



# INTEGRATIVE MUSYRIF STRATEGIES IN CULTIVATING RELIGIOUS CULTURE AT KH MAS MANSUR UMS STUDENT PESANTREN

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## Article Info

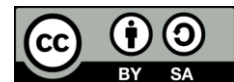
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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture, the implementation of these strategies, and the barriers encountered at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren. This study employed a qualitative case study approach using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving the Board of Caretakers, ISO administrators, and student residents. The findings reveal three main musyrif strategies: exemplary conduct (uswah hasanah), humanistic personal approaches, and structured habituation through routine religious activities. The implementation of these strategies was carried out through planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes integrated into students' daily life within the pesantren environment. The study also identified two major categories of barriers: internal barriers, including low initial awareness, parental coercion, laziness, and burnout; and external barriers, including peer influence, inconsistent role modeling among administrators, unclear sanction systems, and limited socialization of regulations. This study contributes an integrative musyrif strategy model that combines exemplary conduct, personal approaches, and structured habituation in fostering religious culture within a university student pesantren context.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) play an important role in shaping students' religious character through the internalization of Islamic values in daily life. Religious culture in pesantren is not limited to cognitive learning, but also includes habituation in worship practices, moral development, and spiritual formation integrated into a dormitory-based educational system [1]. In the context of university student pesantren, the cultivation of religious culture faces increasingly complex challenges due to students' diverse educational and social backgrounds, exposure to modern lifestyles, and the rapid development of digital technology [2]. These conditions require pesantren to develop adaptive and systematic approaches in maintaining religious values among students.

This issue is particularly relevant in KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren, a university student pesantren under Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta that promotes the values of progressive Islam. Unlike traditional pesantren, this institution accommodates university students from heterogeneous backgrounds, including students with and without prior pesantren experience. Such diversity creates challenges in fostering discipline, religious awareness, and consistency in religious practices within the pesantren environment. Therefore, examining strategies for cultivating religious culture in this context is important both theoretically and practically.

Previous studies on pesantren student development generally focus on three major themes. First, several studies emphasize exemplary conduct and disciplinary supervision as the primary strategies in shaping students' religious character [3],[4]. Second, other studies highlight the role of personal mentoring, habituation, and intensive interaction in strengthening students' religiosity and moral behavior [5]. Third, studies on pesantren management underline the importance of structured supervision systems and continuous guidance in supporting students' religious development [4]. These studies demonstrate that musyrif play a central role in guiding students' daily religious life.

However, previous studies still tend to examine musyrif strategies separately and have not integrated exemplary conduct, humanistic approaches, and structured habituation within a comprehensive framework. In addition, studies on university student pesantren, particularly within Muhammadiyah higher education institutions, remain limited. Existing studies also tend to discuss obstacles in student development generally, without systematically mapping them across individual, social, and institutional levels.

This study focuses on two main contributions. First, it proposes an integrative model of musyrif strategies that combines exemplary conduct, humanistic personal approaches, and structured habituation in cultivating religious culture within a university student pesantren context. Second, this study provides a layered mapping of barriers in religious development, covering internal and external factors affecting the cultivation of religious culture among student residents.

Based on these issues, this study aims to examine musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture, the implementation of these strategies, and the barriers encountered at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren. This study is expected to contribute to the development of religious coaching models in university student pesantren environments.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a single case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren. A single case study design was chosen because the study focused on one institutional setting with distinctive characteristics as a university student pesantren under Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. This approach enabled the researcher to explore social interactions, religious development processes, and institutional dynamics contextually within the pesantren environment [5].

The informants were selected using purposive sampling based on several criteria: (1) being directly involved in religious development activities; (2) understanding the daily activities and culture of the pesantren; (3) having roles in supervising, mentoring, or participating in religious programs; (4) being willing to participate in interviews; and (5) representing different institutional elements, including the Board of Caretakers (Dewan Pengasuh/DP), ISO administrators, and student residents (mahasantri). A total of 11 informants participated in this study, consisting of 3 members of the Board of Caretakers, 4 ISO administrators, and 4 mahasantri.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences and perspectives regarding musyrif strategies, the implementation of religious development programs, and the barriers encountered in cultivating religious culture. Observation was used to examine routine religious activities and interactions within the pesantren environment, while documentation supported the validity of institutional data and activity schedules [6].

The validity of the data was ensured through source triangulation and member checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different categories of informants, while member checking was carried out by confirming interview findings with participants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data [7].

Data analysis employed thematic analysis through three coding stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding [8]. In the open coding stage, interview transcripts were examined to identify initial codes related to musyrif strategies, implementation processes, and barriers in religious development. In the axial coding stage, related codes were grouped into broader categories such as exemplary conduct, humanistic approaches, structured habituation, internal barriers, and external barriers. Finally, selective coding was conducted to integrate these categories into major themes and develop an integrative model of musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture. The analytical process was conducted interactively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to ensure systematic and credible findings.

## 3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

### Musyrif Strategies in Cultivating a Religious Culture

Based on interviews with informants, several strategies were identified as being employed by musyrif in cultivating a religious culture at Pesma KH Mas Mansur.

a. Exemplary Strategy (Uswah Hasanah)

The exemplary strategy emerged as the primary strategy most frequently mentioned by informants. As stated by DP Administrator 2:

“In my opinion, in the pesantren world, rhetoric alone inviting through written messages is not sufficient. A pesantren must maintain a culture of exemplary conduct. Therefore, administrators and caretakers in the pesantren must possess exemplary behavior as a fundamental competency. If we encourage our students to perform congregational prayers, but as administrators we ourselves do not participate, it will become a boomerang for us. What leaves the strongest impression on mahasantri is often the good examples that we demonstrate.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

This statement was reinforced by the Male ISO Administrator, who explained that exemplary conduct is the foremost method:

“The best method in character formation is to provide an example. That is the most important thing, because regardless of how often we remind them verbally, if it is not accompanied by exemplary conduct, it has no value. It is the same as Umar ibn al-Khattab... he did not use violence, nor did he order people harshly; rather, he led through his own example. He acted first, and others observed him. No matter how much he instructed others, he had already practiced it himself beforehand.”

(Interview, Male ISO Administrator, 2025)

The Female ISO Administrator also emphasized the same point:

“My first way is that I must try first I have to set a good example. After that, I supervise them, accompany them, and participate in their activities.”

(Interview, Female ISO Administrator 1, 2025)

This exemplary strategy was acknowledged as effective by the mahasantri, as expressed by Mahasantri 2:

“For example, when the musyrif wakes up earlier, it becomes an example for the mahasantri to wake up as well. Because they see, ‘Oh, the musyrif can wake up early how could I, as a student under their guidance, not be able to wake up for dawn prayer too?’”

(Interview, Mahasantri 2, 2025)

b. Personal Approach Strategy (Humanistic Approach)

In addition to exemplary conduct, a personal approach also became an important strategy employed by the musyrif. DP Administrator 1 explained:

“During my time as an administrator, until becoming part of the DP, I have always tried to position myself appropriately. I try to place myself in the role of an older sibling when needed, becoming someone they can confide in, so they are willing to share the difficulties they experience while living in Pesma. Then, when firmness is needed, I position myself firmly.”

(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

The Male ISO Administrator added that this approach is carried out by “entering their world”:

“The way we approach them is by entering their world. For example, if there is extra food, we give it to another room or neighboring rooms where students may be struggling. We enter gradually. The approach begins with something simple offering food then chatting and having casual conversations. In those moments, little by little, we enter as musyrif who gently remind them and those around them.”

(Interview, Male ISO Administrator, 2025)

DP Administrator 2 also emphasized the importance of a non-rigid approach:

“My strategy is to prioritize exemplary conduct toward the mahasantri, while at the same time making gentle reminders during moments of play or casual conversation, and only then offering advice.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

c. Structured Habituation Strategy

The structured habituation strategy is implemented through daily, weekly, and monthly activities. DP Administrator 1 explained:

“Religious culture is essentially like cultivating good habits so that later, when students leave Pesma, they already have strong provisions. For example, there is congregational prayer, Qur’anic recitation (tadarus), and these are also applied in the classroom. In terms of regulations, there are many as well, such as dress codes and attitudes.”

(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

DP Administrator 2 elaborated on these daily activities:

“The core of student development activities runs from morning until the night classes. In the morning, there is collective tadarus, memorization of Qur’anic chapters, and lessons related to proper purification (thaharah), starting from ablution (wudhu), dry ablution (tayammum), and the correct way to perform obligatory prayers. The theoretical learning component is delivered through night classes. Moral teachings are provided through ta’lim sessions, and there are also lessons related to worship and

muamalah (social and economic transactions in Islam). In addition, there is instruction in AIK (Al-Islam dan Kemuhammadiyah / Islamic and Muhammadiyah Studies).”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

Mahasantri 2 described the daily routine implemented at Pesma:

“From morning until the next morning. In the morning, we are awakened for dawn prayer, then go to the mosque, followed by halaqah sessions, then personal activities such as attending university classes. At Maghrib time, after sunset prayer, there are night classes, then dinner, and we sleep early at 10 p.m. Before sleeping, attendance is checked.”

(Interview, Mahasantri 2, 2025)

DP Administrator 1 also mentioned additional activities such as congregational Tahajjud prayer:

“Tahajjud prayer is held collectively once every two weeks as one of the efforts to strengthen voluntary worship practices among the mahasantri.”

(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

### Implementation of Musyrif Strategies in Cultivating a Religious Culture

The implementation of musyrif strategies at Pesma KH Mas Mansur encompasses several aspects, namely planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

#### a. Planning

The planning of activities is carried out through the preparation of daily activity schedules and the division of responsibilities among administrators. DP Administrator 1 explained his role as a DP administrator, which is more focused on controlling and supervision:

“My role... now that I am in the DP, my position is more about controlling, because there are already block administrators in place. So, in addition to approaching the block administrators, I also approach the mahasantri. In other words, I supervise both sides so that the mahasantri respect their block administrators, and the block administrators are also able to build good relationships with the mahasantri.”

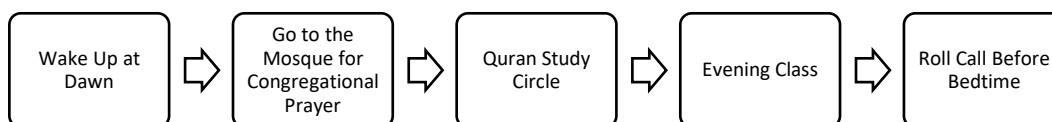
(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

The Female ISO Administrator explained that planning also includes personal agreements with mahasantri, for example regarding how they prefer to be awakened for dawn prayer:

“At the beginning, we usually make agreements like a waking-up contract. For example, some students do not like being woken up by being called by name; instead, they prefer that we gently touch their feet to wake them.”

(Interview, Female ISO Administrator 1, 2025)

#### b. Implementation



**Figure 1.** Daily Schedule

The implementation of activities is carried out according to the predetermined schedule. DP Administrator 2 explained that daily activities include congregational prayer, recitation of dhikr after prayer, and religious classes:

“Morning and evening dhikr is usually carried out during halaqah. In addition, there is also a habit of reciting dhikr after the dawn prayer and after the Maghrib prayer. The purpose is to make mahasantri accustomed to memorizing supplications, because many of them still do not know several important prayers, and this has become a concern for Pesma itself.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

The Female ISO Administrator also described the routine activities conducted:

“We carry out room checks at 10 p.m., and at dawn we go around to the rooms to wake students up.”

(Interview, Female ISO Administrator 1, 2025)

Mahasantri 1 confirmed the implementation of these duties by the administrators:

“The administrators here, like Mas Hanafi, check around at 10 p.m. going from room to room and around the Pesma area.”

(Interview, Mahasantri 1, 2025)

- c. **Monitoring**  
Monitoring is conducted through attendance systems and direct supervision by administrators. DP Administrator 2 explained:  
“The supervision and control system in Pesma particularly for prayer activities is conducted through attendance records. Likewise, for coaching sessions and Pesma classes, attendance is always taken. Then for training activities, such as fiqh training, qurban training, and similar programs, monitoring is also carried out through attendance records.”  
(Interview, DP 2, 2025)  
In addition to attendance, monitoring is also carried out through ISO administrators (block mentors). DP Administrator 2 added:  
“Daily monitoring outside the classroom is conducted through our administrators namely the ISO mentors. These ISO administrators are entrusted with the responsibility to guide, serve, and supervise the students.”  
(Interview, DP 2, 2025)
- d. **Evaluation**  
Program evaluation is conducted periodically. DP Administrator 2 explained:  
“As for measurable evaluation tools, formally documented instruments do not yet exist. However, empirically, we can observe indicators. For example, we evaluate why congregational attendance is low, and from that evaluation we can see whether there is any visible improvement. If, after evaluation, more students begin attending the mosque, then that becomes an indicator that the evaluation process is functioning effectively.”  
(Interview, DP 2, 2025)  
Evaluation is also conducted through regular administrator meetings. DP Administrator 1 stated:  
“Every Saturday, we gather again with the DP. In my opinion, because our meetings are informal, people are able to openly express their concerns and frustrations. I think that itself becomes a source of reinforcement as well.”  
(Interview, DP 1, 2025)  
Mahasantri 2 also confirmed the existence of weekly evaluations:  
“There is weekly evaluation from the musyrif, so we are encouraged to be more consistent in carrying out our obligations at Pesma.”  
(Interview, Mahasantri 2, 2025)

### **Obstacles Faced by Musyrif**

Based on interview findings, several obstacles were identified that hinder musyrif in cultivating a religious culture. These obstacles can be categorized into internal and external barriers.

- a. **Internal Barriers (Originating from the Mahasantri Themselves)**
- 1) **Low Initial Awareness Among Mahasantri**  
DP Administrator 2 explained that the main factor is a lack of understanding regarding the virtues of congregational worship:  
“The most fundamental factor is the awareness of the mahasantri themselves. They do not yet perceive religious coaching as something important. This is a major challenge, and it turns out that it stems largely from their limited prior religious experience. For example, many of them do not understand the virtues of congregational prayer, nor do they understand why, as Muslim men, they are expected to perform prayer in congregation at the mosque.”  
(Interview, DP 2, 2025)
  - 2) **Mahasantri Living in Pesma Due to Parental Pressure**  
DP Administrator 2 revealed that students' initial motivation strongly affects their participation:  
“Many of them enter Pesma because they are compelled by their parents. This has an impact. When students begin their stay out of obligation rather than willingness, they tend to participate half-heartedly in Pesma's coaching programs. Eventually, this leads to resistance resistance in the sense that they become unwilling to follow rules, unwilling to join congregational prayer, and unwilling to participate in other activities.”  
(Interview, DP 2, 2025)
  - 3) **Laziness and Spiritual Decline (Futur)**  
Mahasantri 1 acknowledged that laziness is a major obstacle:  
“The obstacle... is laziness, sometimes exhaustion... sometimes there are too many assignments... so congregational prayer and Qur'an recitation sometimes feel burdensome.”  
(Interview, Mahasantri 1, 2025)  
The Female ISO Administrator mentioned a similar challenge:

“The challenge is that mahasantri are often busy with academic schedules, and sometimes those schedules clash with class activities here, making it difficult for them. In addition, students’ enthusiasm and motivation are not always stable there are times when they simply feel unmotivated.”

(Interview, Female ISO Administrator 1, 2025)

4) Burnout Among Students with Pesantren Backgrounds and Adjustment Difficulties Among Non-Pesantren Students

DP Administrator 1 explained:

“There is another challenge. For students who come from pesantren backgrounds, the challenge is often burnout. They have already spent years living under structured rules, and when they come here and encounter more regulations, they begin to feel that this phase of life should be one of greater freedom.”

(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

He further added:

“The biggest challenge is that not all students come from pesantren backgrounds. Getting them accustomed to practices they have never done before is quite difficult even simply training them to wake up early can be challenging. Meanwhile, for students who already have a pesantren background, the challenge is more about reaching a saturation point they have lived under rules for so long, and at Pesma there are still more rules, so they develop a desire to be free.”

(Interview, DP 1, 2025)

b. External Barriers (Originating from Environment and System)

1) Lack of Exemplary Conduct Among Administrators Themselves

DP Administrator 2 acknowledged that some administrators have not yet become proper role models:

“One factor concerns us as administrators have we truly set a good example? If we ourselves cannot provide good examples, then that becomes one of the obstacles to the coaching process.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

He further explained:

“What remains weak among us is controlling the mahasantri. Secondly, among fellow administrators, many still have not fully realized that they are now caretakers and mentors. As a result, their awareness of their obligations to encourage students to join congregational prayer and attend classes is still lacking.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

This was reinforced by the Male ISO Administrator:

“The obstacle is... there is also futur within the musyrif or administrators themselves. There are times when the musyrif’s faith fluctuates sometimes they attend congregational prayer, sometimes their exemplary conduct declines, sometimes their actions contradict what they themselves have instructed. So, one obstacle comes from within the musyrif themselves.”

(Interview, Male ISO Administrator)

2) Influence of Roommates and Peer Environment

DP Administrator 2 explained that roommates exert significant influence:

“Environmental factors especially the closest environment, namely roommates have a strong impact. If roommates are equally unwilling to participate in coaching, congregational prayer, and other activities, then this becomes a factor influencing each other negatively. Once they are all unwilling together, it becomes very difficult.”

(Interview, DP 2, 2025)

3) Lack of a Clear Punishment System

The Female ISO Administrator criticized the lack of firmness in sanctions:

“My expectation is that Pesma activities need stronger sanctions. As administrators, we become exhausted managing things because our expectations are high. But when mahasantri violate rules, nothing really happens there is no firm follow-up.”

(Interview, Female ISO Administrator 1, 2025)

Mahasantri 1 highlighted the same issue:

“There is no punishment not physical punishment, of course but there is also no transparent point-based system. If there were consequences, students would have more motivation to obey the rules. Whether they like it or not, they would have to comply.”

(Interview, Mahasantri 1, 2025)

Mahasantri 2 added that rule socialization remains inadequate:

“The socialization is lacking. We are simply given a handbook and told to read it ourselves. But not everyone is willing to read it, so the rules continue to be violated.”  
(Interview, Mahasantri 2, 2025)

## Discussion

### Integrative Musyrif Strategies in Cultivating Religious Culture

The findings of this study show that musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren consist of three interconnected components: exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), humanistic personal approaches, and structured habituation. These strategies do not operate separately, but form an integrated coaching system in which moral example, interpersonal mentoring, and institutional routines mutually support the internalization of religious values among mahasantri. This finding expands previous studies that generally examined musyrif strategies partially, such as discipline-based supervision, habituation, or personal mentoring alone [3], [5], [9].

Exemplary conduct functions as the foundation of religious coaching. In the pesantren environment, the authority of musyrif is not only determined by their formal position, but also by the consistency between what they instruct and what they practice in daily life. Mahasantri tend to observe and imitate visible behavior demonstrated by musyrif, especially in worship discipline, moral conduct, and responsibility. This finding is in line with Ibn Miskawayh's view that character formation occurs through repeated and consistent moral practice [10]. It also strengthens previous studies showing that exemplary leadership is an important element in pesantren-based character education [3], [4].

The humanistic personal approach strengthens the relational dimension of religious coaching. Because mahasantri come from diverse educational, social, and religious backgrounds, formal instruction alone is insufficient. Musyrif need to build trust, empathy, and emotional closeness so that students are more willing to receive guidance. This finding is consistent with studies emphasizing that personal mentoring and humanistic communication play an important role in moral development within pesantren environments [5], [12]. In this study, the humanistic approach functions as a bridge between institutional authority and students' personal acceptance of religious guidance.

Structured habituation functions as the institutional mechanism that sustains religious behavior. Routine religious activities, scheduled programs, supervision systems, and daily regulations create repeated patterns of practice within the pesantren environment. Through this process, religious values are gradually embedded into students' habits. This finding supports behaviorist perspectives on reinforcement and shaping, while also showing that habituation in pesantren is not merely mechanical repetition, but is strengthened by mentoring, supervision, and social interaction [13], [14].

The relationship among these three strategies constitutes the main contribution of this study. Exemplary conduct provides behavioral legitimacy, the humanistic approach builds emotional acceptance, and structured habituation ensures continuity of practice. Without exemplary conduct, habituation may lose moral authority. Without humanistic interaction, discipline may be perceived as coercive. Without structured habituation, role modeling and personal guidance may not develop into stable religious habits. Therefore, cultivating religious culture in university student pesantren requires an integrative model that combines moral, relational, and institutional dimensions [16], [17].

### Implementation of Musyrif Strategies

The implementation of musyrif strategies at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren is carried out through planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. These stages indicate that religious coaching is not spontaneous, but institutionally organized through coordination between the Board of Caretakers, ISO administrators, and mahasantri. Similar findings have been identified in pesantren management studies, which emphasize the importance of structured supervision, role division, and continuous mentoring in strengthening student discipline [4], [14].

Planning includes the division of roles, preparation of activity schedules, and arrangement of mentoring responsibilities. This stage is important because the effectiveness of religious coaching depends on clear institutional coordination. In the context of university student pesantren, planning must also consider students' academic schedules, diverse religious backgrounds, and different levels of readiness to participate in pesantren activities.

Implementation is reflected in routine religious activities, mentoring systems, and direct supervision integrated into students' daily life. Musyrif function not only as supervisors, but also as facilitators who accompany students in the process of religious habituation. This finding strengthens previous studies showing that intensive interaction between musyrif and students contributes to worship awareness, discipline, and moral formation in pesantren settings [6], [18].

Monitoring is conducted through attendance systems, daily supervision, and observation of students' participation. These mechanisms function not merely as institutional control, but also as guidance to maintain

students' consistency in religious practice. In dormitory-based education, monitoring becomes important because students' behavior is shaped through continuous interaction between mentors, peers, and institutional routines [19], [20].

Evaluation is conducted through meetings, weekly assessments, and informal discussions among administrators. However, the findings indicate that evaluation procedures still need stronger documentation and measurable indicators. This suggests that pesantren coaching systems require more systematic evaluation mechanisms to assess student development, program effectiveness, and institutional improvement [4], [21].

### **Layered Barriers Based on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory**

The barriers encountered by musyrif in cultivating religious culture can be understood through Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. These barriers appear across three main layers: microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. This layered mapping shows that religious coaching problems are not limited to students' personal discipline, but are also shaped by broader social and institutional conditions [15].

At the microsystem level, barriers originate from students' personal conditions and family backgrounds. These include low initial awareness, parental coercion, laziness, fluctuating motivation, and burnout among students with previous pesantren experience. Students who enter Pesma due to external pressure tend to show weaker commitment to religious programs. Meanwhile, students with long pesantren backgrounds may experience saturation because they perceive pesantren rules as a continuation of previous restrictions. This shows that student readiness is an important factor in the success of religious coaching [15], [22].

At the mesosystem level, barriers arise from students' interactions with roommates, peers, and musyrif. Peer influence becomes significant because mahasantri live in a shared dormitory environment where behavior is easily transmitted among residents. If roommates are less committed to religious activities, students may be influenced to reduce participation. This finding is consistent with studies showing that peer relationships and dormitory-based interaction can strongly affect students' discipline and behavioral adaptation [15], [23].

Another important mesosystem barrier is the inconsistency of some administrators in becoming role models. This is a critical finding because the study identifies uswah hasanah as the central strategy, yet the effectiveness of this strategy is weakened when some musyrif do not consistently embody the values they promote. This contradiction shows that exemplary conduct is not only a strategy, but also a vulnerability in the coaching system. The credibility of musyrif therefore becomes a decisive factor in the success of religious habituation [3], [5].

At the exosystem level, barriers are related to institutional structures and policy implementation. These include unclear sanction systems, limited socialization of rules, and uneven institutional support. Weak enforcement reduces the effectiveness of habituation because students do not receive consistent consequences for violations. Limited socialization of regulations also creates ambiguity regarding expected behavior. Therefore, institutional clarity and structural support are needed to strengthen the authority of musyrif and ensure consistency in religious coaching [4], [14], [24].

This ecological analysis contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of religious culture formation in university student pesantren. The success of religious coaching depends not only on individual motivation, but also on peer relations, administrator consistency, institutional clarity, and structural support. Therefore, strengthening religious culture requires intervention at multiple levels rather than focusing only on individual student behavior [15], [25].

### **Theoretical Contribution**

This study contributes to the development of religious coaching studies in student pesantren by proposing an integrative model of musyrif strategies and a layered mapping of barriers. The integrative model shows that religious culture is cultivated through the interaction of exemplary conduct, humanistic mentoring, and structured habituation. This model moves beyond single-strategy explanations by demonstrating that effective religious coaching requires moral, relational, and institutional dimensions at the same time [10], [12], [13].

The layered mapping of barriers also expands the use of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory in pesantren studies. Barriers to religious development are not merely internal student problems, but are connected to peer influence, administrator consistency, rule enforcement, and institutional support. This perspective helps explain why religious coaching programs may face difficulties even when formal activities are already well structured [15], [25].

Overall, the discussion confirms that cultivating religious culture in KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren requires an integrated and systemic approach. The role of musyrif is central, but its effectiveness depends on the consistency of role modeling, the quality of interpersonal mentoring, the strength of habituation systems, and the support of institutional structures

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study examined musyrif strategies in cultivating religious culture, the implementation of these strategies, and the barriers encountered at KH Mas Mansur UMS Student Pesantren. The findings demonstrate that the cultivation of religious culture in a university student pesantren requires an integrative coaching system consisting of exemplary conduct (uswah hasanah), humanistic personal approaches, and structured habituation. These strategies do not function independently, but complement one another in shaping students' religious awareness, discipline, and daily religious practices.

The study further shows that the effectiveness of musyrif strategies depends not only on religious routines and supervision systems, but also on the quality of interpersonal relationships and the consistency of administrators as role models. Exemplary conduct provides moral legitimacy, humanistic approaches strengthen emotional acceptance, and structured habituation reinforces behavioral consistency through continuous religious activities integrated into students' daily life. This finding suggests that religious culture in university student pesantren is formed through the interaction between moral example, interpersonal mentoring, and institutional structure simultaneously.

In addition, this study reveals that barriers in cultivating religious culture emerge across multiple environmental levels, including individual, social, and institutional dimensions. Internal barriers such as low awareness, fluctuating motivation, and burnout interact with external barriers such as peer influence, inconsistent role modeling, unclear sanctions, and uneven institutional support. These findings indicate that the success of religious coaching cannot be understood solely as an individual responsibility, but must also be viewed within broader social and organizational contexts.

The main contribution of this study lies in the formulation of an integrative musyrif strategy model and a layered mapping of barriers based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective. This study expands previous discussions on pesantren coaching by demonstrating that effective religious development requires the integration of exemplary conduct, humanistic mentoring, structured habituation, and institutional consistency within dormitory-based higher education environments.

Practically, the findings suggest that university student pesantren need to strengthen administrator training, improve institutional supervision systems, develop clearer disciplinary mechanisms, and reinforce humanistic mentoring approaches in order to cultivate sustainable religious culture among mahasantri. Future studies may expand this research by comparing different university student pesantren, examining gender-based coaching patterns, or exploring the influence of digital culture on religious development in contemporary pesantren environments.

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