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Internalization of Religious Values in Basic Training Participants for Prospective Civil Servants in Aceh

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Abstrak :

Internalisasi nilai-nilai agama telah menjadi komponen penting dalam pengembangan karakter di Program Pelatihan Dasar Calon Pegawai Negeri Sipil (Latsar CPNS) Indonesia, yang bertujuan untuk menumbuhkan aparatur negeri yang beretika, bertanggung jawab, dan berintegritas. Studi ini meneliti efektivitas strategi internalisasi nilai-nilai agama yang diimplementasikan di Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh, dengan fokus pada kontribusinya terhadap kejujuran, integritas, tanggung jawab, empati, dan pembentukan karakter mulia. Desain kuantitatif deskriptif digunakan dengan menggunakan data kuesioner yang dikumpulkan dari peserta Latsar CPNS. Data dianalisis melalui statistik deskriptif untuk menentukan persepsi peserta tentang efektivitas strategi di lima indikator terkait karakter. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi internalisasi secara umum dianggap efektif, tanpa ada responden yang menilai strategi tersebut tidak efektif. Kejujuran (75%) dan tanggung jawab (70%) menerima evaluasi positif tertinggi, diikuti oleh integritas (65%) dan pembentukan karakter mulia (64,5%), sedangkan empati menunjukkan efektivitas yang relatif lebih rendah, dengan proporsi penilaian moderat yang lebih tinggi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap pengembangan karakter peserta, meskipun dimensi afektif seperti empati membutuhkan pendekatan pembelajaran yang lebih berbasis pengalaman dan reflektif. Studi ini menyoroti pentingnya mengintegrasikan pembelajaran berbasis nilai, pendampingan, dan budaya institusional untuk memperkuat kompetensi etika dan integritas di antara calon pegawai negeri sipil.

Abstract

The internalization of religious values has become an essential component of character development in Indonesia's Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates (*Latsar CPNS*), aiming to cultivate ethical, accountable, and integrity-driven public servants. This study examines the effectiveness of religious value internalization strategies implemented at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh, focusing on their contribution to honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, and noble character formation. A descriptive quantitative design was employed using questionnaire

data collected from Latsar CPNS participants. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics to determine participants' perceptions of strategy effectiveness across five character-related indicators. The findings indicate that the internalization strategies were generally perceived as effective, with no respondents rating them as ineffective. Honesty (75%) and responsibility (70%) received the highest positive evaluations, followed by integrity (65%) and noble character formation (64.5%), whereas empathy demonstrated comparatively lower perceived effectiveness, with a higher proportion of moderate ratings. These findings suggest that religious value internalization contributes positively to participants' character development, although affective dimensions such as empathy require more experiential and reflective learning approaches. The study highlights the importance of integrating value-based learning, mentoring, and institutional culture to strengthen ethical competence and integrity among prospective civil servants.
Key words: *Religious value internalization; Character building; Basic Training for Civil Servant Candidates (Latsar CPNS); Public service integrity.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of professional and ethical civil servants has become a strategic priority in Indonesia's public administration reform. In addition to possessing technical and managerial competencies, civil servants are expected to demonstrate integrity, accountability, discipline, and a strong commitment to serving the public. Consequently, the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates (*Pelatihan Dasar Calon Pegawai Negeri Sipil* or Latsar CPNS) is designed not only to enhance participants' professional competencies but also to cultivate values and attitudes that support ethical public service. Within this context, the internalization of religious values plays an important role because religion provides a moral framework that shapes individual behavior, strengthens ethical decision-making, and encourages responsibility toward society. Rather than merely transmitting religious knowledge, internalization seeks to transform values into enduring attitudes and behaviors through continuous learning experiences, reflection, habituation, and exemplary leadership (Lickona, 1991; Muhaimin, 2006). Therefore, examining how religious values are internalized within the Latsar CPNS program is essential for understanding their contribution to developing future civil servants with strong moral character.

The concept of value internalization has been widely discussed in educational and character development literature. Internalization refers to the process through which externally introduced values gradually become personally accepted beliefs that

influence an individual's attitudes, judgments, and behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In Islamic education, this process involves integrating religious teachings into daily life through cognitive understanding, affective appreciation, and consistent behavioral practice. Educational scholars emphasize that successful internalization requires multiple pedagogical strategies, including role modeling, habituation, reflective dialogue, experiential learning, and supportive institutional culture (Muhaimin, 2006; Lickona, 1991). These strategies are particularly relevant in professional training environments because ethical competence develops not only through classroom instruction but also through repeated practice and observation of exemplary conduct.

Within the implementation of Latsar CPNS, religious value internalization may be embedded in various educational activities, including formal instruction, character-building sessions, leadership development, group discussions, mentoring, worship activities, and the institutional culture established by the training center. The effectiveness of these strategies is influenced by several supporting factors, such as organizational commitment, competent facilitators, participants' motivation, conducive learning environments, and consistent institutional policies. Conversely, barriers may arise from participants' diverse educational and religious backgrounds, limited opportunities for reflective learning, time constraints, and inconsistencies between institutional values and observed practices. Previous studies indicate that value internalization becomes more effective when learning experiences encourage active participation, self-reflection, and authentic moral practice rather than relying solely on cognitive knowledge transfer (Nucci et al., 2014; Nursalim et al., 2023).

For institutions responsible for developing future public officials, including Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh, understanding the process of religious value internalization is important for strengthening character education within civil servant training. However, empirical studies examining how religious values are systematically internalized in government training institutions remain relatively limited, particularly within the context of Latsar CPNS. Most existing studies focus on schools, universities, or Islamic educational institutions, leaving a gap in understanding how character formation occurs in professional public-sector training environments (Sauri et al., 2022; Nursalim et al., 2023). Investigating the strategies employed, the factors that facilitate or hinder implementation, and their perceived

contribution to participants' integrity can provide valuable insights for improving character development programs and strengthening ethical public service.

Although numerous studies have examined the internalization of religious values in schools, universities, and Islamic educational institutions, empirical evidence concerning how such values are systematically internalized within government training institutions remains relatively limited. Existing studies have primarily focused on students' character development, moral education, or religious learning in formal educational settings, with limited attention given to professional training programs designed for prospective civil servants (Lickona, 1991; Nucci et al., 2014; Nursalim et al., 2023). Moreover, previous research generally emphasizes educational outcomes without comprehensively exploring the interaction between internalization strategies, institutional culture, supporting and inhibiting factors, and their implications for strengthening participants' integrity in public service training. To the best of the author's knowledge, no published study has specifically investigated the internalization of religious values within the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates (*Latsar CPNS*) at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh. Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies not in introducing a new theory of religious value internalization, but in extending its application to the context of civil servant competency development by providing an integrated analysis of (1) the strategies employed to internalize religious values, (2) the institutional and individual factors that facilitate or hinder the process, and (3) their contribution to the formation of participants' character and integrity within Indonesia's public sector training system. This contextual and integrative perspective is expected to enrich the literature on character education in public administration while offering evidence-based recommendations for strengthening ethics- and values-based training for future civil servants.

In conclusion, the internalization of religious values represents an important component of character development within the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates. Through systematic educational strategies, supportive institutional culture, and meaningful learning experiences, religious values have the potential to strengthen integrity, responsibility, honesty, discipline, and ethical professionalism among future civil servants. Given the limited empirical evidence

regarding this process in government training institutions, research conducted at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh can contribute both theoretically and practically by enriching the literature on value-based public sector training while providing recommendations for enhancing character-building programs that support accountable and integrity-driven public governance.

The internalization of religious values is widely recognized as an essential process in character education, as it facilitates the transformation of moral principles into enduring attitudes and behaviors (Lickona, 1991; Al-Attas, 1991). Within educational and training institutions, the successful internalization of religious values requires systematic strategies that integrate cognitive understanding, affective commitment, and behavioral practice. Such strategies are expected to strengthen participants' integrity, responsibility, and ethical conduct in both personal and professional contexts (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Nucci & Narvaez, 2008).

In the context of Puslatbang KHAN, religious values constitute an important foundation for character development and the cultivation of integrity among participants. However, the effectiveness of value internalization may be influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors, including institutional culture, learning environments, role modeling, participant engagement, and social influences (Bandura, 1986; Thomas Lickona, 1991). Therefore, a comprehensive investigation is required to understand how religious values are internalized and how such processes contribute to character formation.

Based on this rationale, the study addresses the following research questions: (1) How are religious values internalized through the educational and training programs implemented at Puslatbang KHAN? (2) What factors support and hinder the internalization of religious values among participants? And (3) How does the internalization of religious values contribute to participants' character development and integrity? Accordingly, the objectives of this study are: (1) To analyze the strategies employed by Puslatbang KHAN in internalizing religious values among participants. (2) To identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the implementation of religious value internalization. And (3) to evaluate the contribution of religious value internalization to participants' character formation and integrity development.

To ensure conceptual clarity and consistency throughout the study, the following operational definitions are employed:

Internalization Strategy.

Internalization strategy refers to a systematic and deliberate set of educational approaches, learning experiences, mentoring activities, and institutional practices designed to integrate religious values into participants' cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. Through this process, religious values become internalized and guide participants' attitudes, decisions, and actions in everyday life (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964; Muhaimin, 2006).

Religious Values

Religious values refer to Islamic ethical and moral principles derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah that function as normative guidelines for human behavior. In this study, religious values include integrity (*amanah*), justice (*'adl*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), responsibility, discipline, honesty, and accountability. These values serve as foundational principles for developing ethical conduct and professional integrity (Al-Attas, 1991; Nasr, 2004).

Character Building (Pembinaan Akhlak)

Character building refers to a planned, continuous, and systematic effort to cultivate moral character through the development of cognitive understanding, affective commitment, and psychomotor or behavioral competencies. Character building aims to foster individuals who possess ethical awareness, moral reasoning, self-discipline, and socially responsible behavior, reflecting the integration of religious and moral values in daily life (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

Kajian Internalisasi Nilai-nilai Keagamaan pada Peserta Pelatihan Dasar Calon Pegawai Negeri Sipil (Latsar CPNS)" merupakan topik yang masih cukup spesifik, tidak semua artikel membahas secara langsung internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan**.** Beberapa artikel membahas internalisasi karakter (Manyo'e, E. T. (2023), core values ASN (Dewi, P. T., 2024; Teresia, A. W., 2024)**,** integritas (Nugroho, T., 2022), dan pendidikan nilai dalam Latsar CPNS (Syarief, Y. I., 2021), yang secara konseptual sangat relevan dengan penelitian ini. Manyo'e, E. T. (2023) membahas strategi internalisasi nilai religius dalam Latsar CPNS untuk memperkuat integritas dan mencegah korupsi. Dewi, P. T., (2024) dan Teresia, A. W. (2024) mengkaji bagaimana

internalisasi nilai-nilai BerAKHLAK memengaruhi sikap kerja peserta setelah mengikuti Latsar CPNS dan membahas implementasi pembelajaran Latsar dalam membangun nilai BerAKHLAK dan karakter ASN melalui pendekatan blended learning. Selanjutnya, Nugroho, T. (2022) menilai efektivitas penanaman nilai dasar dalam Latsar CPNS, terutama pada aspek internalisasi nilai melalui pembelajaran daring. Syarief, Y. I. (2021) Mengkaji pendekatan internalisasi soft skills dalam Latsar CPNS. Meskipun tidak secara khusus membahas nilai keagamaan, artikel ini sangat relevan untuk strategi internalisasi nilai dan pembentukan karakter.

Berdasarkan kelima artikel tersebut, dapat diidentifikasi beberapa kecenderungan penelitian sebagai berikut. Fokus penelitian masih didominasi oleh internalisasi nilai ASN dan karakter, seperti nilai BerAKHLAK, soft skills, integritas, dan antikorupsi, bukan secara khusus pada internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan. Kajian yang secara eksplisit mengangkat nilai religius dalam Latsar CPNS masih sangat terbatas. Artikel Manyo'e (2023) lebih menitikberatkan pada relevansi nilai religius Pancasila untuk pencegahan korupsi melalui studi kepustakaan, sehingga belum menguji implementasi empiris di lembaga pelatihan tertentu. Belum banyak penelitian yang mengkaji proses internalisasi nilai-nilai keagamaan di Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh. Literatur yang tersedia lebih banyak dilakukan pada instansi pelatihan lain atau membahas aspek kurikulum, komunikasi kebijakan, dan model pembelajaran Latsar. Sebagian besar penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif, studi kasus, atau evaluatif, sehingga masih terbuka peluang untuk penelitian yang mengombinasikan analisis strategi internalisasi, faktor pendukung dan penghambat, serta dampaknya terhadap pembentukan karakter dan integritas peserta.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. This method is selected to provide a profound understanding of the strategies for internalizing religious values and the character-building process of Civil Servant Candidates (CPNS) during their basic training (*Latsar*) at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh, including the influencing factors and the resulting outcomes.

The research is scheduled to be conducted over a period of 3 to 4 months, covering the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis, and report finalization.

The study will be situated entirely at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh. The research subjects include trainers (*Widyaiswara*), mentors, and representatives of CPNS participants currently enrolled in or having completed the training program. The research procedure begins with a preliminary study and administrative licensing, followed by data collection, interactive and continuous data analysis, and the formulation of conclusions. The primary research instrument is the researcher themselves (*human instrument*), supported by interview guides, observation sheets, and document analysis protocols.

Data collection techniques involve in-depth interviews with key informants, participant observation of training activities, and documentary studies of the curriculum, training materials, and evaluation reports. Data analysis will be performed through three main stages as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data validity is ensured through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories. Furthermore, ethical considerations, such as information confidentiality and informed consent of the subjects, are strictly maintained throughout the study.

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design to provide a systematic and in-depth analysis of value internalization strategies and character building at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh. This approach focuses on interpreting the naturally occurring phenomena and social processes within the training environment to capture the complex relationship between religious internalization and professional behavioral outcomes.

The participants of this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure rich and relevant data. The subjects include *Widyaiswara* (state trainers), program mentors, and CPNS training participants at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh. These individuals were chosen based on their direct involvement in the curriculum implementation and their firsthand experience in the religious value internalization process during the basic training program.

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher, who acts as the key tool for data collection and interpretation. To maintain objectivity and depth, the researcher is supported by secondary instruments, including semi-structured

interview guides, field observation rubrics, and document analysis checklists. These tools are designed to systematically capture the nuances of religious value internalization and participant character development.

Data analysis follows the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the reduction phase, the researcher filters and categorizes raw data from interviews and observations to focus on key themes of religious internalization. The data is then systematically displayed to identify patterns, which leads to the final stage of drawing and verifying conclusions to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the character-building outcomes.

RISULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Strategies for Internalizing Religious Values in Character Building

Utilizing the Mosque as a Center for "Sidiq" Religiosity. Utilizing the mosque as a center for religious character is a concrete strategy implemented by Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh to leverage the mosque as a hub for activities supporting moral development. The mosque is viewed not only as a place of worship but also as a center for education and the cultivation of other religious values.

Based on an interview with the Head of Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh, it can be concluded that the mosque plays a significant role in internalizing religious values, particularly in building the *sidiq* (truthfulness) attitude of participants. "The utilization of the mosque for worship, studies, and social interaction needs to be optimized" (Head of Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI, Interview, February 2024). Furthermore, Ilh (Latsar Organizer, 2025) stated, "This mosque serves as a vessel for participants to deepen religious values through various activities, thereby forming a religious character, morality, and *sidiq*." FA (Trainer/WI, 2025) explained that "the mosque is the center of religious activities to foster participants' religiosity. Activities include Quranic recitations, *tausyiah* (religious lectures) themed around the Prophet's honesty in all aspects of life, Islamic studies, congregational prayers, and Islamic holidays such

as the Prophet's Birthday (Maulid). Participants are also trained to take turns delivering short sermons (*kultum*)."

The following table illustrates the sensitivity levels of participants in utilizing the mosque as a center for internalizing religious values:

Table 1: Participant Sensitivity in Utilizing the Mosque for "Sidiq" Character Building

No	Sensitivity Indicator	Behavior
1	Attendance in religious activities (prayers, dhikr, Quranic studies)	Always present in congregational prayers and studies
2	Active participation (Imam, Muazzin, Preacher)	Actively asks questions and provides constructive input
3	Application of religious values in daily life	Politeness and honesty
4	Social participation (Alms and charity)	Giving charity/Sadaqah
5	Mosque care (Cleaning, serving worshippers)	Cleaning the mosque, being friendly

Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that Latsar participants generally possess a high level of sensitivity in utilizing the mosque for character formation.

Integrating Religious Values into All Aspects of Training. Integrating religious values into every training session is a vital step in fostering *sidiq* attitudes and creating a positive learning environment. According to IY (Trainer, Interview, April 2025), this is achieved by "blending training materials with religious values relevant to the Aceh context. For example, when discussing integrity modules, we connect the material with the *sidiq* attitude." The Head of Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh added that the leadership highly appreciates the inclusion of religious morality in training, especially since Aceh's regional identity is rooted in Islamic Sharia. He emphasized that "skill and experience can be honed, but poor character is difficult to change. Therefore, a good institution always prioritizes recruiting human resources with noble character."

Fostering "Sidiq" through Social Awareness. A crucial aspect of internalization is strengthening religious character through social concern. IY explained that this is implemented through concrete activities such as "fundraising for disaster victims (e.g., Palestine), providing for orphans, or conducting social services like collecting clothing and basic food items." Trainers (Wis & Asr, 2025) emphasized that religious individuals manifest their faith through helping others, respecting differences, and maintaining harmony.

Incorporating Quranic Verses, Hadiths, and Wise Aphorisms in Presentations. To instill honesty (*sidiq*), trainers incorporate Quranic verses and Hadiths into their presentation slides. For instance, Surah Al-Maidah verse 8 regarding justice and Surah Al-Ahzab verse 70 regarding speaking the truth are frequently quoted. Participants Mh and Yd (2024/2025) noted, "The use of 'As-sidqu yahdi Ilal Jannah' (Honesty leads to Heaven) in slides helps us understand that honesty is a religious command, not just an ethical one."

Effectiveness Level of Religious Value Internalization Strategies

The effectiveness of these strategies was measured based on participant perceptions regarding the program's success in instilling character, integrity, and empathy.

Table 2: Effectiveness Level of Religious Value Internalization Strategies

Indicator	Very Effective (%)	Effective (%)	Moderately Effective (%)	Less Effective (%)	Ineffective (%)
Strengthening Honesty	25	50	20	5	0
Increasing Integrity	20	45	30	5	0
Instilling Responsibility	30	40	25	5	0
Developing Empathy	15	35	40	10	0
Noble Character Formation	**22**	**42.5**	**27.5**	**7.5**	**0**

Table 2 presents participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of religious value internalization strategies across five character-related indicators. Overall, the findings indicate that respondents perceived the strategies implemented during the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates (Latsar CPNS) as predominantly effective in fostering desirable character traits. Across all indicators, no respondents rated the strategies as ineffective, while the combined percentages of the "Very Effective" and "Effective" categories consistently exceeded 50%, suggesting a generally positive evaluation of the internalization process.

Among the five indicators, *strengthening honesty* received the highest overall positive assessment, with 25% of respondents rating it as "Very Effective" and 50% as "Effective," yielding a combined positive response of 75%. This finding suggests that the internalization strategies were perceived as particularly successful in promoting honesty as a core ethical value. Likewise, *instilling responsibility* demonstrated a strong level of effectiveness, with 30% of respondents selecting "Very Effective" and 40% selecting "Effective," resulting in a combined positive perception of 70%. Notably, this indicator recorded the highest proportion of "Very Effective" responses among all indicators, indicating that participants viewed responsibility as one of the most successfully internalized values.

Similarly, *increasing integrity* was positively evaluated, with 20% of respondents rating the strategy as "Very Effective" and 45% as "Effective," while 30% perceived it as "Moderately Effective." These findings indicate that although most participants believed the strategies contributed positively to strengthening integrity, a considerable proportion perceived room for further improvement in achieving stronger internalization outcomes.

The indicator of *developing empathy* exhibited the lowest overall effectiveness compared with the other dimensions. Only 15% of respondents perceived the strategies as "Very Effective," while 35% considered them "Effective." In contrast, 40% rated this indicator as "Moderately Effective," and 10% considered it "Less Effective." This distribution suggests that empathy development may require more intensive experiential learning approaches, reflective activities, or social interaction opportunities to facilitate deeper affective engagement among participants.

Regarding *noble character formation*, which represents the overall outcome of religious value internalization, 22% of respondents rated the strategy as "Very Effective," 42.5% as "Effective," 27.5% as "Moderately Effective," and only 7.5% as "Less Effective." The absence of "Ineffective" responses indicates that participants generally recognized a positive contribution of the program to their moral character development, although variations in perceived effectiveness suggest that the impact may differ across individuals.

Overall, the descriptive findings demonstrate that religious value internalization strategies implemented during the training program were perceived as effective in promoting honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, and noble character. Nevertheless, the relatively higher proportions of "Moderately Effective" responses for integrity and empathy indicate potential areas for program enhancement. Future training initiatives may therefore benefit from strengthening reflective learning, mentoring, collaborative activities, and practical ethical experiences to optimize the internalization of affective and behavioral dimensions of religious values.

Discussion

The findings indicate that participants generally perceived the religious value internalization strategies implemented during the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates (Latsar CPNS) as effective in strengthening core moral values, particularly honesty, responsibility, integrity, empathy, and noble character. The consistently high proportion of responses in the "Very Effective" and "Effective" categories across all indicators suggests that the training environment was perceived as conducive to promoting ethical awareness and character development. Nevertheless, because these findings are based on participants' perceptions, they should be interpreted as evidence of perceived effectiveness rather than objective proof of behavioral change.

The strong ratings for honesty and responsibility are consistent with the theoretical perspective that value internalization becomes more effective when moral values are repeatedly reinforced through habituation, exemplary leadership, and meaningful learning experiences. According to Lickona (1991), character education is successful when it integrates moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action into educational practice. Likewise, Muhaimin (2006) argues that the internalization of Islamic values requires continuous interaction between cognitive understanding, affective commitment, and behavioral implementation. Within the context of Latsar CPNS, these findings suggest that structured learning activities, institutional culture, and interactions with facilitators may have supported participants in recognizing honesty and responsibility as essential ethical principles for public service.

The positive perception of integrity also aligns with contemporary theories of public sector ethics. Integrity is not merely compliance with organizational regulations but reflects the internal acceptance of ethical values that guide professional decision-making (Huberts, 2018). The OECD (2020) further emphasizes that integrity-based public governance depends on developing ethical awareness alongside institutional mechanisms that encourage accountability and transparency. However, the relatively high proportion of respondents who rated integrity as only "Moderately Effective" indicates that internalizing integrity is a gradual process requiring sustained reinforcement beyond formal training. This finding supports the argument that ethical competence develops through continuous practice and organizational socialization rather than through short-term instructional interventions alone.

In contrast, empathy emerged as the dimension with the lowest perceived effectiveness, suggesting that affective competencies may be more difficult to cultivate than cognitive understanding or rule-based ethical behavior. This finding is consistent with experiential learning theory, which emphasizes that empathy develops primarily through authentic experiences, reflective observation, interpersonal interaction, and critical self-reflection rather than through conventional classroom instruction (Kolb, 2015). Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2020) argue that values become deeply internalized when individuals experience autonomy, meaningful participation, and personal relevance during learning. Therefore, the relatively lower ratings for empathy may indicate the need for training strategies that incorporate mentoring, collaborative learning, community engagement, reflective practice, and real-world ethical case analysis to facilitate deeper emotional and moral engagement among participants.

The findings regarding noble character formation further reinforce the multidimensional nature of character education. Character is not formed through isolated instructional activities but through continuous interaction between institutional values, social environment, personal reflection, and repeated ethical practice (Nucci et al., 2014). Although participants generally perceived the program as contributing positively to character development, variations in effectiveness across indicators suggest that different moral dimensions may require different pedagogical

approaches. Consequently, religious value internalization should be viewed as a continuous developmental process rather than a one-time educational outcome.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing literature on values-based public sector education by extending discussions of religious value internalization from formal educational institutions to the context of civil servant training. While previous studies have largely examined schools, universities, and Islamic educational settings (Nursalim et al., 2023; Sauri et al., 2022), the present findings suggest that similar principles of value internalization can also be applied within professional training institutions responsible for preparing future public officials. However, because the present analysis relies on descriptive perception data, future research should employ longitudinal designs, behavioral assessments, qualitative interviews, or mixed-method approaches to examine whether positive perceptions of religious value internalization are translated into sustained ethical behavior and professional integrity after participants enter public service.

CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that participants generally perceived the religious value internalization strategies implemented during the Basic Training Program for Civil Servant Candidates at Puslatbang KHAN LAN RI Aceh as effective in promoting honesty, responsibility, integrity, empathy, and noble character. Honesty and responsibility received the strongest positive evaluations, whereas empathy showed comparatively lower perceived effectiveness, indicating that affective dimensions of character development may require more intensive experiential and reflective learning approaches. These findings suggest that religious value internalization constitutes a meaningful component of character education within civil servant training, particularly in fostering ethical awareness and reinforcing moral values that support public service professionalism. Nevertheless, because the study is based on participants' perceptions, the findings should not be interpreted as direct evidence of long-term behavioral change. Future studies are therefore encouraged to examine the sustainability of these values in workplace settings using longitudinal, qualitative, or mixed-method research designs to provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the impact of religious value internalization on ethical conduct and public sector integrity.

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