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Cultivating Religious Character Through Archery Extracurricular Activities In An Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the instilling of religious character through the extracurricular archery activity at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School in West Aceh. Archery at the Islamic boarding school is not only viewed as a sunnah sport but also as a means of developing the religious character of students. This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the boarding school leadership, extracurricular instructors, teachers, and students. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. The results show that the extracurricular archery activity is able to instill various religious character values, such as discipline, patience, focus, tawakkal (relief), sincerity, steadfastness, responsibility, maintaining good manners, guarding one's tongue, sportsmanship, and gratitude. This character instillation is carried out through habituation during training, teacher role models, providing advice, and the application of Islamic values in every stage of the archery activity. This research shows that extracurricular activities based on the Sunnah can be an alternative in strengthening religious character education in Islamic boarding schools and other Islamic educational institutions.

Keywords: Extracurricular; Activities Archery; Pesantren; Charakter Education; Islami Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Character is a collection of values that lead to a system, underpinning the thoughts, attitudes, and behavior displayed (Wulandari 2019). Character can also mean letters, numbers, spaces, or special symbols that can be displayed on a screen using a keyboard. A person with character means someone with personality, behavior, nature, disposition, or character (Izzati & Irawan, 2023). Religious character is one of the character values cultivated (Syaroh and Mizani 2020). Religious character is essential for students to face changing times and moral degradation (Armini, Sujana, and Aryana 2022). Islamic boarding schools, as educational institutions, play a crucial role in cultivating religious character. Islamic boarding schools can equip their students with commendable attitudes such as diligence, honesty, trustworthiness, independence, responsibility, creativity, innovation, hard work, and others (Syaroh and Mizani 2020). The process of cultivating religious character is not limited to academic activities but also occurs in non-academic activities such as archery. Extracurricular activities are programs that provide a platform or platform for channeling students' interests and talents (Qorina 2022). Extracurricular activities also play a crucial role, one of which is shaping the character of students. Many Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) have implemented archery as an extracurricular activity. Archery is also a very popular sport and is quite popular among the community, not only in Indonesia but also globally (M. Mughni 2021).

Previous research has shown that cultivating religious character through archery extracurricular activities indicates positive outcomes. Forming students with character (M. S. Mughni 2021), can educate students to be disciplined, patient, calm, brave, hardworking, respect each other, responsible, and obedient (Khofi 2024), Being in the good category, this is shown by the results of observations with a percentage of Yes as much as 84% and No as much as 16% (Zulaika and Safitri 2023), is already considered good but the facilities and infrastructure are less supportive (Qorina 2022), can achieve targets with the existence (Rahmadini 2020), procedures for objectives, planning, implementation, and evaluation (Sularno, Heri Cahyono 2022). The archery extracurricular program shows that it is effective in forming students' character in accordance with the principles of Islamic education (Sugiarti, Mutmainah, and Ahyani 2025). Archery extracurricular activities have an impact on students' ability to concentrate on learning because there is a significant difference in concentration ability between students who participate in archery extracurricular activities and students who do not participate in archery extracurricular activities (Hardi and Hastian 2022).

Previous research has shown that extracurricular archery activities play a role in character

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development in students. Several studies have shown that archery can foster discipline, responsibility, self-confidence, focus, hard work, and social awareness. This demonstrates that archery is not merely a sport but can also be a means of character education. However, research on archery has focused more on general character development and has been conducted in formal schools. Studies on the instillation of religious character through archery activities in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) environments are still scarce. This is despite the fact that Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) offer a stronger Islamic educational environment, fostering the habit of worship, maintaining good manners, respecting teachers, and implementing religious values in daily life.

Furthermore, previous research has focused more on character development such as discipline, self-confidence, and responsibility. However, religious values such as sincerity, trust (relief), consistency (steadfastness), guarding one's tongue, discipline in worship, and responsibility in using archery equipment have rarely been specifically discussed. Previous research has also focused more on the outcomes of character development rather than the process of instilling religious values during archery activities. Based on this, this study was conducted to examine the instilling of religious character through extracurricular archery activities at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School. The uniqueness of this study lies in the integration of Islamic educational values into archery activities. Students not only learn archery techniques, but also are accustomed to praying before practice, maintaining good manners, practicing patience and focus, being a good sport, and being responsible for the equipment used. Thus, archery activities are not only a physical activity but also a medium for developing students' religious character.

METHOD

This research was designed using a qualitative, descriptive approach. This approach was chosen based on the research objective of describing in-depth and holistically the phenomenon of religious character development through extracurricular archery activities, as it exists in the field without any intervention from the researcher. The research location was Dayah Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari, a traditional Islamic educational institution located in West Aceh Regency, known for its strong tradition of integrating religious education and sunnah-based physical activities.

To obtain comprehensive and credible data, the researcher identified four categories of research subjects, selected purposively. These four categories are: (1) dayah leaders who have

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authority over curriculum policy and student development; (2) extracurricular archery coaches who act as ustadz and role models in archery practice; (3) teachers or ustadz who teach religious subjects and interact with students on a daily basis; and (4) students actively participating in archery activities, selected from various age groups to obtain a variety of perspectives.

Data collection was conducted using three complementary techniques: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The observation technique involved the researcher directly observing a series of extracurricular archery activities, from the warm-up phase, through theoretical instruction in archery etiquette, target shooting practice, and post-training evaluations. The primary focus in these observations was on the interactions between coaches and students, as well as the religious values explicitly and implicitly embedded in each session, such as pre-training prayers, the attitude of trust (Tawakal), and patience in the face of failure.

Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted using semi-structured guidelines to elicit richer and more contextual information from the informants. The interviews focused not only on the technical aspects of archery but also explored their understanding of religious character values, such as honesty, discipline, humility, and a love for the Prophet's traditions. The researcher conducted repeated interviews with several key informants to ensure data depth and verify the consistency of responses, particularly in capturing the hidden meanings behind the long-herited archery tradition at the dayah.

Documentation was used as supporting data to strengthen and complement the findings from observations and interviews. The types of documents collected included photographs of archery practice activities, weekly practice schedules, student attendance lists, achievement records, and photographs of the dayah atmosphere and the facilities used. Furthermore, researchers reviewed written documents in the form of yellow books taught at the dayah, particularly those containing hadiths regarding archery advice, to explore the theological basis for these activities.

The data analysis process was conducted interactively and continuously, following the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was achieved by summarizing, selecting key points, and focusing on aspects relevant to the instilling of religious character. The data presentation was organized in the form of descriptive narratives and a thematic matrix to facilitate understanding of patterns of relationships between themes. Furthermore, conclusions were drawn inductively, consistently comparing new findings with previous findings, resulting in dynamic conclusions

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grounded in field data.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques, including both source and technical triangulation. Source triangulation was achieved by comparing and confirming information obtained from dayah leaders, trainers, teachers, and students regarding the same event, thus identifying common ground and differences in their perspectives. Meanwhile, technical triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observation, interview, and documentation data. If discrepancies were found between the techniques, the researcher conducted a member check in the field until consistent and scientifically accountable data were obtained. This rigorous procedure is expected to produce research findings that are not only methodologically valid but also rich in meaning and the local context of the dayah.

RESULTS

1. Character Targets Developed

The archery extracurricular program at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School is designed to cultivate several key aspects of religious character among students. Although the students already possess certain inherent religious values, these traits require continuous reinforcement through structured habituation and consistent practice. Throughout the archery sessions, teachers deliberately integrate religious character values into every stage of the activity, ensuring that students internalize and routinely apply these principles in their daily lives.

One of the teachers emphasized that the moral responsibility of educators extends beyond mere instruction to encompass holistic nurturing and character formation. According to this teacher, religious character must be cultivated in every activity, including praying before commencing practice, arriving punctually, assisting peers who are still struggling with technique, and demonstrating perseverance and patience even when outcomes are not immediately successful. These practices are intended to help students develop consistency in applying virtuous behavior.

This perspective was corroborated by another instructor, who stated that religious values are embedded throughout the training process from the very beginning. Each session opens with a collective prayer seeking divine blessings and facilitation. Additionally, teachers consistently offer words of encouragement and praise to maintain students' morale and to instill a spirit of resilience.

These assertions were further validated by a student at the Islamic boarding school, who expressed great enthusiasm for participating in archery. The student noted that the activity had

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significantly enhanced personal qualities such as focus, patience, discipline, and diligence. Before releasing an arrow, students are taught to concentrate fully on the target and to recite the Basmalah (invoking the name of Allah). Furthermore, the student highlighted that archery is a sunnah (tradition) recommended by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and is regarded as a sport that trains breath control, mental concentration, and emotional composure. The student also acknowledged the kindness and patience demonstrated by the female instructors throughout the training.

These accounts collectively indicate that supervising teachers consistently encourage students to engage in virtuous deeds. Moreover, teachers serve as living examples of good character, modeling the very traits they seek to instill. Essentially, educators in this context function not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as exemplars of moral conduct.

Observations of the archery extracurricular activities reveal that teachers provide direct supervision and personalized guidance to students. Their role extends beyond teaching technical skills to embedding religious values into every aspect of the session. For instance, both teachers and students arrive on time according to the predetermined schedule; they begin practice with a communal prayer; they recite the Basmalah prior to each shot; they maintain focus on the target; and they patiently await their turns. Teachers also offer encouragement to students who have not yet achieved accuracy, advising them not to lose heart. They remind successful students to remain grateful and to utter Alhamdulillah (praise be to Allah), while also encouraging mutual assistance among peers. Each session concludes with a closing prayer.

These observational findings are supported by student interviews. One student reported that the female instructor consistently motivates those who have not yet hit the target, urging them to persist, continue learning, and avoid giving up easily. Another student mentioned that complaints about frequent misses are common during practice, but teachers always respond with constructive advice to sustain motivation. Archery, as the students acknowledged, requires extended periods of training to achieve accuracy; hence, focus, patience, sustained effort, discipline, and teamwork are indispensable. Repetitive practice is essential for developing precision.

2. Implementation and Evaluation Process

The archery extracurricular activity at the Islamic boarding school follows a fixed weekly schedule, held every Thursday from the afternoon prayer (Asr) until sunset (Maghrib). At the designated time, students arrive equipped with their archery gear. The instructor directly supervises each session while systematically instilling religious character values, including focus,

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patience, honesty, perseverance, tawakkal (reliance on Allah), gratitude, humility, diligent effort, courage, self-confidence, caring, sincerity, discipline in worship, steadfastness, responsibility for equipment, and a persistent spirit aimed at achieving optimal results.

According to the instructor, religious character values are woven into every phase of the activity. The session begins with punctual arrival to cultivate discipline, followed by preliminary instructions, warm-up exercises, and a collective prayer. Throughout the training, students are taught not only the mechanics of drawing the bow and releasing the arrow, but also the importance of patient waiting, focused release, acceptance of missed targets without complaint, humility, and mutual assistance. An evaluation is conducted at the final session to assess both archery proficiency and behavioral conduct during the activity.

Teachers reaffirmed that at each meeting, they continue to nurture religious character by embedding it into every process. The closing session includes a reflective evaluation aimed at improving subsequent sessions. Students echoed this sentiment, acknowledging that they consistently pray before beginning practice. One student noted that upon the archery schedule announcement, they eagerly arrive on time and participate in the opening prayer, while the female instructor offers motivational advice. Another student added that the instructor always emphasizes prayer before any activity, patience while waiting for turns, and helping one another.

Observations confirmed that the archery sessions proceed smoothly. Students arrive punctually, dressed in the official archery uniforms provided by the boarding school, and carrying the necessary equipment. Due to limited shooting ranges, the students are divided into three groups. Each session begins with instructions and advice from the supervising teacher, followed by a communal prayer. As students take turns shooting, each individual performs three shots using various shooting styles. Focus and readiness are paramount during the release to achieve accurate results. At the conclusion, the supervising teacher conducts an evaluation of the day's activities and closes with a prayer for blessings.

Interviews with the supervising teacher further reinforced these observations. The teacher stated that evaluations are conducted at the end of each meeting and once per semester. The semester evaluation scores are incorporated into the students' report cards as a formal record of their progress throughout the activity.

Documentation study results indicate that the Islamic boarding school does not possess a specific written guidebook detailing the structure of the archery process. Instead, the activities are executed directly through hands-on practice led by the supervising teacher, with instructions delivered verbally through explanations and motivational remarks. Evaluations are performed

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both at the end of each session and on a semester basis, with grades recorded in the students' academic reports.

3. Teacher-Student Interaction and Involvement of Other Parties

In the context of archery activities, the interaction between teachers and students plays a pivotal role in the effective cultivation of religious character. Teachers function not merely as technical instructors but also as behavioral role models. Positive and harmonious interaction creates a calmer and more conducive learning environment. Additionally, the support and involvement of the boarding school leadership and other teaching staff significantly contribute to the smooth implementation of the program.

One teacher underscored the importance of active communication in the teacher-student relationship, stating that dialogue is essential whether students are correct or mistaken. Ignoring students during the learning process is not an option. This viewpoint was reinforced by another teacher, who noted that both parties must remain actively engaged, as the learning process requires mutual participation. Students are encouraged to approach the ustazah (female teacher) with questions whenever they encounter difficulties.

Students corroborated these statements, explaining that during practice, the ustazah immediately corrects any improper handling of the bow or arrow. If anything is unclear, they feel comfortable asking for clarification. They also reported that no conflicts have ever arisen during practice and that interpersonal relationships among students remain positive.

These accounts highlight the significance of open communication between teachers and students, as well as among peers. Such interaction fosters student engagement, encourages inquiry, and nurtures a sense of closeness within the activity. The rapport between teachers and students demonstrates that archery serves not only as a means of fulfilling the boarding school's vision and mission but also as a medium for cultivating effective communication skills.

This was further affirmed by a student who recalled the teacher's encouragement: even if one has not yet achieved the target, the important thing is never to give up, and success will eventually follow.

Field observations confirmed that teacher-student interactions are characterized by harmony and positivity. The supervising teacher provides direction and constructive feedback in a supportive manner. Students confidently ask questions without fear, and peer assistance is frequently observed when a classmate is confused, reflecting a spirit of mutual help.

Documentation studies, however, reveal that there are no written documents or posters explicitly requiring students to greet teachers or peers upon meeting. Rather, this practice is

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encouraged orally by teachers during each session.

4. Summary of Religious Character Values Cultivated

Based on the triangulation of observations, interviews, and documentation conducted at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School in West Aceh, the archery extracurricular activity is recognized not merely as a religiously endorsed sport but also as an effective vehicle for character development. The program instills a range of religious values, including discipline, patience, focus, responsibility, and the maintenance of proper conduct during training.

a. Cultivating Disciplined Character

Observations indicate that archery sessions are conducted regularly according to a fixed schedule. Students are required to arrive on time, follow instructions, and prepare their equipment in an orderly manner. Latecomers are reprimanded and encouraged to manage their time more effectively. Interview data confirm that archery not only hones physical skills but also habituates students to obey rules, maintain order, and respect time within the broader context of boarding school life.

b. Cultivating Patience and Focus

Research findings show that archery trains students to exercise patience and concentration throughout practice. Students are taught to control their emotions, regulate their breathing, and direct their attention to the target to ensure precise shots. According to interview responses, students feel that archery helps them become calmer and less hasty. They also learn to accept failure gracefully and to continuously strive for improvement in subsequent sessions.

c. Cultivating Reliance (Tawakkal) and Sincerity (Ikhlas)

Observations reveal that before training begins, students are accustomed to reciting prayers together and are encouraged to participate with sincere intentions. Teachers remind students to exert maximum effort while surrendering the final outcomes to Allah SWT. Interview data indicate that students are taught the importance of piety, patience, and sincerity in accepting training results. They are also advised against arrogance when successful and against despair when results fall short of expectations.

d. Cultivating Responsibility and Maintaining Good Manners

Research results demonstrate that students are habituated to use and maintain archery equipment properly and to return all gear after the activity concludes. According to instructors, this practice is part of learning responsibility and proper etiquette. Students are also encouraged to uphold good behavior during training, including speaking politely, respecting instructors, and

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refraining from disturbing classmates throughout the session.

DISCUSSION

According to Lutan, extracurricular activities are an integral part of the learning process aimed at meeting student needs (Annisa, Dewi, and Furnamasari 2021). This is in line with the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 62 of 2014 concerning extracurricular activities, namely "Extracurricular activities are character development activities in order to optimally expand the potential, talents, interests, abilities, personality, cooperation, and independence of students carried out under the guidance and supervision of the Education Unit" (Kemendikbud 2024). With the aim of gaining additional knowledge, skills and insight and helping shape the character of students (Supiani, Muryati, and Saefulloh 2020). Extracurricular activities in Islamic boarding schools play an important role because they are a vehicle for developing character values (Zayyinah 2021). The extracurricular archery activity at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School has existed since the boarding school was founded in 2018. Thus, extracurricular activities are not only seen as sports but as a means of character building. The values taught in Islamic boarding schools prioritize the principle of "rahmatan lil alamin" (Khopia, Usman, and Munawaroh 2024). Archery is also one of the Sunnah (religious teachings) of the Prophet Muhammad.

Many Muslims have forgotten archery, even though it is a vital sport. Four elements are crucial in archery: the bow, arrow, target, and archer (Sobarna and Taja 2023). Archery trains an individual's emotions to aim at a single point (Azizah, Anwar, and Kurniawan 2024). The values instilled in archery teach students civility, discipline, patience, calmness, courage, hard work, mutual respect, responsibility, and obedience (Khofi 2024), intelligence, focus, curiosity, faith, honesty, courage, self-confidence, perseverance and striving for self-improvement, calmness, patience, health, competitiveness, respect, humility, caring, hard work, and friendliness (Mavianti 2025).

Based on research findings, students at the Tkg Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School already possess religious character values. However, they still require further guidance to ensure consistency and familiarity. Through extracurricular archery activities, teachers familiarize students with instilling religious character values. The habituation carried out during the training process can help students become accustomed to practicing them without coercion.

In the process of character development, communication between teachers and students is essential. Communication established during archery activities is not merely a matter of

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technical guidance on the stages of archery but also serves as a means of instilling religious character. Learning that integrates character values into group assignments is effective in increasing student discipline and responsibility. This habituation process is a long-term strategy for developing positive student behavior (Fazli, Nirwana, and Neviyarni 2025).

The archery extracurricular activity at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School is held every Thursday after the midday prayer (Dhuhr) until the afternoon prayer (Asr). At the beginning, students are prepared with special archery clothing that covers their aurat (awrah) and protective equipment. They arrive according to the schedule set by the Islamic boarding school. Students line up neatly in groups, and the activity begins with a prayer, guidance from the supervising teacher, and a basic warm-up. Etiquette is also important in archery, as Imam Ibn Qayyim explained, explaining that we should honor the guests of Allah present at the gathering, as archery is a game that only angels can attend (Sobarna and Taja 2023).For example, during practice, students should maintain their eyebrows and speak meaningful words. The stages for archery are body position, grip on the bow, fitting the arrow, drawing the bow, anchor point, aiming, releasing the arrow, follow-through (Dedi Putra.Penyiar, n.d.).

The results of this study indicate that the extracurricular archery activity plays a significant role in instilling the religious character of students at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School in West Aceh. Archery is not only understood as a sunnah sport, but also serves as a medium for character education through the process of habituation, role modeling, and the integration of Islamic values into every training activity. The discipline developed through archery demonstrates that consistent practice influences students' behavior. The obligation to arrive on time, comply with training rules, wait their turn in an orderly manner, and maintain training equipment are all forms of discipline directly instilled in archery. In Islamic education, the habituation method is an effective way to shape students' morals because repeated behaviors develop into habits in daily life. This aligns with the implementation of character education through archery extracurricular activities, which can foster independent character in students (Azizah, Anwar, and Kurniawan 2024).

These findings align with Islamic educational theory, which emphasizes that character development is not solely achieved through material delivery but also through continuous practice and habituation. The boarding school environment, which implements a boarding school system, also strengthens this habituation process, as students engage in ongoing educational activities in their daily lives. In addition to discipline, archery also fosters patience and focus. Students are required to control their emotions, maintain concentration, and maintain composure before

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releasing an arrow at the target. This process demonstrates that archery not only trains physical abilities but also fosters self-control and emotional stability. The development of patient character through archery is closely linked to Islamic educational values, which emphasize the importance of patience in learning and daily life. Students are taught to accept failure when their shots fall short and to continually strive to improve their abilities without giving up. This demonstrates the ongoing character development process through direct experience during archery practice.. Third, the spiritual element encompasses patience, dhikr (remembrance of God), and the value of worship (Azizah, Anwar, and Kurniawan 2024).

The findings of this study can also be analyzed through Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which explains that individuals learn through observing and imitating the behavior of others (Patu, Damopolii, and Maulana 2025). During archery, students observe firsthand how instructors demonstrate discipline, patience, careful communication, and responsibility during practice. These behaviors are then imitated and applied by the students in their daily activities. In addition to habituation, the instilling of religious character in archery is also fostered through the exemplary behavior of teachers or extracurricular instructors. Instructors not only teach archery techniques but also provide guidance, advice, and examples of good behavior to students. This aligns with the concept of uswah hasanah (good character) in Islamic education, which places teachers as role models in the process of developing students' morals. The values of tawakkal (religious commitment) and ikhlas (sincerity) identified in this study are key differences compared to previous research. Generally, previous research focused more on general character traits such as discipline, self-confidence, and responsibility in archery activities in formal schools. Meanwhile, this study shows that archery activities in Islamic boarding schools also instill deeper religious values, such as praying before practice, accepting the results of practice with an open heart, not being arrogant when successful, and getting used to an attitude of resignation after trying one's best.

Teacher behavior is one of the primary benchmarks for instilling character in students. If teachers want students to be disciplined, they must start with the teacher, as students naturally emulate their teacher's behavior. Therefore, interactions must be effective, both between teachers, between students, and between students. The teacher referred to here is not just the archery instructor but also everyone involved in the Islamic boarding school environment. Strong collaboration will undoubtedly yield maximum results. The evaluation process at Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School measures the extent of students' abilities during their participation in extracurricular archery activities and their impact on their character. The

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evaluations include discipline, accuracy, courage, and a hands-on skills test.

The implications of extracurricular archery activities are inherently flexible, adapting to the needs of the Islamic boarding school, encompassing the institution, teachers, students, and the community. For students, it has a significant impact on the quantity and quality of their memorization and can train their physical and mental health (Ikhsannudin 2023). This proves that archery is not just a sport but also an effective model for character education.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the extracurricular archery activity at the Darul Ulum Tgk Chik Djauhari Islamic Boarding School in West Aceh not only serves as a recommended sport but also serves as a means of instilling religious character in students. Religious values such as discipline, patience, focus, tawakkal (religious obedience), sincerity, steadfastness, responsibility, maintaining good manners, guarding one's tongue, and sportsmanship are instilled through habituation, teacher role models, advice, and the application of Islamic values in every archery practice. This research demonstrates that sunnah-based extracurricular activities can be an alternative strategy for strengthening religious character education, particularly in Islamic boarding schools and Islamic educational institutions. A pesantren environment that consistently implements religious habits is also a crucial factor in supporting the successful character development of students. Future research is expected to examine the effect of archery on student discipline and character development through a quantitative approach. Furthermore, future research could also conduct comparative studies between Islamic boarding schools and formal schools and examine the effectiveness of other recommended sports in student character development.

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