



Research Article

Internalizing Struggle Values in Pesantren Education at TMI Al-Amien Prenduan

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Abstract. This study explored (1) the meaning of struggle values (nilai-nilai kejuangan) in pesantren education and (2) how these values were internalized within the educational system of TMI Al-Amien Prenduan. Using a qualitative field approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis involving key institutional figures and educators. The findings indicate that struggle values at TMI Al-Amien Prenduan are primarily oriented toward worship (ibadah) and dedicated service (pengabdian) in education, conceptualized through the ethos of mujāhid al-tarbiyah (educational striver). These values are characterized by sincerity (ikhlas), doing one's best, total commitment, and integrity in fulfilling educational responsibilities. The internalization process occurs in three interconnected stages: value transformation (value transmission and orientation), value transaction (two-way interaction and exemplary modeling), and transinternalization (habit formation and personality embodiment through the 24-hour pesantren system). The study highlights the uniqueness of institutional value formation where devotion,

discipline, and continuous guidance are embedded into daily life, shaping educators and students into committed members of a value-based educational community.

Keywords: Struggle Values, Value Internalization, Pesantren Education, Educational Devotion, TMI Al-Amien Prenduan

INTRODUCTION

Pesantren education is widely recognized as a value-centered educational ecosystem where learning, character building, and daily religious practice are integrated into a continuous life system. Unlike schooling models that largely separate instructional time from students' social and moral formation, many pesantren especially those with boarding and a structured daily rhythm operate as a "total institution" in which educational messages are experienced repeatedly through routines, discipline, communal worship, and interpersonal guidance.

Within this context, the question of how values become "lived" is central. Values may be taught verbally, but a value becomes meaningful only when it is embodied, practiced, and internalized into habitual dispositions. Value internalization, therefore, refers not merely to delivering moral messages but to cultivating a stable orientation that guides one's commitments, decisions, and behavior over time (Mulyana, 2011). This is particularly relevant in pesantren settings where the educators' daily presence and conduct function as a primary moral curriculum: students learn not only from what teachers say but from what they repeatedly observe and experience.

One value domain that remains under-discussed in many educational studies is the ethos of struggle (*nilai-nilai perjuangan*). In Indonesian Islamic educational traditions, "struggle" is not limited to political or military narratives; it often refers to perseverance, sincerity, sacrifice, and disciplined dedication for the sake of worship and service. In pesantren culture, this ethos can be institutionalized into expectations about how educators serve, how students learn, and how the community sustains its educational mission.

TMI Al-Amien Prenduan, as a pesantren-based educational institution with a structured boarding system, is frequently associated with a strong ethos of educational devotion. One distinct institutional feature is the expectation that graduates contribute through a period of service (*pengabdian*) a mechanism that potentially sustains both staffing and value continuity. This makes TMI Al-Amien Prenduan a meaningful site to examine struggle values not only as moral ideals but as organizational culture and pedagogical practice.

A number of studies have examined character formation and value internalization in pesantren through routine formation, teacher exemplarity, and institutional discipline (e.g., Widyaningsih et al., 2014; Wibowo et al., 2018; Surya & Rofiq, 2021). However, fewer works specify how *struggle values* are conceptualized, what core meanings are emphasized by institutional actors, and how such values are transmitted into stable dispositions through a full-day educational environment.

Accordingly, this study addresses two questions, what are the struggle values (*nilai-nilai kejuangan*) in the pesantren education of TMI Al-Amien Prenduan, and what characteristics define them? How are These Struggle values internalized within the educational system and daily life of the pesantren?

By focusing on these questions, the study contributes to value-education research in three ways. First, it clarifies struggle values as a normative orientation toward worship and educational service. Second, it describes the internalization process through staged mechanisms (transformation, transaction, transinternalization) that connect teaching with habituation. Third, it highlights how a 24-hour pesantren system functions as an “implementation environment” where values are continuously reinforced through repeated practice and social expectation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative field approach to understand struggle values and their internalization within the natural setting of pesantren life. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for capturing meanings, interpretations, and lived experiences that cannot be adequately reduced to numerical indicators (Moleong, 2023; Murdiyanto, 2020).

Research Site and Participants

The study took place at TMI Al-Amien Prenduan, a pesantren-based educational institution with a structured 24-hour boarding system. Participants were selected purposively based on their institutional roles and proximity to value formation processes. Key informants included institutional leaders and educators (e.g., the director, secretary, and other responsible figures within the educational structure), as well as school-level heads and educational bureaus who operationalize daily discipline and guidance.

Data Collection

Data were collected through three main techniques:

1. In-depth interviews, focusing on institutional definitions of struggle values, perceived characteristics of educators’ devotion, and practical strategies used to transmit these values.
2. Observation, focusing on daily routines, educator–student interactions, disciplinary practices, and examples of value embodiment in practice.
3. Document analysis, including institutional documents that express mission, value statements, and rules that guide educational life and devotion.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Data were analyzed through iterative processes of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, allowing the researcher to build thematic explanations grounded in field evidence. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of sources (comparing leaders, educators, and observation) and triangulation of techniques (interview–observation–documentation), enabling cross-validation of key patterns (Sugiyono, 2016).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Struggle Values in Pesantren Education: Meanings and Characteristics

The study indicates that struggle values (*nilai-nilai kejuangan*) at TMI Al-Amien Prenduan are understood primarily in two interrelated orientations: worship (*ibadah*) and dedicated service (*pengabdian*) in education. Struggle is framed as purposeful effort directed toward God and manifested through commitment to educational responsibilities. In institutional discourse, the educator is not merely an employee delivering curriculum content but is positioned as a *mujāhid al-tarbiyah* an “educational striver” who dedicates energy, time, and character to the formation of students.

This meaning is supported by institutional narratives that emphasize teaching and service as part of religious life. The educational task is interpreted as a form of devotion that must be performed with sincerity and seriousness. This framing redefines “struggle” from a purely external hardship into an internal commitment to uphold educational trust (*amanah*) consistently.

From interviews and documents, struggle values are characterized by at least four major attributes:

1. Sincerity (*ikhlas*) as the moral foundation

Sincerity emerged as the most central attribute. Educators are expected to serve without making worldly reward the main motivation, emphasizing inner orientation and religious intention. In the pesantren context, sincerity is not only a personal virtue but a cultural expectation that shapes how educators view workload, discipline, and responsibility. This also aligns with broader discussions of religious value formation where the internal motive (intention) is treated as a key dimension of moral quality (Sahlan, 2011).

2. *Doing one's best: excellence as devotion*

Struggle values also emphasize “doing the best” in educational work. This includes seriousness in teaching preparation, persistence in guiding students, and consistency in implementing discipline. Importantly, excellence is not framed as a competitive performance metric but as a form of worshipful responsibility: educators aim for the best because they interpret their work as religiously meaningful.

3. Total commitment and time investment

A distinctive characteristic of struggle values in TMI Al-Amien Prenduan is the emphasis on total commitment. Because the pesantren operates as a 24-hour environment, educators' roles extend beyond classroom instruction into mentoring, supervision, moral guidance, and community leadership. This is supported by the institutional expectation that educators remain present and involved throughout daily life, which amplifies the function of educators as role models and moral guardians.

4. Integrity and consistency of character

Integrity refers to the alignment between values spoken and values practiced. In a boarding system, students observe educators continuously; therefore, inconsistency can weaken value credibility. Integrity becomes both a personal obligation and a structural requirement: the institution depends on the educators' character to sustain the moral ecology of the pesantren.

These characteristics indicate that struggle values are not abstract ideals but are embedded into institutional expectations. The concept of struggle becomes meaningful because it is linked to repeated practice: sincerity shapes motive, excellence shapes effort, totality shapes time allocation, and integrity shapes behavioral consistency.

Internalization Process: from Transmission to Embodiment in A 24-Hour System

The study identified that struggle values are internalized through a staged process that can be explained using three interrelated phases: value transformation, value transaction, and transinternalization (Muhaimin, 2012:178). While these phases can be analytically separated, in practice they overlap and reinforce each other within pesantren life.

1) Value Transformation: Orientation, Verbal Transmission, and Institutional Messaging

Value transformation refers to the phase where values are introduced and clarified. At TMI Al-Amien Prenduan, this stage occurs through institutional orientations, advice, sermons, rules, and repeated messaging about the purpose of education as worship and service. Leaders and senior educators emphasize struggle values through formal statements and motivational guidance, connecting educational effort to religious narratives of perseverance and devotion.

This stage establishes a cognitive understanding: students and educators learn what is considered “good,” why it is valued, and how it relates to the pesantren’s mission. Importantly, transformation is strengthened by documents and institutional doctrines that formalize value priorities, so values are not merely individual preferences but collective commitments.

2) Value Transaction: Interaction, Exemplary Modeling, and Reciprocal Reinforcement

Transaction refers to two-way engagement where values are not only stated but negotiated, practiced, and reinforced through interpersonal relationships. In pesantren settings, transaction is deeply linked to exemplary modeling (*uswah hasanah*). Educators demonstrate struggle values through daily conduct: punctuality, patience in guidance, responsible supervision, and consistent discipline.

This phase also involves reciprocal reinforcement. Students respond to educators’ modeling, internalize expectations, and are corrected or encouraged through feedback. The pesantren environment provides frequent opportunities for such interaction: study sessions, communal worship, dormitory supervision, and daily activities. Through repeated interaction, struggle values become socially meaningful: they are no longer simply “taught” but become norms that structure relationships.

The transaction phase is crucial because it is here that values become believable. If educators embody sincerity and commitment, their advice gains moral authority. Conversely, if educators do not model what they teach, internalization may remain superficial.

3) Transinternalization: Habituation, Conditioning, and Personality Formation

Transinternalization is the deepest phase where values become embodied dispositions. In this stage, struggle values are not merely understood and practiced occasionally but become part of the learner's stable character. TMI Al-Amien Prenduan's 24-hour system is essential for this process: continuous routines create repetition, and repetition creates habituation.

The pesantren environment conditions students to live within structured expectations discipline in worship, responsibility in learning, and commitment to communal duties. Over time, these practices shape personality traits such as self-control, persistence, and responsibility. This is consistent with the idea that moral dispositions emerge through sustained practice in supportive environments rather than through verbal instruction alone.

Field observation suggests that transinternalization is reinforced through immediate institutional responses: educators intervene when students deviate from routines and provide guidance to restore discipline. For example, in everyday practice, educators actively ensure students follow learning schedules and responsibilities, which strengthens the internal habit of commitment. Such practices represent how the institution turns values into lived routine: the environment continuously "calls" individuals back into the expected moral pattern.

The Uniqueness of TMI Al-Amien Prenduan: Devotion as Institutional Continuity

One notable feature in the study is the institutional role of devotion/service (*pengabdian*) in sustaining struggle values. The expectation that graduates serve and contribute to the pesantren is not only a staffing mechanism but a value reproduction strategy. Through devotion, graduates transition from recipients of values to carriers and transmitters of values, reinforcing cultural continuity.

This mechanism strengthens the institution's moral ecology: educators who were shaped within the system return as role models who already share the value grammar of the pesantren. In this way, struggle values are not maintained by policy alone but by a cycle of formation and service.

Comparatively, while many schools attempt character education through curriculum integration, the pesantren model demonstrates how values can be internalized more robustly when the environment provides continuous reinforcement. The study supports previous findings that value internalization is strongest when supported by consistent modeling and structured routines (Widyaningsih et al., 2014; Wibowo et al., 2018), while adding a specific emphasis on struggle values as worshipful devotion and educational service.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that struggle values (*nilai-nilai kejuangan*) in the pesantren education of TMI Al-Amien Prenduan are fundamentally oriented toward worship and dedicated service in education, expressed through the ethos of *mujāhid al-tarbiyah*. These values are characterized by sincerity, excellence in effort, total commitment, and integrity in carrying educational trust.

The internalization of struggle values occurs through a three-stage process: transformation (value introduction and orientation), transaction (interactive reinforcement and role modeling), and transinternalization (habit formation and personality embodiment). The 24-hour pesantren system provides a powerful environmental structure that turns values into repeated practice, shaping stable dispositions over time.

Practically, the findings suggest that value education becomes more effective when institutions: (1) clarify value meaning and purpose, (2) ensure educators model the values consistently, and (3) design routines and structures that repeatedly reinforce values as daily habits. Future research may compare struggle values across pesantren types or examine how graduates sustain these values when entering non-pesantren professional contexts.

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