

Research Article

Integration of Social Activities and Leadership Values in Character Building of Students by the PIJAR Semarang Community

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Abstract: This study examines the integration of social activities and leadership values in shaping the character of students by the PIJAR Semarang Community as a form of community-based non-formal education. The background of this study stems from the increasing problems with student character, such as low empathy, responsibility, and self-confidence, as well as the increasing cases of violence and bullying in the educational environment. These conditions indicate that formal education has not been fully able to address the challenges of shaping student character. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research was conducted at the PIJAR Semarang Community by involving community managers, volunteers, and students as research subjects. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation of activities, and documentation to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the character-building process. The results of the study show that the PIJAR Semarang Community integrates social activities and leadership values through academic and non-academic learning programs that are designed to be contextual and participatory. Social activities such as play-based learning, social action, field trips, art performances, and leadership training are the main media for instilling character values. The character values developed include responsibility, cooperation, empathy, discipline, and self-confidence. Leadership values are instilled through habit formation, volunteer role models, providing opportunities for participation, and the active involvement of students in every activity. This study also found several obstacles in the form of differences in student character, limited resources, and low self-confidence among some students in leadership. To overcome these obstacles, the PIJAR Semarang Community implemented intensive mentoring, motivation building, and adjustments to activities to make them more inclusive. Overall, this study confirms that the integration of social activities and leadership values in community-based non-formal education plays an important role in the holistic and sustainable character building of students.

Keywords: Character Building; Educational Community; Leadership Values; Non Formal Education; Social Activities.

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1. Introduction

The issue of students' character has become a significant object of study in contemporary Indonesian education, as it indicates signs of a moral crisis among the younger generation. This crisis is characterized by a decline in the values of honesty, justice, tolerance, social concern, and mutual respect in daily life (Istante, 2023). Various phenomena such as student brawls, low standards of etiquette, declining responsibility, and the erosion of tolerance demonstrate that character-related issues have developed into a persistent social problem (Fahdini et al., 2021). These conditions are also reflected in the increasing cases of violence and bullying within educational environments, which indicate low levels of empathy and discipline among students (Dewi et al., 2024).

Various methods have been employed in the formation of students' character, particularly through formal education and extracurricular activities in schools. This approach has strengths in its systematic curriculum structure and clear institutional supervision. However, formal education is often limited in providing contextual social experiences that allow for deep internalization of values. These limitations have become increasingly evident in the digital era, where excessive use of technology reduces direct social interaction and opportunities for authentic moral learning (Kaimara & Deliyannis, 2022).

Exposure to negative content in digital spaces such as violence, pornography, hate speech, and consumerist behavior contributes to the decline in students' moral quality (Kang et al., 2024). Technology also facilitates the spread of unverified information, which triggers cyberbullying and digital addiction. The weaknesses of formal educational approaches are further exacerbated by minimal parental supervision and the limited emphasis on moral values within school curricula (Qutub, 2025). These conditions indicate that character formation methods relying solely on schools have not been fully effective.

The research problem becomes increasingly evident when empirical data show a significant rise in cases of violence and bullying in national and regional educational settings. In Central Java Province, the number of child victims has increased from year to year, indicating that the moral crisis has not been optimally addressed. The surge in cases of violence within the national educational environment also reveals gaps in character development and weak synergy among schools, families, and communities (Tirto.id). These facts underscore that the formation of students' character requires a more collaborative and socially based approach.

As a solution, this study proposes a community-based nonformal education approach by integrating social activities and leadership values. Nonformal education enables students to gain contextual learning experiences through habituation and direct social interaction that foster social concern and responsibility (Cantika, 2024). The PIJAR Semarang Community was selected as the research object because it consistently develops learning assistance, social activities, and leadership training as an integrated program. This approach is relevant for instilling empathy, courage in decision-making, and leadership skills through direct experience (Leithwood et al., 2021).

The main contributions of this study include providing empirical evidence regarding the role of nonformal communities in the formation of students' character. This research also offers new insights into the integration of social activities and leadership values that are systematically applied in community-based educational practices. Previous studies have largely focused on formal school environments and extracurricular activities such as Scouting, which emphasize character and leadership development among students (Lestari, 2022). Other studies position teachers and school institutions as the primary actors in the internalization of character and leadership values among students (Ivon et al., 2024). In addition, this study explicitly examines the constraints and solutions in the process of value integration, which are rarely discussed in previous research (Nuralda et al., 2023).

This study aims to analyze the integration of social activities and leadership values in the formation of students' character by the PIJAR Semarang Community. The research focuses on nonformal learning practices, students' social experiences, and the leadership dynamics that emerge within community activities. The findings of this study are expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of community-based character education.

2. Literature Review

Character Education

Character education, according to Thomas Lickona, emphasizes the cultivation of moral and social values through conscious and well-planned learning processes. Lickona states that character education encompasses three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, which together form an integrated and holistic character (Zhang, 2023). These three components are interrelated and inseparable in the process of character formation. Character education aims to develop individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess moral integrity and are capable of contributing positively to social life (Nur Hikmasari, 2021). The role of educators and facilitators is crucial in ensuring consistency in the internalization of values. This context is relevant to the practice of character education within the PIJAR Semarang Community (Ma'zumi et al., 2023).

Socialization Theory by Durkheim and Mead

Durkheim memandang sosialisasi sebagai proses internalisasi norma dan nilai kolektif masyarakat. Konsep kesadaran kolektif menjelaskan bagaimana nilai moral membentuk perilaku individu (Wirawan, 2012). Pendidikan berperan sebagai sarana transmisi nilai sosial. Proses ini menciptakan keteraturan sosial (Muslich, 2022). Mead menekankan sosialisasi melalui interaksi sosial dan pengambilan peran. Individu membentuk konsep diri melalui internalisasi harapan sosial (Janoski & Lepadatu, 2021).

Social Learning

Albert Bandura's social learning theory explains that individuals learn behavior through observing the actions of others and the consequences that follow (Lesilolo, 2018). This process involves mechanisms of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, which enable learning to occur without direct experience (Yanuardianto, 2019). Bandura emphasizes reciprocal determinism among cognitive factors, behavior, and the environment, in which individuals play an active role in regulating their own actions (Boiliu, 2022).

Character Formation

Character formation is a process of internalizing values through experience and habituation. Family, school, and community function as agents of character formation (Mardewi, 2017). Positive social interactions encourage the development of empathy and responsibility. The environment is a determining factor in the success of character formation (Sari & Ningsih, 2024). Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory explains the influence of various environments on individual development, with the closest environments having a direct impact on a child's character (Bronfenbrenner, 2013).

Leadership

Leadership is understood as a process of influencing individuals to achieve shared goals. Burns emphasizes transformational leadership that is oriented toward moral change. Leadership encourages the development of integrity and responsibility, making this concept relevant to character education for students. Terry views leadership as an activity of voluntary influence. Leadership effectiveness depends on the social context. In education, leadership fosters independence and responsibility. Leadership values develop through direct experience.

Social Activities

Social activities are collective actions aimed at providing social benefits. These activities foster values of care and empathy (Pratiwi, 2022). Social activities serve as a contextual medium for character learning. Direct experience strengthens the internalization of values (Saputra, 2023).

Community

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Learning Programs

Community-based learning programs emphasize active participation among members. Collaborative methods encourage student engagement through meaningful shared activities (Susilo et al., 2024). The role of facilitators determines the success of programs in guiding learning processes and group interactions (Legi, 2024). Continuous evaluation is necessary to maintain learning quality and program effectiveness (Shofwan & Kuntoro, 2017).

3. Materials and Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, namely the role of the PIJAR Semarang community in the formation of students' character through learning programs and social activities. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables researchers to understand the experiences of students and facilitators within the natural context of community activities (Subhaktiyasa, 2024). This study focuses on a detailed description of the integration of social activities and leadership values in the process of students' character formation. In this research, the researcher acts as the key instrument, directly involved in data collection and analysis (Fadli, 2021).

The research design employed is descriptive qualitative, with the objective of thoroughly depicting how the social activities and leadership values implemented by the PIJAR Semarang community contribute to students' character development. This study emphasizes understanding meanings, processes, and experiences of the research subjects in their natural settings. This approach was selected because the researcher seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of the community's social activities, the leadership values instilled, and the tutoring and mentoring practices. This design allows the researcher to produce a comprehensive description of the phenomenon under study.

The research procedure begins with the identification of the research problem and objectives, focusing on the contribution of social activities and leadership values to students' character formation. The next stage involves a literature review covering theories of social activities, leadership, character education, and the role of communities in education. This is followed by data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation. Subsequent stages include data analysis, interpretation of findings, drawing conclusions, and evaluation and reflection on the research process.

The research subjects consist of students who actively participate in social activities and learning programs of the PIJAR Semarang community, as well as tutors or community administrators who are directly involved in character formation. Informant selection was conducted purposively, taking into account active involvement and experience in community programs. The research location is the PIJAR Semarang community and all learning and social activity sites organized by the community. These locations were selected because they serve as the primary spaces for social interaction and the implementation of leadership values.

The research data comprise primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews, direct observation of learning and social activities, and documentation of community activities. Secondary data were obtained from community documents such as profiles, vision and mission statements, organizational structures, lists of students, learning modules, and activity documentation. The combination of these data sources was used to obtain a comprehensive overview of the role of the PIJAR Semarang community.

Data analysis was conducted using the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman, which include data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles, 1984). Data validity was ensured through methodological triangulation and source triangulation by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation (Mulyana, 2024). The analysis process was carried out systematically to identify patterns and themes related to students' character formation. The results of the analysis were then interpreted to explain the role of the community in integrating social activities and leadership values.

4. Results and Discussion

Research Result

Social activities in the PIJAR Semarang Community are implemented as a core component of nonformal learning that directly involves students in real-life experiences. Based on the learning activities conducted on 16 June 2025 at TPQ Al-Hamim Krobokan, students participated in a series of social activities integrated with literacy learning and the strengthening of environmental awareness values. These activities were designed in the form of thematic learning, group work, personal mentoring, and collective reflection carried out systematically. This pattern of engagement indicates that social activities are not merely complementary, but function as the primary medium for students' character formation.

Thematic learning constitutes the most dominant form of social activity in the implementation of PIJAR Semarang's programs. The theme "Let's Take Care of the Environment" was delivered through animated video media, group discussions, and simple practical activities connected to students' daily lives. Students were guided to observe, understand, and actively respond to the material according to their respective ability groups. This process encouraged students to understand their social roles and fostered attitudes of care and responsibility.

Group work was implemented as a form of social activity that trained interaction and cooperation among students. Students were divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced groups, with tasks adjusted to each group's level of ability. Through this process,

students learned to communicate, follow instructions, and complete tasks collaboratively. This activity illustrates a process of social learning that occurs naturally through interaction among students.

Personal mentoring was provided for students who experienced learning difficulties and challenges related to self-confidence. Mentoring was conducted through individual guidance, informal dialogue, and motivational reinforcement during activities. This approach helped students feel safe and accepted within the community environment. Such conditions enabled students to participate in social activities gradually and demonstrate positive attitudinal development.

Collective reflection became the final component of the series of social activities in each meeting. Students were guided to express their experiences, feelings, and understanding after participating in the activities. The reflection process helped students connect concrete experiences with the values being learned. This activity demonstrates that students were emotionally and cognitively engaged in social learning.

Interview results indicate that social activities have a direct impact on students' character formation. Student K stated that through joint learning activities, group work, and leadership training, they learned discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and concern for others. Student C also stated that learning through play and stories shared by tutors helped them better understand social and leadership values and encouraged them to begin leading prayers, despite still feeling shy. These statements indicate that character formation occurs gradually in accordance with students' readiness.

The results of observations and tutor interviews show that social activities are designed by adjusting to students' ages and characteristics through the habituation of positive behaviors, role modeling, and direct involvement. Tutors apply play-based approaches for younger students and group responsibility for older students. Personal mentoring becomes an essential component in assisting students with low self-confidence. These findings demonstrate that social activities function as the primary means of character formation within the PIJAR Semarang Community.

Discussion

The social activities developed by the PIJAR Semarang Community demonstrate strong alignment with the concept of character education based on social experience, in which nonformal learning places social activities at the core of the learning process, as emphasized by Lickona (2013). Students do not merely receive instructional content but directly experience social situations that require responsibility, care, and the courage to interact through thematic learning, group work, personal mentoring, and collective reflection. The adaptation of activity formats to the age and background of students reflects a humanistic approach that positions learners as active subjects who feel safe and valued within the learning process (Rogers, 2012). Engagement in discussions and group work indicates the formation of participatory leadership that develops through social interaction and experiences of role-taking (Northouse, 2018). Social interaction processes within groups also illustrate the formation of values through socialization and the construction of social meaning (Mead, 2015). The role of tutors as facilitators and behavioral models strengthens the internalization of values through role modeling and positive reinforcement (Bandura, 2017). Personal mentoring and collective reflection assist students in linking concrete experiences with an understanding of moral values and self-awareness in accordance with the stages of character formation (Santika, 2020).

Leadership Values Instilled by the PIJAR Semarang Community

The PIJAR Semarang Community instills leadership values through social practices that are consistently integrated into the entire sequence of community activities, in which leadership is understood not as a formal position but as an attitude and set of behaviors that develop through everyday social interaction. Values such as responsibility, discipline, courage, cooperation, empathy, honesty, independence, and social concern are cultivated through habituation, tutor role modeling, and the direct involvement of students in every learning activity and social program. Students are guided to understand their roles and responsibilities, to participate courageously, to collaborate within groups, and to be sensitive to the conditions of their peers. Tutors act as mentors and behavioral models who provide direct examples and prioritize reflective dialogue in responding to students' behavior. The process of value

cultivation is carried out gradually and continuously in accordance with students' readiness, without separating academic learning from value-based learning. The findings indicate observable changes in students' attitudes, including increased self-confidence, willingness to assume roles, and heightened social concern after regular participation in activities. The integration of social activities with leadership values creates contextual and meaningful learning experiences in the character formation of students within the PIJAR Semarang Community.

Mechanisms for Integrating Social Activities and Leadership Values

The mechanism for integrating social activities and leadership values in the PIJAR Semarang Community operates through interconnected stages of learning planning, implementation, and evaluation that are consciously designed by tutors and community administrators. Each activity is structured with both academic objectives and character development goals, ensuring that social activities do not stand alone but are integrated throughout all phases of learning. Students are involved in discussions, group work, and simple leadership practices appropriate to their age and abilities, enabling them to learn responsibility, cooperation, courage, and social concern through direct experience. Tutors serve as facilitators and role models who provide personal mentoring without pressure, fostering a psychologically safe environment in which students feel confident to take on roles. Learning evaluation not only assesses learning outcomes but also cultivates honesty, responsibility, and self-confidence through the presentation of work results in front of the group. Community administrators ensure the consistency of value integration through flexible program planning and regular coordination with tutors. These findings indicate that the integration mechanism in the PIJAR Semarang Community is implemented systematically, contextually, and progressively in accordance with students' developmental stages.

Impact of Integration on Students' Character Formation

The integration of social activities and leadership values in the PIJAR Semarang Community has produced tangible impacts on students' character formation. These impacts are evident in the increased sense of responsibility demonstrated by students in completing group tasks and carrying out social roles without the need for constant reminders. Students have also shown enhanced self-confidence through the courage to speak, lead prayers, and present their work in front of the group. Intensive social interaction within group work has fostered attitudes of cooperation and social concern toward peers. Tutors have observed improvements in students' discipline and initiative in participating in activities and assisting in organizing groups. The impact of integration is not only experienced during the activities themselves but has also begun to be applied in daily life at home, based on information from parents. These findings indicate that the integration of social activities and leadership has a progressive and sustainable impact on the formation of students' personal and social character.

The Role of the PIJAR Semarang Community in the Integration of Social Activities and Leadership Values

The administrators and volunteers of the PIJAR Semarang Community play a strategic role in integrating social activities and leadership values into the process of students' character formation. Administrators are responsible for designing programs based on evaluations of previous activities and mapping students' needs to ensure that social and leadership values are consistently instilled. Each activity is directed not only toward academic achievement but also toward the cultivation of values such as responsibility, cooperation, and social concern, which are communicated to tutors. Volunteers and tutors serve as the main implementers of value integration through the habituation of positive behaviors, role modeling, and the involvement of students in social activities. Tutors also apply active learning methods and personal mentoring to create a safe, conducive learning atmosphere that supports students' courage and participation. Regular coordination between administrators and volunteers is conducted to align perspectives and evaluate challenges encountered in the field. The synergy between administrators and volunteers ensures that the integration of social activities and leadership values is implemented in a structured, consistent, and sustainable manner.

Program planning in the PIJAR Semarang Community is understood as the initial stage that determines the direction of integrating social activities and leadership values. Planning begins with an analysis of students' needs and the social conditions of the surrounding

environment to ensure that programs do not operate merely in a normative manner. Administrators identify students' characteristics through direct observation and internal discussions to ensure that programs are relevant to real conditions. Tutors and volunteers are actively involved in the planning process by providing input based on their direct mentoring experiences. Each program is designed with clear leadership value objectives, such as responsibility, cooperation, and social concern, which are then translated into concrete activities. Planning is flexible and adaptive to field dynamics without compromising the goals of character formation. The synergy between administrators and tutors enables program planning to proceed in a systematic, collaborative manner that supports the successful integration of leadership values.

Implementation and mentoring in the PIJAR Semarang Community are understood as the actualization stage of planning, functioning as the primary space for the internalization of social and leadership values. Each activity is designed so that students directly experience leadership values through social activities that involve active participation. Implementation begins with simple social habituation, such as greetings, collective prayers, and the assignment of small roles to build students' social readiness. During core activities, students are engaged in group discussions and educational games that gradually develop cooperation, courage, and leadership. Mentoring is carried out intensively and persuasively through observation, guidance, and individualized approaches to ensure that students feel safe and valued. The community also maintains an inclusive learning environment and consistency in activity patterns to reinforce the habituation of positive attitudes. Despite facing limitations in time and resources, flexibility in implementation and mentoring ensures that the integration of leadership values proceeds effectively and sustainably.

Evaluation and character reinforcement in the PIJAR Semarang Community are understood as subsequent stages to ensure the sustainability of social and leadership value integration. Evaluation is not interpreted as a judgment of right or wrong, but as a process of observing students' attitudinal development gradually. Evaluation is conducted during and after learning activities to understand the extent to which these values are practiced in daily behavior and to serve as a basis for determining subsequent reinforcement measures. The process is carried out through direct observation by tutors, focusing on small changes in attitudes such as discipline and responsibility, without relying on rigid standardized instruments. Each student is assessed based on their own development, so that small changes are regarded as meaningful progress and do not create pressure. Collective reflection constitutes an important component, in which students are encouraged to share their experiences and feelings using simple language. This process helps students recognize the social and leadership values they have practiced, both individually and collectively, through observations of cooperation and leadership roles. The evaluation results are then utilized for character reinforcement through the repetition of activities, the assignment of further responsibilities, positive feedback, and internal discussions among tutors and administrators to improve mentoring practices without negative labeling.

Obstacles and Solutions in the Integration of Social Activities and Leadership Values by the Semarang PIJAR Community

Internal constraints in the process of integrating social activities and leadership values within the PIJAR Semarang Community are multidimensional, stemming from the diversity of students' characteristics, psychological readiness, and fluctuations in motivation that influence the pace of value internalization and self-confidence in participation. Inconsistencies in discipline and psychological barriers, particularly among younger students, often disrupt the learning flow and require tutors to adapt their approaches so that all participants remain engaged without coercion. These conditions are further compounded by limitations in activity duration, the number of tutors, and differences in tutors' experiential backgrounds, which restrict the optimization of intensive mentoring and the continuity of internal coordination due to differing schedules. These constraints in human resources and internal dynamics result in character changes that are not always immediately observable, necessitating gradual, incremental, and meticulous evaluation of students' development. Despite challenges in the intensity of leadership value reinforcement, the community continues to employ a humanistic approach and internal reflection as strategies to manage these obstacles in order to sustain students' character formation.

External constraints in the implementation of social and leadership value integration activities within the PIJAR Semarang Community arise from factors outside the internal structure, particularly the family environment, which exerts a significant influence on the continuity of the values instilled. Differences in backgrounds, parenting styles, and limited parental understanding of the importance of community-based character education often result in the values acquired within the community not being consistently reinforced at home, leading to instability in students' behavioral consistency. In addition, less supportive social environments and the strong influence of peer groups outside the community frequently conflict with the positive habits learned, further complicated by differences in character education approaches between schools and the community. Limitations in students' time due to school schedules, socioeconomic conditions, and insufficient intensive communication with families also hinder the synchronization of value habituation on an ongoing basis. Moreover, suboptimal collaboration with external partners due to differing priorities restricts the development of large-scale social activities and the utilization of external resources. In response to these complexities, the community strives to remain adaptive through persuasive engagement with parents and the design of effective activities to ensure that the community's role as an alternative educational space continues to function consistently amid existing social realities.

The internal and external constraints faced by the PIJAR Semarang Community exert a systemic impact on the rhythm and depth of value internalization, whereby the character formation process unfolds gradually and unevenly across students. Consistency in the application of social values becomes fluctuating due to insufficient reinforcement in the family environment, while barriers related to self-confidence and discipline result in leadership experiences and the quality of learning interactions being unevenly distributed. Limitations in activity duration and the number of tutors also affect the depth of reflection and the intensity of individual mentoring, causing students with higher needs to require more time to demonstrate stable behavioral change. This phenomenon creates variations in character outcomes and influences students' long-term motivation, often requiring tutors to provide additional emotional support and effort to maintain the quality of mentoring. Nevertheless, the impact of these constraints is not always negative, as they encourage the community to engage in adaptive evaluation and innovative approaches, while simultaneously cultivating students' patience and perseverance in facing limitations. Overall, the management of these constraints underscores that the success of character education in nonformal settings is highly dependent on mentoring strategies that are inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to existing environmental dynamics.

The PIJAR Semarang Community responds to these various constraints through the implementation of adaptive and contextual strategies that position students as the primary subjects of learning through the continuous management of educational processes. Key strategies include adjusting learning methods, such as employing play-based and storytelling approaches for younger students and assigning more complex social responsibilities to older participants, in order to accommodate differences in individual readiness. Other practical solutions include personal mentoring to build self-confidence, tutors' role modeling as a medium for the imitation of positive behavior, and the diversification of educational activities to maintain students' motivation. In addressing limitations of time and resources, the community applies efficiency through the design of value-dense activities, strengthened internal coordination among tutors, and informal communication with parents to align value habituation within the family environment. All of these strategies are implemented within a humanistic framework that avoids pressure, wherein leadership roles are introduced gradually in accordance with students' psychological readiness. Finally, the community leverages its limitations as opportunities for reflection to teach perseverance, supported by periodic internal evaluations to ensure that programs remain relevant, high in quality, and effective in integrating social and leadership values.

5. Comparison

Previous studies have shown that character building in students has been widely studied in the context of formal schools and certain communities with varying focuses. Ardiansyah (2024) examined the formation of a love of reading through the implementation of a full-day school system at MIN 1 Pati, with an emphasis on the school environment and the role of teachers. Ningrum (2024) examined the formation of Islamic character in children through religious value-based literacy activities in the Gubuk Literasi community. Meanwhile, Sunariati (2023) and Karisma, Suciati, and Iswahyudi (2021) placed formal schools and the role of teachers as the main actors in character building, both through civic education and reading literacy habits.

Based on relevant previous studies, most research has emphasized the positive results of character education integration, both through formal learning and community activities, without examining in depth the obstacles encountered in the implementation process. In contrast to this trend, this study specifically formulates issues related to obstacles and solutions in the process of integrating social activities and leadership values carried out by the PIJAR Semarang Community. This approach provides a new contribution by revealing the real challenges faced by non-formal communities in shaping the character of students and the practical solution strategies developed in the field. Thus, the novelty of this research lies in exploring the role of non-formal social communities in systematically integrating social activities and leadership values, while identifying implementation obstacles and solutions that have not been widely discussed in previous studies that focused more on the context of formal education.

6. Conclusion

This study concluded that the integration of social activities and leadership values in shaping the character of students in the PIJAR Semarang Community was carried out through contextual, participatory, and sustainable experience-based learning, with social activities as the main means of internalizing the values of responsibility, social awareness, cooperation, discipline, leadership, empathy, and self-confidence. This integration process is supported by the active role of the community through program planning, activity implementation, personal mentoring, evaluation, and the exemplary role of tutors in creating a safe and humane learning environment. Despite facing internal obstacles such as differences in student character, limited time and resources, and external obstacles in the form of uneven family and social environment support, the community was able to respond with adaptive strategies and a humanistic approach so that the character building process continued to run effectively. These findings confirm that character education does not only depend on formal education but requires synergy between schools, communities, and society. They also show that community-based non-formal education models, such as those implemented by the PIJAR Semarang Community, have strategic implications as a reference for the development of applicable and sustainable character education.

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