



The Leadership of Kiai Langgar as Head of Madrasah in Forming Students' Religious Character

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Abstract

Religious character education is a central government theme which aims to give birth to a generation of people who uphold values in all aspects of life, so ideas and an active leadership role are needed from managers of Islamic educational institutions. The aim of this research is to determine the success of kiai as heads of madrasas and religious educators in the community in instilling character education. This research was implemented at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Thufatut Tuhllab and MI Al Falah in Pamekasan District uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were applied by means of observation, interviews and documentation and supported by analysis of the Milles and Hubermen models. The results of this research are that the motivation of a madrasa head in instilling character in students is based on the character of social concern, the spirit of fighting for weak students/society, istiqomah in carrying out sunnah worship, likes reading and practicing the Al-Qur'an. The leadership model developed to instill character values includes democratic, transparent and transformative leadership and always provides motivation to members of the organization.

Keywords: *Kiai Leadership, Madrasah Headmaster, Religious Character.*

Introduction

Education today is faced with social problems in society which have an impact on the nation's moral decadence. This can be seen from the increasing number of brawls between students and the increasing prevalence of drugs (Ninik Hidayati et al., 2021). Character education in Indonesia is experiencing dynamics (*dynamic of education*) and system transformation, from traditional to modern, so that this becomes a factor in the birth of formal education (Asbari et al., 2019). This education is an effort to find answers to these problems.

Moral decadence occurs at all levels which encourages managers, administrators, academics and education sympathizers to play an active role in overcoming this problem to create education that is capable of producing graduates with noble morals. One of the reasons

Leadership of Kiai Langgar as Head of Madrasah in Forming Students' Religious Character– Mohammad Zakki

for low morale is a consequence of low role models in the world of education which do not reflect the figure of a leader (Zakki & Saputra, 2022). Noble morals are the main goal of the central idea or theme of character education. Where psychological character education as developed by the Ministry of National Education is an effort to develop personal potential which includes cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects (Trisnantari, H.E., Mutohar, P.M., 2015). It is hoped that character education pursued by educational institutions will be the answer and solution to the phenomenal problems that have hit this country (Mohammad Zakki, 2023).

Character education is an effort carried out by groups and individuals in an organized manner to enable students to recognize, choose and then internalize ethical values originating from religion (Trisnantari, H.E., Mutohar, P.M., 2015). Internalization of individual values can be carried out within the family and educational counselors. The family is a very effective learning space for motivating children and other members to be active in obtaining knowledge information from existing media sources (Zakki, 2021). The family environment is an environment that influences the formation of children's character, attitudes and emotions (Heryyanti et al., 2021).

The effectiveness of character education is closely related to leadership in educational institutions which has a very important role in achieving predetermined goals. The position of a madrasa head in Islamic education is a leader who can carry out personal interactions with members of the organization, thereby facilitating the implementation of certain activities (Prim Masrokan Mutohar, 2020). Success and failure in educational organizations can be determined by the skills possessed by a leader (Syafaruddin, 2015).

Kiai are public figures who are used as role models by the community. Specifically, a kiai is the main educator in an Islamic boarding school who is responsible for educating and guiding (Rohmat & Dewi, 2022). The role and leadership of a kiai is increasingly getting a response among the community, especially in rural areas. In the village, kiai have a noble position. This is considering his role and leadership in educating the community. Both in the form of moral education, aqeedah, worship and other commendable qualities can lead society to a more advanced civilization.

The approach and aim of this research is the system implemented by Islamic educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools and langgars through special materials, but has not yet touched on the cultivation of character education developed at the basic level. Where basic education has the potential to build children's character to prepare them for the next year. This research has not focused on religious character, where religious attitudes are a characteristic of madrasas as educational institutions that were born from the womb of Islamic boarding schools. Apart from that, they have not yet appointed the head of the madrasah who also plays the role of kiai in charge of educating children who study the Al-Qur'an in Langgar.

Based on this description, the researcher concludes that researching religious-based character education at the basic education level is a very valuable and contributive academic action. The character championed by the head of the madrasah is also trusted as a religious educator in the community. Therefore, the researcher raised the title Kiai Langgar's Leadership as Madrasa Head in Forming Religious Character at MI Tuhfatut Thullab and MI Al Falah Kadur in Pamekasan District.

Kiai Leadership

In An organization needs a leader who can mobilize subordinate organizational

members to carry out their respective duties and obligations optimally. The role of a leader in an organization is the main pillar whose function is to encourage and inspire other people to achieve predetermined goals (Agus: 144, 2017). Kuntowijoyo emphasized that the presence of a leader in society is leadership that involves three elements, namely elements of humanism, liberation and transcendence (Samsul Arifin: 12, 2018). Leadership is an important thing to pay attention to, because it has an important role and enormous benefits in every step of human life (Zakki et al: 103, 2023). Meanwhile, Binti Maunah said that transformational leadership can provide encouragement, motivation and inspiration in moving subordinates so that positive interactions occur, being able to solve problems well and making Islamic education of higher quality possible (Binti Maunah, et al: 2023, 52)

Kiai Langgar

Hit is a small institution with non-formal status which is generally located in rural areas. This place is an effective means for kiai langgar to convey da'wah to the community (Masfuroh & Widodo, 2021). The effectiveness of the kiai's role in educating the public using very traditional methods is easily accepted among the community, especially those related to issues of worship and morals. M. Sholichin said that kiai as transmitters of Islam are a link in the chain of continuity or *continuity* Islamic teachings that exist on earth. Its role can be believed to have a big influence on society in enlivening Islamic law and spreading moral values in society in general (Sholichin, 2007).

Religious Character Education

Character education is a process of instilling Islamic boarding school values to become an Islamic Muslim person *kaffah*, have faith, knowledge, noble character, uphold human values, be sensitive to social life, be responsible and work hard, be creative and independent and have high nationalist and Pancasila characteristics. Tomas Lickona said that moral education is used as a training goal in schools. They are taught character as intelligence, politeness as literacy, virtue as knowledge. Apart from that, they have tried to form their own citizens to build a better world by using their intelligence to provide benefits to others and to themselves (Rudi Hartono: 12, 2020).

Madrasah

Madrasas are non-formal educational institutions that cannot be separated from Indonesian national education. It is said to be non-formal because it gives freedom in curriculum development. Soebahar said that madrasas are Islamic educational institutions that were born from the womb of Islamic boarding schools (2022, 12). As Sagala said, the birth of madrasas in society reflects the community's need to gain religious knowledge and becomes a bridge to enter Islamic boarding schools (Sagala, 2015).

Research Method

The type of research used in this research is qualitative. Qualitative research is research that aims to understand natural social reality (*natural* setting) and discovery (Mamik: 2015). Meanwhile, the approach is phenomenological research. The phenomenological approach seeks to understand the reality or experiences that occur in individuals and groups

(Murdiyanto, 2020). The social reality found in research is described with data so that it is easy to understand and can be used as a reference by groups or other people. With this research, the researcher attempts to objectively explore data through participants who are considered to have a concrete picture and potential.

Participants in this research were madrasa heads, committee members, teachers, student guardians, and graduates from both madrasas. Data collection was carried out by researchers using participant observation techniques, interviews, reference studies. Next, data analysis was carried out using the Milles and Humbermen model, where the qualitative analysis was carried out interactively and continued continuously until completion (Ahyar et al., 2020).

Result/Findings (or, this section may be combined with Discussion)

1. Madrasah Profile

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Tuhfatut Thullab is a formal education institution under the auspices and supervision of the Ministry of Religion in Pamekasan Regency. This education board was established on initiative *stakeholder* and the elders in P. Hamlet, B. Village, Pakong District for the support of the surrounding community, who are in fact Islamic boarding school alumni. This institution is equivalent to a State Elementary School (SDN) under the auspices of the Pamekasan Regency Education Office.

There are 5 basic level educational institutions in MI Tuhfatut Thullab, accredited B, located in a rural area where most of their economic livelihood is farming. This institution is close to SDN B.1 around 300 m, and 350 m from SDN B. 2, 800m from MI. RU B. Dusun Sawah, 1200m from MI FU Bicolorong which is in the Islamic boarding school environment and 500m distance to SDN B. Pakong Village (interview with B. Village, AM: July 2023).

The number of MI or Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is 11 institutions. Number of MI students Tuhfatut Thullab in 2022 is ranked 3rd. This is an indicator that private institutions adjacent to SDN are still magnets and bona fide institutions for the community. Following are the names of SD/MI in P.District:

Table 1. Number of Basic Education Institutions in B. Village

<u>Name of basic level institution</u>	<u>Geographical location and community environment</u>
MI. Tuhfatut Tullab	Inland villages and Islamic boarding school alumni
MI. RU	Villages next to public highways and Islamic boarding school alumni
MI. FU	A mountain village and the shelter of a foundation belonging to an Islamic boarding school
SDN B. 1	Village next to public highway
SDN B. 2	Village next to public highway

Meanwhile, MI Al Falah is a basic level educational institution that was established and developed in the Al Falah Islamic Boarding School environment in SGK Pamekasan which has private status. This institution has been accredited B since 2015. This institution is known as Al Falah 1, because of the many educational institutions affiliated with the Al Falah foundation owned by Islamic boarding schools (interview with head of MI Al Falah in August 2023).

Table 2. Number of Basic Education Institutions in K. Village

Name of basic level institution	Geographical location and community environment
MI. Al Falah I	Peggir village and Islamic boarding school
MI. AF II	Villages next to public highways and Islamic boarding school alumni
MI. AF III	A mountain village and the shelter of a foundation belonging to an Islamic boarding school
SDN 1	Village next to public highway
SDN	Village next to public highway

2. Kiai Langgar and Head of Madrasah

Leaders matter *being a leader's power of leading the qualities of leader* is a person's strength or quality in leading and moving others (Hidayat & Wijaya, 2017). MI. Tuhfatut Thullab was initiated until now it has had two changes in the head of the Madrasah. He was the first head of a Madrasah to be appointed directly by the founder of the institution, the late Alm. KH. Muthar (Interview with the Tuhfatut Thullah madrasa committee in August 2023). Meanwhile MI Al Falah is led by K. Hb. who was appointed by the chairman of the Foundation and approved by the Islamic boarding school caretaker. His leadership is approved and accepted by all groups, especially the managers and teachers who help serve this institution.

As M.S said, kiai have a strategic role in conveying religious teachings, including morals (Sholichin, 2007). Public trust in the head of the madrasah who also serves as kiai *hit* became a special moment for a madrasah head in MI. Al Falah and MI. Tuhfatu Thullab in instilling the values of Islamic teachings in the students, especially in educating with noble morals.

Leadership at MI. Tufatut Thullab ended in 2017 at the same time as the civil service retirement period for Civil Servants (PNS) within the Pamekasan Ministry of Religion. Then the head of the madrasa was succeeded by his son, MB from 2017 until now. Apart from being a teacher at MI. Tuhfatut Thullab, he was also the son of the first head of the madrasah. The position of head of the madrasah was inherited from his parents. This can be seen from the quality of educational institutions, especially the student character, which is considered good. Characters who prioritize morals *qur'ani* which is also very relevant to educational institutions with private status. It is an educational institution that was born from the womb of a boarding school (Abd. Halim Soebahar: 2022).

Head Madrasahs also gained trust from the community to lead and provide religious guidance among the community. This trust is proven by the enthusiasm of the people who entrust him to provide guidance in the form of recitation of the yellow book. This recitation is intended to fortify society with correct religious teachings and correct morals that can be accepted in family and social life (Sagala, 2015).

Apart from being a lecturer, he is also an Al-Qur'an teacher in Langgar. The students who recite the Qur'an are elementary/MI students. Becoming an Al-Qur'an teacher and langgar

kiyai is a form of service to society in eradicating ignorance, especially in reading the Al-Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims. When reading it, it must be based on the knowledge of the Tajweed so that the reading is correct and avoids mistakes.

3. Characteristics of Madrasah Head Leadership

A kiai who is trusted by the community to be the head of a madrasa must have several distinctive characteristics. This characteristic is like the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad. It is: *shiddiq, trust, tabligh* and *Fathonah*. These three are the personal characteristics of a leader so that he can mobilize, motivate, influence and direct his subordinates to always work according to their duties and obligations (Muhammad, 2021). Hence, the role of kiai as madrasa heads has great potential in instilling values in teachers, students and the community.

- a. *Shiddiq*, a leader who prioritizes the character of honesty, an attitude that seeks to equate words with actions, prioritizes ethical attitudes and actions. Allah SWT. says in surah Al-Ahdzab which means: "*O you who believe, fear Allah and speak the truth*". (QS. Al-Ahdzab: 70).
- b. *Trust*, this character is a trait possessed by a manager to gain trust from others and as a figure who is responsible for his duties (Mutohar, et al., 2020). Rasulullah saw. said: "*Each of you is a leader and every leader will be held accountable*."
- c. *Tabligh*, the third attribute of the apostle is related to the task of conveying the truth to others. Rasulullah saw. first convey this trust to his own family. A popular term *ismundzir*(warner)
- d. *Fathonah*, a leader who has skills (*genius leadership*) to provide an overview of the future that will be faced by his subordinates (Muhammad, 2021).

These four characteristics, as stated by Secretary of the Al Falah Foundation in September 2023, are often conveyed by the Chair of the Foundation and Islamic Boarding School Administrators to teachers, especially madrasa heads, during the Annual Evaluation Meeting. Meanwhile at MI Tuhfatu Thullah's attitude is often conveyed at the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday by the chairman of the Foundation, which is attended by teachers, employees, student guardians and all students (Hasbullah, madrasa operator in August 2023).

Apart from the characteristics described above, there are several characteristics that are important for educators to pay attention to, especially madrasa heads. Among them: the nature of compassion, humanizing humans, glorifying humans, reminding each other and helping each other. This humanitarian characteristic was once applied in one institution Makassar-Bugis Series education. This characteristic is used as the basis for forming students' character and has great potential in forming and strengthening character education (Jamaluddin et al., 2022).

4. Principles and Head of Madrasah

Leadership (*leadership*) is a leading activity to influence subordinate organizational members (Dewi et al., 2020). Leadership is a process for character change and transformation towards internal awareness (Aminuddin, 2021). There are three principles that are used as a basis for madrasa heads to fulfill their obligations, namely the principles of monotheism, deliberation, justice and openness.

- a. The principle of monotheism for a leader of an Islamic educational institution is the most basic belief that can strengthen his dedication to Allah Swt. through Islamic education.
- b. The principle of deliberation is part of the means for finding new ideas for realizing religious character education for each student and finding solutions to institutional and student problems.
- c. The principle of justice is an action and attitude that reflects truth, honesty and avoids disgrace.
- d. The principle of openness or transparency is a form of a leader's responsibility in conveying the mandate he has or will carry out (Syafurudin, 2015). All these principles also reinforce the role of kiai langgar in conveying the values of Islamic teachings and including the teachings of monotheism as the foundation of Islam (Masfuroh & Widodo, 2021).

Historically, a madrasa leader and community can imitate the ideal leadership model exemplified by the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad namely models *prophetic leadership* as initiated by Kuntowijoyo is leadership that involves three elements, namely elements of humanism, liberation and transcendence (Aminuddin, 2021). Leadership as a madrasa head or educator has an important role in promoting educational values to student parents, as do teachers or educators in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Pakistan which involves parents in learning (Shah et al., 2023). This involvement can support the easy absorption of material and moral values by students, because they receive supervision from the family.

5. Democratic Madrasah Headmaster

Headmaster of madrasah in leading MI Tuhfatut Thullab and MI Al Falah is very democratic or participative. Democratic is a leadership that considers ideas and input from organizational members (Syafurudin, 2015). In this case, basic principles are needed in implementing it, the basic principles in question are division of tasks, empowerment of members and cooperation. This task is as described below:

- a. *Division of tasks and responsibilities*: institutional tasks to achieve religious student character are carried out based on internal awareness motivated by the head of the madrasah. To support the emergence of awareness, madrasa heads hold regular deliberations involving all institutional organizational structures. The aim is to share and convey everyone's obligations and responsibilities in accordance with academic competencies and qualifications.
- b. *Job Descriptions*: This is a form of a leader's responsibility to his subordinates. This is confirmed by the fact that a teacher is required to have an effective personality to provide understanding and improve religious character education in schools (Lukman et al., 2021). Likewise, the personality of a madrasa head is required to be more effective in transforming values to his subordinates, guardians and the community.
- c. *Empowerment of organizational members*: empowering madrasa heads to all teachers and employees is a real effort to provide and facilitate this, both regarding administrative facilities and those related to policies and personal welfare.
- d. *Collaborating with subordinates*: the concept of cooperation built by the head of the madrasah is based on the concept of the Al-Qur'an *ta'awanu 'alal birri wattaqwa wala ta'awanu 'alal ismi wal'udwan* (interview with madrasa committee MI. Al Falah and MI. Tuhfatut Thullab in September 2022)

A leader's democracy is characterized by a willingness to listen, social empathy, awareness, and a strong commitment to developing and developing members together to build a better organization in the advancement of Islamic education (Robbi, Ubaidillah, 2022). As in the chart below:

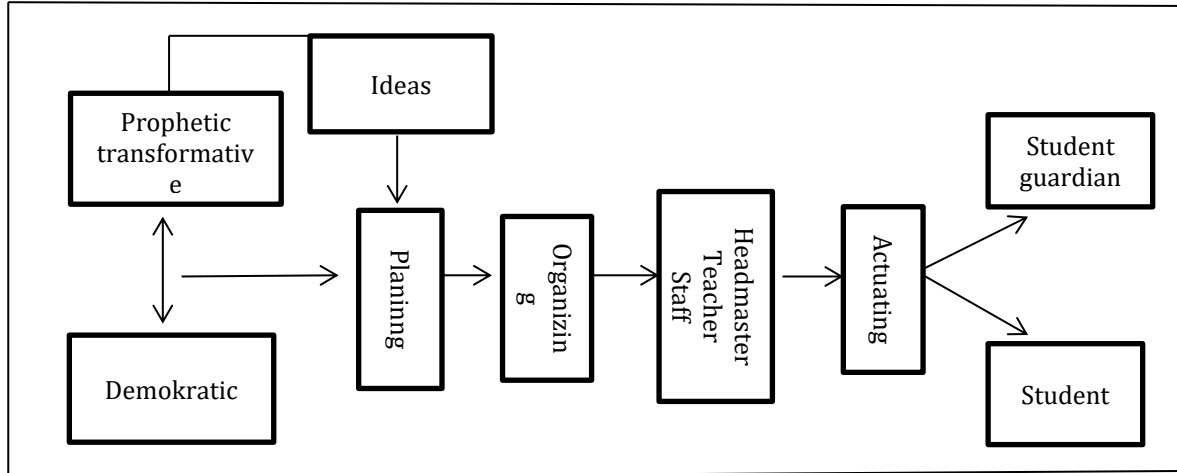


Figure 1. Kuntowijoyo's Democratic and Prophetic Transformative Leadership

6. The Role of the Madrasah Head in Instilling Spiritual Values

There are various strategies used by madrasa heads to shape good student character. Namely character that is in accordance with the guidance of the Al-Qur'an, character exemplified by the Prophet and previous ulama' who contributed to building world civilization (Maimun & Haris, 2021).

In MI. Tuhfatut Thullab and MI. Al Falah internalization of religious values is applied through familiarization in the madrasah environment. These habits include:

- a. Shaking hands: everyday students who come are required to immediately enter the madrasa yard and are not allowed to play or be outside the yard. Meanwhile, guardians who accompany their children are prohibited from entering the yard. This handshaking activity has become a tradition for students, guided by all teachers, staff and madrasa heads.
- b. Reading of Surah Yasin and al-Mulk: before learning begins, it begins with the reading of Surah Yasin and al-Mulk, led by the head and followed by all teachers in the class and in the teacher's office. This reading is specifically on Friday and Saturday.
- c. Reading Juz 'Amma: reading Juz 'Amma is technically the same as reading Surah Yasin and Al-Mulk, but the time is from Tuesday to Thursday.
- d. Molok/akhlaq learning: apart from core learning, at MI. Tuhfatut Thullab and MI. Al Falah is supplemented by learning local religious content based on moral formation, namely learning special moral books in grades 2 – 6.
- e. PHBI commemoration: every moment of the Islamic calendar, students are held activities such as commemorating the Prophet's birthday in the month of Rabi'ul Awal, providing compensation for orphans in the month of Muharram, commemorating Isra'

Mikraj and included in this category are Islamic boarding school community gatherings and/or founders of educational institutions.

- f. Student and guardian tahfidz competition: this activity *asevaluating* from reading Juz 'Amma. This competition is divided into two categories, namely the student and guardian categories. The student category is Juz 'Amma while the guardian category is *Lafdhhiyyah surah* which is usually read in prayer (interview with the head of MI. Tuhfatut Tullah, Moh. Badri in September 2022).

Table 3. MI Tuhfatut Thullab and MI Al Falah Learning Activities Towards Religious Character Education.

Intra Madrasa Activities	Information	Madrasah Extra Activities	Information
Tahfidz Juz 'Amma	All classes	Social service	After semester every
Recitation of Surah Yasin and Al-Mulk	Before class	Grave visit	After semester every
Religious cult	Before entering class	Commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday	Every year
Learning according to Curriculum	In class	Haul warning	Every haul
		August warning	Every year
		Haflatu test	Every end of year

Some of these activities are efforts made by madrasah heads to facilitate the internalization of values in students. This strengthens Soebahar's opinion that madrasahs are children of Islamic boarding schools which are strong in Islamic teachings and the cultivation of morals (Soebahar: 2022, 15) and Sagala who emphasizes that madrasahs are private educational institutions which in principle are representative of Islamic boarding schools, so that madrasah graduates it is easier to adapt to the Islamic boarding school environment when continuing to the next level (Sagala, 2015). Meanwhile, Syamsul and Miftahul stated that the important thing for educators and educational practitioners to do is to explore the values *akhlaqul karimah* into subjects (Syamsul et al., 2023).

7. Strategy Organizing and Evaluating in Instilling Religious Character

All intra- and extra-institutional activities are always coordinated and evaluated. These two strategies aim for the effectiveness and sustainability of these activities, so that the main goal of educational institutions (students' religious character) can be realized. Two strategies will be described as follows.

- a. *Organizing* activities, tasks and their implementation
 Institutional organization is intended for effectiveness, conduciveness and productivity of activities in educational institutions (Ramayulis, 2017). The organization was spearheaded by the head of the madrasah through ideas, concepts and visions of the institution which were conveyed to all teachers, staff/student guardians and community leaders. This conception has been approved and recommended by the head of the foundation, caretakers and madrasah committee.
 Each type of activity, especially student affairs, is scheduled starting at the beginning of the school year, then conveyed to all guardians. All these activities are assigned and

Leadership of Kiai Langgar as Head of Madrasah in Forming Students' Religious Character– Mohammad Zakki

accountable to teachers and staff/employees in accordance with their academic competencies and qualifications.

- b. *Evaluating* The results of the activity aim to check the achievements of the madrasa program implemented by all managers, teachers and staff. In general, evaluation is divided into two, namely evaluation every three months (special evaluation) and evaluation every six months/end of semester (general evaluation).

Special evaluation is an effort to track student attitudes related to intra- and extra-madrasah activities which are accountable to the appointed teacher/staff. Problems found according to the presentation of the person in charge are sought for solutions, then put on the agenda for counselor activities and special coaching.

Meanwhile, the general evaluation is a further stage of the special evaluation, but at this stage, apart from being attended by the teacher/staff in charge, it is also attended by the head of the madrasah, caregivers, committees, foundations and representatives of community figures. This is a form of democratization of the leadership of the madrasa head to achieve the formation of religious character in students.

Conclusion

The role of the madrasa head who is portrayed by the community as a figure has enormous benefits in shaping the religious character of students in the madrasa and in the community environment. Religious character is a characteristic that educators must instill in madrasa students. Religious values are internalized by educational institutions through intra and extra madrasa activities for students and for guardians. This activity is carried out continuously *organizing* and *evaluating* to determine the achievements of educational institution programs, both in the short and long term.

The strategy used by the madrasa head to instill religious character in students includes the head's motivation for subordinates and intensive supervision of the reading of short surahs before the start of learning activities, Surah al-Mulk, spiritual showers packaged in seven-minute lectures, social service at Islamic holiday celebrations. and statehood, shaking hands guided by the teacher of each class and social empathy. Teachers and madrasah employees play an active role in internalizing religious values to all students. Internalization of these values is a manifestation of the goals of educational institutions in forming religious character.

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***Leadership of Kiai Langgar as Head of Madrasah in Forming Students' Religious Character–
Mohammad Zakki***

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