development, especially in religion-based institutions. These findings contribute to the literature on character education and become the basis for the development of more applicable policies to improve students' moral and social integrity.

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# Producing a Generation of Character: Transforming Responsibility, Discipline, and Society Through Tapak Suci in Primary Schools

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## Abstract

This research focuses on strengthening the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students through extracurricular activities of Tapak Suci. The background of this research is the phenomenon of weak implementation of character values in the formal education environment, such as unpunctuality, incomplete attributes, and lack of student responsibility for assignments. This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of case study to deeply understand the influence of Tapak Suci activities on the formation of students' character. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with madrasah heads, coaches, and students; direct observation during the implementation of activities; and documentation analysis. The data analysis technique uses the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that Tapak Suci activities contribute significantly in shaping responsibility through the habit of being present on time, wearing complete attributes, and complying with training rules. The character of discipline is formed through structured routines, such as opening prayers, core exercises, and closing salutes. In addition, students' social character is strengthened through pair exercises that emphasize cooperation, empathy, and concern for friends. The implication of this study is that the Tapak Suci program can be used as a model for holistic character education development, especially in religion-based institutions. These findings contribute to the literature on character education and become the basis for the development of more applicable policies to improve students' moral and social integrity.

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## INTRODUCTION

Student character is one of the important foundations in the formation of superior human resources (Dewi & Alam, 2020; Ercantan & Eyupoglu, 2022; Banmairuroy et al., 2022). A decline in the quality of Indonesian students' character, especially in the value of responsibility and discipline (Hidayati et al., 2020; Gamage et al., 2021; Zulela et al., 2022). This phenomenon has an impact on students' low ability to meet learning targets, adapt in teams (Whillans et al., 2021; Niemi, 2021; Zhai & Wibowo, 2023), and face global challenges. Character education cannot rely solely on a cognitive approach through classroom learning (Maftuh, 2023; Kharisma, 2024; Holili et al., 2024). A more applicative and contextual method is needed to instill character values in students' lives (Budiman et al., 2021; Damayanti et al., 2023; Hermawan & Asnawi, 2023). In the theory of character education by Lickona (Berkowitz et al., 2020), character formation requires a structured environment and consistent habituation to build individual morality and integrity (Phelps & Brown, 2023; Zaini, 2023; Basri et al., 2024). Therefore, this research focuses on Tapak Suci's extracurricular activities as an effective medium to integrate learning the values.

The results of initial observations show that students at MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat face challenges in implementing the values of responsibility and discipline. Many students arrive late to school, do not wear their uniforms properly, and tend to be less concerned about the cleanliness of the environment. This phenomenon not only hinders the learning process, but also contradicts the vision of education to produce a generation with integrity. In addition, formal learning activities are not effective enough to instill character values in depth, so a more innovative approach is needed. Tapak Suci, as a martial arts activity that also instills moral and religious values, is a potential alternative to answer this problem. However, the effectiveness of this activity in building student character still requires further study to provide deeper insights.

The research of Dindorf et al. (2024), highlights the importance of character education through habituation of the values of responsibility and discipline, showing that collaboration-based activities can improve students' ability to manage tasks and obey rules. However, this research is limited to the context of formal learning in the classroom. Muzaki & Ali. (2024), found that Tapak Suci activities are effective in building the character of social responsibility, especially through group exercises that instill the value of cooperation. This research does not review the discipline aspect which is one of the important focuses in character education. Meanwhile, Martín-Rodríguez et al. (2024) show that physical approaches such as martial arts are able to build values of empathy and solidarity, but have not touched on the role of these activities in strengthening individual responsibility. This research seeks to fill the void by integrating an in-depth analysis of responsibility, discipline, and social character through Tapak Suci activities.

Although many studies have discussed the importance of character education, no one has comprehensively examined the influence of Tapak Suci activities in building responsibility, discipline, and cooperation at the same time. Most previous studies have focused on only one aspect of character without looking at the interactive relationship between these values. In addition, research linking martial arts activities to a holistic approach based on religion and habituation is still very limited. This research fills this gap by exploring the impact of the Tapak Suci program as a whole, as well as providing a theoretical and practical foundation for the development of character education in Indonesia.

This research presents novelty by integrating a religious physical activity-based approach to shape students' character holistically. Tapak Suci, as a self-defense program based on Islamic values, is used to combine the strengthening of students' responsibility, discipline, and social character. Another novelty offered is the model of implementing activities that not only focuses on individual development but also strengthens social relationships between students through group cooperation and habituation of moral values. This perspective makes a new contribution to the literature on character education, especially in the context of religion-based education.

This study aims to analyze how Tapak Suci activities can strengthen the character of responsibility, discipline, and cooperation of students in MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat. This goal is important to answer the needs of character education that are relevant to global challenges and current social realities. Through this research, it is hoped that an effective habituation model will be created in building character values that can be implemented in other schools. In addition, the results of this research are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of a more applicable and contextual character education policy in Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type of research. This approach was chosen because it allows an in-depth exploration of a complex phenomenon, namely the influence of Tapak Suci activities on the formation of the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students in MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat. The case study was chosen because the focus of this research lies in the specific context in a single school, which provides an opportunity to deeply understand the interaction between Tapak Suci activities and student character outcomes. Compared to the quantitative approach, the qualitative approach is more relevant to explore the meaning, experience, and processes that occur in this activity, so that the data produced is richer and more contextual (Renjith et al., 2021; Wainstein et al., 2023; Jones, 2023). Data collection techniques are carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation.

The location of the research was MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat, Kediri, East Java, which was chosen because of the Tapak Suci program which is a mandatory part of the school curriculum. The research respondents consisted of 10 people, including the head of the madrasah, two Tapak Suci trainers, and seven students who participated in the activity regularly. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their active involvement in Tapak Suci activities. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the experiences, views, and impact of activities on students' characters, while observations were used to record students' behavior during exercises. Documentation in the form of activity schedules, training modules, and attendance data is also collected to support the main data. The following is a table of resource persons' coding:

**Table 1. Resource Person Code**

Resource Person Code	Role/Position	Number of Respondents
KN1	Head of Madrasah	1
KN2	Sacred Site Trainer	2
KN3	Students Participating in Tapak Suci	5

The data analysis technique uses interactive models from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The analysis process begins with data reduction, which is filtering and compiling relevant data based on research objectives, such as interview transcripts, observation notes, and supporting documents. The reduced data is then presented in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, or diagrams to facilitate the identification of key patterns and themes. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, where the data that has been analyzed is tested for validity through triangulation of methods and sources. This technique was chosen because it provides a systematic structure in analyzing complex qualitative data, while ensuring that the results of the analysis can be scientifically accounted for.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Character education is one of the main focuses in an effort to create a superior generation that has good morals, integrity, and social skills. At MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat, the strengthening of students' character is directed through a holistic approach that integrates the values of responsibility, discipline, and cooperation in extracurricular activities. One of the flagship programs implemented is Tapak Suci, a pencak silat activity that not only trains physical skills but also shapes students' character as a whole. This research aims to identify how Tapak Suci activities are able to contribute to the development of these character values through habituation and implementation of structured activities.

## **Strengthening the Character of Responsibility Through the Holy Site**

The results of the study show that the strengthening of the character of responsibility in MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat students is carried out through habituation in extracurricular activities of Tapak Suci. Students are trained to arrive on time, bring complete attributes, and follow the entire series of exercises in an orderly manner. The consistent implementation of rules, such as giving sanctions in the form of push-ups for students who are late or do not wear full uniforms, is an important part of forming a sense of responsibility. In addition, students are taught to be responsible for personal and group tasks during practice, such as keeping the practice site clean and assisting friends in completing movements.

The character of student responsibility at MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat is instilled through the implementation of routine activities of Tapak Suci. In an interview with the Head of the Madrasah, he stated, "Through Tapak Suci activities, students are trained to take responsibility for themselves, such as being present on time, bringing complete attributes, and obeying the rules during training. This has become a habit that carries over to daily life." (Interview, KN1, 2024).

Coach of Tapak Suci added that, "We always instill responsibility through the application of punishment if students do not carry out their duties. For example, students who arrive late have to do push-ups as a form of consequence." (Interview, KN2, 2024). This is reinforced by the statement of one student who said, "I learned to be responsible by never forgetting to bring a full uniform, because otherwise there will be sanctions from the coach." (Interview, KN3, 2024).

The results of the interviews showed that the character of student responsibility was built through habituation to consistent rules in Tapak Suci activities. Students are trained to understand the importance of personal responsibility, such as showing up on time, wearing appropriate attributes, and following all the rules during practice. The implementation of educational sanctions, such as light physical punishment for students who violate, serves as a reminder and direct learning regarding the consequences of their actions. This approach creates an understanding that responsibility is not only important in the context of extracurricular activities, but also in everyday life. This shows that consistent habits are effective in instilling the value of responsibility in students from an early age.

Observations during the activity showed that almost all students complied with the rule, although some minor violations were found, such as the delay of the coach. However, this phenomenon does not reduce the effectiveness of the program in building student responsibility. The interpretation of this data shows that responsibility is trained through habituation and consistent application of rules.

In the context of the theory of character education by Dindorf et al. (2024), strengthening responsibility requires a process of habituation that is repeated until it becomes part of students' daily habits.

### **Strengthening Discipline Character Through Routine and Practice**

Strengthening the character of discipline in MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat students is carried out through a structured routine of Tapak Suci activities. Students are trained to show up on time, wear full uniforms, and participate in a series of activities regularly. The activity began with a joint prayer that taught the importance of respecting time and spiritual values, followed by a warm-up session, core exercises, and ended with a closing in the form of prayer and respect for the coach. To ensure discipline, coaches apply educational sanctions, such as push-ups, to students who violate the rules, such as arriving late or not wearing full attributes. Through this habit, students gradually internalize the values of discipline, which then become part of their daily lifestyle. This routine has proven to be effective in building a consistent disciplinary character among students.

Discipline is one of the main characters emphasized in the Holy Site. The Head of Madrasah revealed, "This activity is routinely carried out every week, with a clear schedule. Students who follow the Sacred Site become more organized in their daily lives." (Interview, KN3, 2024). One coach explained, "We started the training with a prayer together and respect for the coach. This gives meaning that discipline starts from small things, such as respecting time and others." (Interview, KN2, 2024).

Through the interview activities carried out, it was shown that the character of student discipline was formed through the implementation of organized activities with a clear routine schedule. Habits such as starting the practice with prayer and reverence create an understanding that discipline starts with small things, such as appreciating time and others. This routine not only trains students to obey the rules of the activity, but also brings regularity into aspects of their lives more broadly. This emphasizes that the implementation of a consistent schedule and habituation of basic discipline values is an effective step in shaping students' character.

The results of observations support this statement. Students were seen attending on time and following the exercises in an orderly manner. In the implementation of the exercise, there are warm-up sessions, core exercises, and closings that are carried out in a structured manner. This data indicates that discipline is not only applied in the implementation of activities, but also through the structure of activities that support the formation of positive habits.

### **The Influence of Sacred Site Activities on Social Character**

The Tapak Suci activity at MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat has a positive influence on the formation of students' social character. Through exercises that

involve cooperation, such as pair sparring and group exercises students are taught to respect each other, help each other, and take care of their friends during practice. Coaches consistently instill moral values, such as the importance of upholding selflessness and respecting others, both in practice and in daily life.

In addition to responsibility and discipline, Tapak Suci also contributes to the development of students' social character. The Head of Madrasah said, "Through this activity, students are taught to cooperate with their friends. For example, when doing exercises in pairs or in groups." (Interview, KN1, 2024). This is also what one of the students expressed, "I learned not to be selfish, because when sparring, we have to take care of our friends so that they don't get hurt." (Interview, KN3, 2024).

The results of the interview showed that Tapak Suci activities have a significant role in the development of students' social character through the habit of cooperation and concern for others. Through activities such as pair or group exercises, students are taught to support and care for each other, especially in contexts that require caution, such as sparring. This habit sharpens empathy and reduces selfishness, so that students are more sensitive to the needs and safety of others. This shows that Tapak Suci activities not only strengthen individual skills, but also form harmonious social relationships among students.

This is also reinforced by observation activities showing that students support each other in every training session, especially when there are difficulties in following certain movements (Muzaki & Ali, 2024). They show an attitude of helping each other, which is part of social responsibility. In Al-Ghazali's theory, good social character is the result of self-control and the intention to always benefit others. These results show that Tapak Suci not only shapes individual character, but also builds empathy and cooperation in groups.

The results of this study show that Tapak Suci is effective in shaping the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students in MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat. In relation to the theory of character education, the program integrates the core values necessary to face the challenges of the era of globalization. This is as attached in table 2.

**Table 2. Research Findings**

<b>Activity Components</b>	<b>Formed Character</b>	<b>Observation Results</b>
Opening with prayer	Discipline and responsibility	Students attend on time, pray together.
Structured training	Discipline and order	The activity ran according to the schedule with clear steps.
Sparring in groups	Cooperation and responsibility	Students support each other in pairs exercises.

The implication of these findings is that similar programs can be adopted in other schools with some adjustments.

However, challenges such as the consistency of coaches and facility support need to be a concern for the sustainability of the program. This research also makes a significant contribution to the literature on character education in Indonesia, especially in the context of religion-based schools. This result can be a model for curriculum development that integrates character values in extracurricular activities, in accordance with the spirit of the Independent Curriculum and P5.

Practically, the results of this study contribute to schools, especially those under the auspices of Muhammadiyah, in adopting Tapak Suci activities as an effective strategy to strengthen the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students. This program can be used as a model in the development of character-based extracurricular activities that are able to create positive habits in students through habituation and consistent application of rules. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on character education by showing that structured physical activity-based approaches, such as Tapak Suci, can be an effective medium for building core character values. This reinforces the theory of character education by Lickona and Al-Ghazali, who emphasized the importance of habituation and self-control as the foundation for the formation of students' morals and integrity.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that Tapak Suci activities at MI Muhammadiyah 4 Kandat significantly contribute to shaping the character of responsibility, discipline, and social of students. Through consistent habituation, students are taught to be punctual, follow rules, work together in groups, and be responsible for themselves and their surroundings. Structured routines, such as opening and closing prayers, the implementation of physical exercises, and the application of educational sanctions, become a real means of learning that not only builds individual character but also strengthens social relationships between students. These findings provide new insights that martial arts-based extracurricular activities are not only beneficial for physical development, but also an effective medium for holistic character education. This strengthens the theory of character education by Al-Ghazali and Ki Hajar Dewantara who emphasizes the importance of habituation and repetition in shaping the morals and regularity of individual behavior.

Scientifically, this study enriches the literature on character education by offering a unique perspective on the use of religious value-based physical activity as a strategic approach to strengthen the core values of character. This research makes a practical contribution by providing activity models that can be adopted in various educational institutions, especially those that focus on developing students' character.

However, this study has limitations on the limited coverage of locations in one school as well as the main focus on students with certain characteristics. Follow-up studies involving schools with more diverse cultural, gender, or age backgrounds are needed to provide a more comprehensive picture. Future research may also explore the long-term effects of these activities on students' lives outside of school. Thus, the results of this research can be the basis for the development of a broader and targeted character education policy.

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