

Transforming Fiqh Learning to Strengthen Students' Character as Prospective Islamic Religious Education Teachers

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Abstract

Educational transformation in the era of globalization requires higher education to focus not only on the development of academic competencies but also on strengthening students' character as prospective teachers. Although numerous studies have examined character education in Fiqh learning, most have primarily focused on the implementation of character values without adequately explaining the systematic learning transformation that shapes students' character. This study aims to analyze the transformation of Fiqh learning in strengthening the character of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers and to formulate a Character-Based Fiqh Learning Transformation Model (TPFBK) grounded in empirical findings. The study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. Data were collected through observations, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires, and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that the transformation of Fiqh learning occurs through the integration of five key components: instructional planning, learning implementation, character value internalization, learning evaluation, and a supportive academic environment. The integration of these components resulted in the development of the Character-Based Fiqh Learning Transformation Model (TPFBK), which constitutes the principal finding of this study. This model provides an implementation framework for developing Fiqh learning that integrates academic competence with character development, thereby preparing prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers who are both professionally competent and possess strong moral integrity.

A. Introduction

Over the past several decades, higher education has faced an increasingly complex paradox. On the one hand, advances in scientific knowledge, digital technology, and artificial intelligence have expanded access to information and significantly enhanced the quality of teaching and learning. On the other hand, persistent challenges—including declining academic integrity, weakened social responsibility, increasing incidents of plagiarism, intolerance, a crisis of role modeling, and the erosion of professional ethics—have become more prevalent within higher education institutions (Arthur, 2024; Brooks & Lamb, 2026). These phenomena indicate that the success of higher education can no longer be measured solely by academic achievement or the mastery of cognitive competencies, but also by its capacity to cultivate individuals with strong character, integrity, and moral responsibility (Lickona, 1991, 1996; Berkowitz & Bier, 2004). In other words, intellectual advancement without corresponding character development risks producing graduates who are academically competent yet inadequately prepared to fulfill their professional and social responsibilities (Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025; Mulyasa, 2019).

These developments have prompted many countries to reposition the fundamental goals of education. Education is no longer viewed merely as a process of knowledge transfer but as a holistic human development that integrates intellectual, moral, social, spiritual, and emotional dimensions (Singer-Brodowski et al., 2022). This paradigm shift has reaffirmed character education as one of the central issues in contemporary global educational reform (Arthur, 2024). Higher education institutions are expected not only to produce graduates who can adapt to rapid advances in science and technology but also to nurture individuals who uphold ethical values, integrity, leadership, and social responsibility (Lamb et al., 2022; Lamb & Brooks, 2026). Consequently, character development is increasingly recognized as a fundamental pillar in preparing human resources capable of addressing the complex challenges of the twenty-first century (Berkowitz & Bier, 2024; Mulyasa, 2019).

In the Indonesian context, the urgency of character education has received increasing attention through a range of national policies that position character development as an integral component of the education system. The Strengthening Character Education (*Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter—PPK*) policy emphasizes that character formation should be implemented comprehensively through the harmonious

integration of ethical, aesthetic, literacy, and kinesthetic dimensions across all teaching and learning processes (Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional, 2011). This paradigm underscores that character education is not a standalone subject but rather a set of values that must be systematically integrated into all academic activities (Hasanah, 2013; Alinuridin, 2021). Consequently, every academic course is responsible for fostering students' character development in accordance with the distinctive characteristics of its discipline (Kardiawan et al., 2023; Maulana, 2022).

This responsibility becomes even more strategic in Islamic higher education institutions, which are mandated not only to develop academic competence but also to cultivate noble character. The Islamic Religious Education Study Program, for example, does not merely prepare students to become university graduates; rather, it prepares them to become prospective teachers who will carry out educational, moral development, and exemplary roles within society. Islamic Religious Education teachers are expected not only to master pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies but also to embody Islamic values in educational practice in a tangible manner (Haji Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Tabrani ZA et al., 2024). Therefore, character development throughout students' educational journey is an inseparable part of shaping their professional identity as future teachers (Jaedun et al., 2024; Arthur, 2024).

Among the various courses taught in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) holds a very strategic position in developing students' character. *Fiqh* is often understood as a discipline that studies sharia law regarding worship and transactions. However, every legal provision in *Fiqh* is actually built on moral values that aim to develop individuals who are honest, trustworthy, disciplined, fair, responsible, respectful of others, and concerned about social life (Nurkhamidi et al., 2023; Mushthofa et al., 2025). Therefore, studying *Fiqh* should not stop at mastering normative and legalistic aspects, but needs to be transformed into a learning process that internalizes character values in the real lives of students as future educators (Sapiudin, 2025; Sari & Salim, 2026).

The transformation of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) learning is becoming increasingly important because the challenges facing students today are far more complex than in the past. The development of digital media, changes in learning culture, ease of access to information, and the dynamics of social life present various new issues that cannot always be addressed solely through conventional learning approaches.

Learning that is still oriented towards memorizing concepts, delivering material in a one-way manner, and emphasizing cognitive aspects tends to provide less space for students to develop reflective skills, ethical decision-making, or habituate character values in everyday life (Kholifah & Salim, 2025; Alawiyah et al., 2026). This condition indicates that the transformation of learning is not only related to changes in teaching methods, but also involves shifting the orientation of education from mere academic achievement to character building (Singer-Brodowski et al., 2022; Arthur, 2024).

Various previous studies have shown that character education is a crucial factor in improving the quality of higher education graduates. Numerous studies have shown that integrating character values into the learning process can enhance students' sense of responsibility, discipline, integrity, and social awareness (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2004; Arthur, 2024; Lamb & Brooks, 2026). Other studies have shown that values-based learning is more effective in developing positive behaviors than learning that only emphasizes cognitive aspects (Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025; Lamb et al., 2022; Muassomah et al., 2025). In Indonesia, character education in higher education has also been reported to contribute to the formation of students' academic identity, integrity, and social responsibility (Maulana, 2022; Kardiawan et al., 2023; Yusuf, 2024).

In the context of Islamic education, various studies have also shown that *Fiqh* learning has great potential as a medium for internalizing character values. Nurkhamidi et al. (2023) demonstrated that integrative *Fiqh* learning can strengthen student competency development through a multidisciplinary approach. Research by Farida (2024) found that the integration of character values in *Fiqh* learning at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* contributes to the formation of religious behavior and student responsibility. Rosya (2024) also demonstrated that character education in *Fiqh* learning plays a role in developing students' social ethics. Meanwhile, Mushtofa et al. (2025) emphasized that *Fiqh* material in the Independent Curriculum has a strong relationship with student character development. Other studies show that transforming *Fiqh* learning through a contextual approach, problem-based learning, and the use of digital technology can increase student engagement and develop critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills (Abdul Khalil et al., 2024; Sapiudin, 2025; Kholifah & Salim, 2025; Sari & Salim, 2026).

However, most of these studies still focus on identifying character values, implementing learning strategies, or evaluating learning outcomes at various levels of

education. These studies generally view character as the result of the application of certain learning methods, thus failing to explain how the transformation of *Fiqh* learning takes place as a system that connects learning planning, implementation, internalization of values, evaluation, and the academic environment in shaping the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers (Farida, 2024; Rosya, 2024; Nurkhamidi et al., 2023; Sapiudin, 2025). Consequently, to date, no empirical model exists that can comprehensively explain the mechanism underlying the transformation of character-based *Fiqh* learning in the context of Islamic higher education.

Based on this gap, this study offers a different perspective by positioning the transformation of *Fiqh* learning as a learning system that integrates planning, implementation, internalization of character values, learning evaluation, and academic environmental support to shape the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. This perspective aligns with the view that character education will develop optimally when integrated into the overall learning system and academic culture, not only through the delivery of specific learning materials or activities (Berkowitz & Bier, 2024; Singer-Brodowski et al., 2022; Arthur, 2024). Therefore, this study not only describes the implementation of character education in *Fiqh* learning but also attempts to formulate an empirical model that explains the mechanism of the transformation of character-based *Fiqh* learning, based on field findings. Thus, this study is expected to provide a conceptual contribution to the development of *Fiqh* learning in Islamic higher education while enriching studies on character education in prospective teacher education.

Based on the description, this study aims to analyze the transformation of *Fiqh* learning in strengthening the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers, identify forms of character value integration in the learning process, analyze factors that support and hinder its implementation, and formulate a Character-Based *Fiqh* Learning Transformation Model (TPFBK) based on empirical research findings.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design to gain a deep understanding of how the transformation of *Fiqh* learning contributes to strengthening the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the processes, meanings, and

experiences of participants in integrating character values into learning, thus generating a comprehensive understanding of educational practices that occur in academic environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moleong, 2021).

The research was conducted at the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The research location was selected purposively because the study program has a strategic responsibility for preparing students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers, and *Fiqh* learning is one of the courses that plays an important role in shaping the professional character of prospective educators. The research participants consisted of the Head of the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, lecturers teaching *Fiqh* courses, and students attending *Fiqh* lectures. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the learning process (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Yin, 2024).

Research data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, document studies, and questionnaires. Observations were conducted to identify the implementation of *Fiqh* learning, interactions between lecturers and students, and the practice of internalizing character values during the learning process. In-depth interviews were conducted with the Head of the Study Program and lecturers to obtain information regarding the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning, as well as the applied character strengthening strategies. Documentation was used to review various academic documents, such as Semester Learning Plans (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), evaluation tools, and other supporting documents related to the implementation of character education. In addition, a questionnaire was administered to 25 students as supporting data to obtain an overview of student perceptions of the implementation of character value integration in *Fiqh* learning. The use of various data collection techniques was intended to obtain comprehensive information and to enable triangulation during the research (Arikunto, 2017; Walidin et al., 2023; Sugiyono, 2023).

Data analysis was conducted interactively through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The reduction process involved selecting, grouping, and organizing data into themes related to the transformation of *Fiqh* learning, the integration of character values, and the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. The reduced data were then presented in descriptive narratives and tables to facilitate the identification of patterns, relationships, and trends in the research findings. The final stage involved inductive conclusion drawing by interpreting the

interrelationships between the findings to yield a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of *Fiqh* learning to strengthening the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers (Miles et al., 2020; Sugiyono, 2023; Walidin et al., 2023).

Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from lecturers, heads of study programs, and students, while technical triangulation was conducted by comparing the results of observations, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Time triangulation was used to ensure the consistency of information obtained at different times (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The entire research process was carried out with due regard to research ethics principles, namely obtaining participant consent before data collection, maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities, and ensuring that all data is used solely for academic purposes.

C. Results and Discussion

This section presents research findings systematically organized by research focus, including learning planning, learning implementation, internalization of character values, learning evaluation, and factors that support or hinder the learning transformation process. Based on the synthesis of all empirical findings, this study also produces a TPFBK as a framework that explains the relationship between components in shaping the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. Furthermore, each finding is interpreted and discussed by linking it to theory and previous research to clarify the scientific contribution of this study.

1. Results

a. Transformation of Character-Based Fiqh Learning (TPFBK)

The research results show that the transformation of *Fiqh* learning in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, is taking place gradually and systematically. This transformation is evident not only in changes in learning strategies but also in a shift in learning orientation that treats character building as an integral part of the academic process. Thus, *Fiqh* learning is no longer seen solely as a medium for conveying Islamic legal concepts but rather as a vehicle for character development among students preparing to become future Islamic Religious Education teachers.

This transformation begins at the planning stage, including the development of Semester Learning Plans (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), material selection, teaching methods, and evaluation instruments that integrate knowledge, attitudes, and skills. In the implementation stage, lecturers integrate character values through material delivery, discussions, case studies, presentations, familiarization, reflection, and role modeling throughout the learning process. Furthermore, these activities encourage the internalization of values, ultimately shaping the character of students who will become future Islamic Religious Education teachers.

Based on the implementation patterns identified in the research, all of these stages can be synthesized into a TPFBK Model, as presented in Figure 1. This model shows a continuous relationship among learning planning, learning implementation, the internalization of character values, students' character formation, and the formation of professional identity as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers.

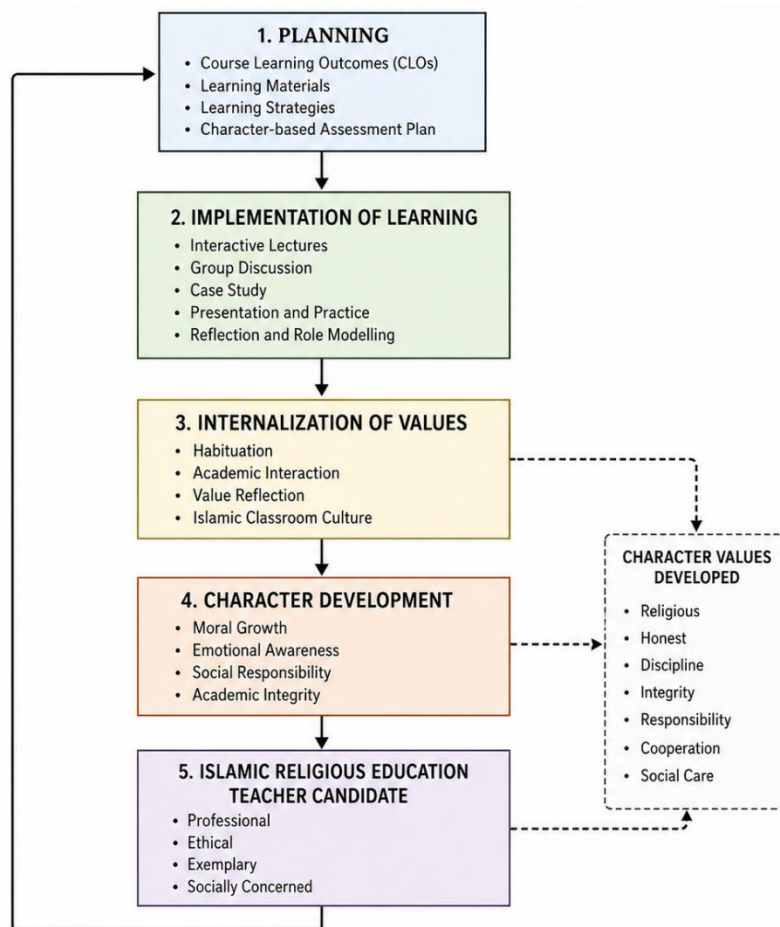


Figure 1. The Model of Fiqh Learning Transformation Based on Character (TPFBK)
(Sumber Sintesis Hasil Penelitian)

Figure 1 shows that learning transformation does not occur instantly but rather through interrelated processes. Learning planning is the main foundation that determines the direction of learning implementation. Implementation carried out through various learning strategies then encourages the process of internalizing character values. This internalization process then shapes student character, which is reflected through the development of religious attitudes, honesty, discipline, integrity, responsibility, cooperation and social awareness. The entire process leads to the formation of students with the character of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers who are professional and of noble character.

To clarify the implementation of each stage of the learning transformation, the research results were synthesized into the main components of the TPFBK. This synthesis demonstrates the relationship between the transformation stages, the form of learning implementation, and the character developed, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of the Character-Based Fiqh Learning Transformation Model (TPFBK)

Transformation Stage	Implementation of Learning	Character Values Developed	Learning Outcomes
Planning	Preparation of the Semester Learning Plan (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), instructional materials, teaching methods, and character-based assessment instruments.	Responsibility, integrity	Character-oriented learning instruments
Implementation	Interactive lectures, group discussions, student presentations, case studies, reflective learning, and lecturers' role modeling.	Religiosity, honesty, discipline, cooperation	Contextual learning experiences
Internalization	Habituation, academic interaction, value reflection, and the development of an Islamic classroom culture.	Integrity, responsibility, tolerance, social responsibility	Character values internalized by students

Evaluation	Assessment of students' knowledge, attitudes, ethics, behavior, and responsibility.	Academic honesty, discipline, responsibility	Positive changes in students' behavior
Outcome	Strengthening the character of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers.	Professionalism, noble character, leadership, social responsibility	Prospective PAI teachers with strong character

Table 1 shows that the transformation of *Fiqh* learning is not only oriented towards changing teaching methods, but also towards changing the learning system as a whole. Each stage contributes differently to student character formation. The planning stage serves as the foundation for integrating character values into learning tools. The implementation stage provides a space for internalization through student-centered learning activities. Furthermore, evaluation helps ensure that learning success is measured not only by mastery of the material but also by students' character development. Therefore, character strengthening in *Fiqh* learning results from the integration of all learning stages, not simply from the use of a particular method.

b. *Fiqh* Integration of Character Values in *Fiqh* Learning

The research results show that the implementation of the TPFBK is realized through the integration of character values at every stage of the learning process. This integration is not carried out incidentally or through the separate delivery of moral material, but is designed as an integral part of the learning objectives, materials, learning strategies, academic activities, and the evaluation process. Thus, *Fiqh* learning is not only oriented towards mastering Islamic legal concepts, but also serves as a medium for internalizing character values relevant to the professional competence of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers.

During the planning stage, lecturers integrate character values into the learning materials through the development of Semester Learning Plans (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), learning indicators, and evaluation strategies. Values such as religiosity, responsibility, honesty, discipline, and integrity are formulated as part of the learning outcomes that must develop along with mastery of the *Fiqh* material. This planning demonstrates that character education has been the learning orientation from the beginning, not merely a response to situations that arise during the lecture process.

During the implementation phase, character value integration is carried out through various learning approaches that encourage active student involvement. Lecturers not only convey Islamic jurisprudence concepts normatively but also relate them to real-life issues through group discussions, case studies, presentations, academic reflection, and role modeling. This strategy enables students to understand that each Islamic jurisprudence provision has an ethical dimension related to responsibility, honesty, justice, social awareness, and professionalism as future educators.

In addition to classroom learning, internalization of character values is also reinforced through the academic culture established during lectures. Lecturers instill in students discipline in attending lectures, respecting the opinions of others during discussions, taking responsibility for academic assignments, and demonstrating honesty in every evaluation process. These habits are crucial for character formation because students not only gain knowledge about Islamic values but also directly implement them in their daily academic activities.

Research findings also indicate that learning evaluation is not solely focused on cognitive achievement but also includes assessment of students' attitudes and behaviors. Attendance, discipline, participation in discussions, responsibility for assignments, ability to work collaboratively, and ethics during the learning process are indicators considered in the evaluation. This approach demonstrates that successful *Fiqh* learning is understood as establishing a balance between mastery of Islamic knowledge and character development in students who will become future teachers.

To clarify the form of integration of character values at each stage of learning, the research results were synthesized as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Fiqh Integration of Character Values in Fiqh Learning

Learning Stage	Learning Implementation	Integrated Character Values
Planning	Preparation of the Semester Learning Plan (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), learning objectives, and assessment instruments.	Religiosity, responsibility, integrity
Content Delivery	Linking <i>Fiqh</i> concepts to real-life contexts and everyday situations.	Religiosity, honesty, responsibility
Discussion and Presentation	Group discussions, student presentations, and scientific argumentation.	Cooperation, tolerance, self-confidence, communication skills

Learning Stage	Learning Implementation	Integrated Character Values
Case Study and Reflection	Analysis of contemporary <i>Fiqh</i> issues followed by value-based reflection.	Critical thinking, social responsibility, integrity
Learning Evaluation	Assessment of students' knowledge, attitudes, ethics, and academic behavior.	Discipline, responsibility, academic honesty

c. Student Perceptions of the Implementation of the TPFBK

The questionnaire results showed that students responded positively to the implementation of the TPFBK. In general, students assessed that *Fiqh* learning is not only oriented towards conveying Islamic law material but also provides learning experiences that foster religious character, academic integrity, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and social awareness. This perception indicates that the learning transformation implemented by lecturers is evident to students during lectures.

To obtain a more comprehensive picture, the various indicators in the questionnaire were grouped into five main dimensions: the integration of character values in learning, lecturer role models, learning strategies, character evaluation, and the impact of learning on student character development. This grouping facilitated interpretation of the relationship between the learning process and character development during the course.

Table 3. Student Perceptions of the Implementation of the TPFBK Model

Dimension	Indicator	Positive Response Rate (%)
Character Value Integration	Character values are integrated into <i>Fiqh</i> learning materials.	88
Lecturer Role Modeling	The lecturer serves as a role model through positive attitudes and exemplary behavior.	96
Learning Strategies	Discussions, case studies, and reflective activities facilitate students' understanding of character values.	91
Character Assessment	Students' attitudes and behaviors are incorporated into the assessment process.	86

Dimension	Indicator	Positive Response Rate (%)
Learning Outcomes	Fiqh learning strengthens students' character development as prospective Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers.	93

Source: Processed research data (2026)

To provide a more concise visualization of the tendencies of student perceptions, the distribution of positive responses in each dimension is presented in the graph below.



Chart 1. Percentage of positive student responses to the implementation of the Character-Based Fiqh Learning Transformation Model (TPFBK).

The chart above shows that all dimensions achieved positive response rates over 85%, indicating that students perceive the implementation of TPFBK to be consistently carried out across various aspects of the learning process. The highest percentage was found in the lecturer role-modeling dimension, indicating that students consider the lecturers' behavior and attitudes to make the greatest contribution to the process of internalizing character values. These findings suggest that the success of *Fiqh* learning is determined not only by the content being taught but also by the quality of educational interactions and the exemplary conduct demonstrated by lecturers throughout the learning process.

On the other hand, the character evaluation dimension achieved a relatively lower percentage than the other dimensions, although it still fell within the high category. This indicates that the assessment of character-related aspects has been

implemented, but there remains room for improvement by developing more systematic evaluation instruments oriented toward changes in students' behavior. These findings suggest that character evaluation remains an area requiring greater attention in refining the implementation of TPFBK.

Overall, the questionnaire results reinforce the findings of observations, interviews, and documentation that the transformation of *Fiqh* learning has provided a learning experience that not only enhances students' understanding of Islamic material but also fosters the development of character traits needed to carry out their profession as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. The consistency across these data sources indicates that the implementation of the TPFBK has been effective in strengthening students' character.

d. Supporting Factors and Challenges in Implementing the TPFBK

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the TPFBK is influenced not only by the quality of learning planning and implementation but also by various interacting institutional, pedagogical, and individual factors. These factors play a role in determining the effectiveness of the internalization of character values during *Fiqh* learning. These findings indicate that the success of character strengthening does not depend solely on the material taught but is also influenced by an academic environment that supports the development of a character-oriented learning culture.

Based on the results of observations, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires, this research identified two main groups of factors: supporting factors and challenging factors. Supporting factors include lecturers' commitment to integrating character values into learning, curriculum support that provides space for the development of affective aspects, an Islamic academic culture that develops within the faculty environment, as well as students' active involvement in various learning activities. On the other hand, several challenges are still found, including the dominant learning orientation on cognitive aspects, the limitations of standardized character assessment instruments, the influence of digital culture on student behavior, and the diversity of student character backgrounds, which influence the value internalization process.

To provide a more systematic picture of these findings, the factors influencing TPFBK implementation are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Supporting Factors and Challenges to the Implementation of TPFBK

Supporting Factors	Implementation Challenges
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Lecturers' commitment to integrating character values into the learning process	Predominant emphasis on cognitive assessment
A curriculum that supports character education	Character assessment instruments are not yet fully developed
An Islamic academic culture	The influence of digital media on students' behavior
Lecturers' role modeling	The diversity of students' character backgrounds
Participatory learning methods	Limited instructional time
Intensive academic interaction	Inconsistent internalization of character values beyond the classroom

Source: Processed research data (2026)

Table 4 shows that the supporting factors and challenges of TPFBK implementation interact in determining the success of student character development. Supporting factors primarily stem from institutional aspects and learning practices that consistently integrate character values into every academic activity. Conversely, the challenges are more related to the dynamics of the learning environment, social change, and the limitations of the evaluation system, which is not yet fully capable of comprehensively measuring student character development.

Based on the overall research results, various empirical findings were synthesized into a framework of relationships among variables that constitutes the TPFBK. This synthesis demonstrates that student character formation occurs through a continuous relationship between learning planning, learning implementation, internalization of values, and the support of a conducive academic environment, as presented in Figure 2.

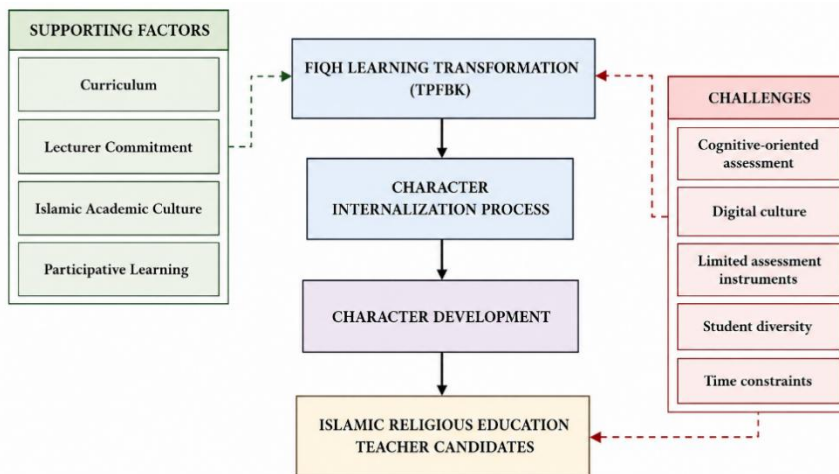


Figure 2. *Fiqh learning transformation framework diagram*

Figure 2 shows that the implementation of the TPFBK is a system built upon the interaction of supporting factors, the learning transformation process, and challenging factors. Supporting factors strengthen the effectiveness of the learning transformation through the curriculum, lecturers' commitment, Islamic academic culture, and participatory learning strategies. Conversely, various challenges can diminish the effectiveness of the value internalization process if not managed appropriately. Therefore, the character formation of students as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers is understood as the result of a systemic, continuous learning process influenced by various interrelated factors.

Overall, the research results indicate that the transformation of *Fiqh* learning is implemented through the integration of learning planning, learning implementation, internalization of character values, learning evaluation, and the support of a conducive academic environment. The integration of these five components forms the TPFBK, the main finding of this study.

2. Discussion

Research findings indicate that the transformation of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) learning cannot be understood simply as a change in learning strategy, but rather as a paradigm shift that makes character building an inherent goal throughout the entire educational process. In this context, Islamic jurisprudence learning no longer functions solely as a medium for transmitting Islamic legal knowledge, but rather as a pedagogical space that enables students to internalize religious values, integrity, responsibility,

discipline, cooperation, and social concern through systematically designed learning experiences (Arthur, 2024; Brooks & Lamb, 2026; Nurkhamidi et al., 2023). This shift in orientation indicates that learning success is no longer measured solely by mastery of cognitive aspects, but also by students' ability to translate Islamic values into academic and social attitudes and behaviors (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2004; Muassomah et al., 2025).

This interpretation aligns with the view of character education, which positions the learning process as a vehicle for holistic personality formation. Character education is not merely the delivery of moral values, but rather a process of habituation that enables students to develop the ability to think, behave, and act based on the values they believe in (Lickona, 1991, 1996). From this perspective, character develops through consistent learning experiences, so that internalization of values does not occur through normative lectures, but through interaction, role models, reflection, and real-life experiences during the educational process (Berkowitz & Bier, 2024; Arthur, 2024). Therefore, learning *Fiqh* becomes more meaningful when Islamic laws are understood as the foundation for the formation of moral behavior and responsibility, not merely as a set of provisions to be memorized. This view aligns with the research findings of Mushtofa et al. (2025), Sapiudin (2025), and Sari and Salim (2026), which show that *Fiqh* learning will be more effective when integrated with the process of reflection, contextualization, and character development of students.

The findings of this study also show that the character formation process occurs through the integration of learning planning, implementation, value internalization, evaluation, and academic support. This integration demonstrates that character education is a systemic process, as its success is determined by the consistency of the relationships between learning components. This view aligns with the whole-school approach, which emphasizes that character formation cannot be solely focused on a single subject or learning activity but must become a culture integrated into the curriculum, learning practices, evaluation systems, and the educational environment as a whole (Berkowitz & Bier, 2024; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025). These findings also reinforce the research findings of Muassomah et al. (2025), which showed that character education develops more effectively through participatory learning experiences and a supportive academic culture. Thus, student character develops through the

accumulation of ongoing learning experiences, rather than as a result of a single, temporary intervention.

In the context of Islamic higher education, these findings indicate that *Fiqh* learning plays a strategic role in shaping the professional identity of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. This is because *Fiqh* essentially governs not only the legal-formal dimensions of a Muslim's life but also contains ethical principles that guide individual behavior in both personal and social life. When these principles are integrated into a participatory, reflective, and contextual learning process, students not only gain an understanding of Islamic law but also develop a moral awareness that serves as the foundation for carrying out their profession as educators (Haji Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Tabrani ZA et al., 2024). Thus, the transformation of *Fiqh* learning is part of the effort to build teacher professionalism, supported not only by academic competence but also by strong character, integrity, and ethical responsibility. These findings also support the research findings of Jaedun et al. (2024), which emphasized that the education of prospective teachers requires an integration between mastery of professional competence and character strengthening as the main foundation in building quality educators.

The findings of this study demonstrate that character building in *Fiqh* learning does not occur through the explicit delivery of moral values, but rather through a transformation of the learning process that continuously integrates all learning components. These findings broaden the understanding of character education, which has previously been positioned primarily as a process of integrating values into learning materials. In this study, character is understood as the result of a systematic interaction between learning planning, implementation strategies, value internalization, evaluation, and the academic environment. Thus, character formation does not depend on a single learning method but is a consequence of the integration of the entire learning system. These findings reinforce the view that character education is a holistic process that requires integration between the curriculum, learning strategies, academic culture, and students' learning experiences (Arthur, 2024; Berkowitz & Bier, 2024; Brooks & Lamb, 2026).

This interpretation aligns with various studies that confirm that character education develops more effectively when integrated into the overall learning experience, rather than taught as a stand-alone. Various studies show that the success

of character education is strongly influenced by consistency between the curriculum, learning practices, institutional culture, and the role models of educators (Lamb & Brooks, 2026; Oldham & McLoughlin, 2025; Lamb et al., 2022). Learning environments that enable students to experience, reflect on, and practice the values they learn have been shown to have a stronger impact on character development than approaches that focus solely on conveying moral knowledge (Singer-Brodowski et al., 2022; Muassomah et al., 2025). Therefore, character does not develop through cognitive processes alone, but through ongoing learning experiences within a supportive academic environment. The results of research by Jaedun et al. (2024) and Maulana (2022) also showed that the education of prospective teachers will be more effective if character development becomes an integral part of the entire educational process, not just an additional goal in learning.

In the context of *Fiqh* learning, the results of this study indicate that Islamic law has a broader function than simply providing a normative understanding of worship and transactions. *Fiqh* learning serves as a medium for building ethical awareness that connects the normative dimensions of sharia with the realities of students' lives as prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. When *Fiqh* material is connected to social, professional, and humanitarian issues through discussions, case studies, reflections, and lecturer role models, students not only understand Islamic legal provisions but also develop the ability to make responsible decisions and consider moral values in every action. This condition indicates that *Fiqh* learning has the potential to shape teachers' professional identity by integrating academic competence and character. This finding is in line with research by Nurkhamidi et al. (2023), Abdul Khalil et al. (2024), Sapiudin (2025), and Sari and Salim (2026), which emphasize that *Fiqh* learning will be more meaningful when oriented towards developing critical thinking skills, ethical reflection, and solving real-life problems.

The results of this study also demonstrate differences from most previous research on character education in *Fiqh* learning. Many previous studies focused on identifying character values contained in *Fiqh* material or evaluating the effectiveness of specific learning methods in improving students' character (Mulyasa, 2019; Farida, 2024; Rosya, 2024; Mushtofa et al., 2025). These approaches make important contributions to the development of character education, but generally still view character as the outcome of specific learning activities. This study presents a different perspective by viewing character formation as a continuous transformation process

through the interconnectedness of learning components. Thus, attention is directed not only to the character values taught but also to how the learning system consistently builds the internalization process of these values. This perspective expands on the findings of previous research by positioning learning transformation as the primary mechanism explaining the relationship between *Fiqh* learning and strengthening student character.

This perspective resulted in the TPFBK, which illustrates the functional relationship between learning planning, learning implementation, internalization of character values, learning evaluation, and academic environmental support. Unlike learning models that generally position character as a learning outcome, the TPFBK demonstrates that character develops through a mechanism that involves the integration of all learning components. In other words, changes in student character are not a direct result of the use of a particular method, but rather the result of a learning system that consistently integrates character values into every stage of the educational process. These findings complement the ideas of Berkowitz and Bier (2024) regarding the design of effective character education and extend the research findings of Sapiudin (2025) and Nurkhamidi et al. (2023) by presenting an empirical framework that explains the mechanisms of transformation of *Fiqh* learning in the context of Islamic higher education.

These findings have broader relevance for the development of teacher education, particularly in Islamic higher education institutions. Prospective teacher education not only emphasizes mastery of pedagogical and professional competencies but also requires a learning system that consciously fosters integrity, responsibility, leadership, and exemplary behavior (Haji Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Tabrani ZA et al., 2024). In this context, the TPFBK offers a perspective that character building is not an additional program in teacher education but rather the core of the learning design itself. This perspective demonstrates that *Fiqh* learning can serve as a strategic instrument in developing the professionalism of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers, who possess not only academic abilities but also the moral capacity to fulfill their roles as educators and role models in society (Jaedun et al., 2024; Arthur, 2024).

The findings of this study provide a theoretical contribution to the development of studies on *Fiqh* and character education, particularly in the context of Islamic higher education. *Fiqh* learning has traditionally been understood as a process of mastering

Islamic law, oriented toward cognitive and normative aspects. This study demonstrates that *Fiqh* learning has a broader pedagogical function, namely as a vehicle for educational transformation that integrates the mastery of Islamic knowledge with the character development of prospective teachers. Thus, character is not positioned as a byproduct of the learning process, but rather as an integral part of the design, implementation, and evaluation of learning. This perspective enriches the discourse on *Fiqh* learning by placing character education at the core of the learning process, not merely as a supplement to the curriculum. These findings expand on the research findings of Nurkhamidi et al. (2023), Mushthofa et al. (2025), and Sapiudin (2025), while also reinforcing the view of Berkowitz and Bier (2024) that character education will develop optimally if designed as an integral part of the overall learning system.

In addition to providing conceptual contributions, this research also has practical implications for the development of teacher education in Islamic religious higher education institutions. The research findings indicate that character strengthening requires systematic learning design from the planning stage to evaluation. Therefore, the development of Semester Learning Plans (RPS), Course Learning Outcomes (CPMK), learning strategies, and assessment systems needs to be guided to integrate knowledge, skills, and character in a balanced manner. In this context, lecturers not only serve as material deliverers but also as facilitators, mentors, and role models who foster an academic environment conducive to the internalization of values (Haji Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Tabrani ZA et al., 2024; Jaedun et al., 2024). This approach provides an alternative for developing *Fiqh* learning that is more contextual, reflective, and oriented towards the formation of the professional identity of prospective Islamic Religious Education teachers. This implication is also in line with the research findings of Muassomah et al. (2025), who emphasized the importance of participatory learning in building character, as well as Zubaidah et al. (2026), which shows that strengthening the affective aspect needs to be supported by an assessment system that is able to evaluate character development in a sustainable manner.

The implications of this research also have broader relevance for the development of teacher education in the era of global educational transformation. Various education systems today increasingly emphasize the importance of balancing mastery of academic competencies with the development of character, integrity, responsibility, collaboration, and leadership as part of 21st-century competencies

(Arthur, 2024; Brooks & Lamb, 2026). In this context, the TPFBK offers an implementable framework that demonstrates how character education can be systematically integrated into the learning process without compromising the depth of academic content. Although this model was developed in the context of Islamic higher education, its underlying principles, such as the integration of planning, implementation, internalization of values, evaluation, and academic support, have the potential to be adapted to various educational contexts oriented toward character development and educator professionalism. This perspective aligns with the concept of transformative learning, which positions reflection, learning experiences, and the educational environment as the primary foundations for shaping changes in student behavior and identity (Singer-Brodowski et al., 2022; Arthur, 2024).

However, this study still has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the findings. This study was conducted within a single study program at an Islamic religious university, so different institutional characteristics, academic cultures, and learning contexts have the potential to produce varying patterns of learning transformation. Furthermore, this study used a qualitative approach with a limited number of participants, so the findings emphasize an in-depth understanding of the learning transformation process rather than generalizing the results. Therefore, the findings of this study need to be understood within the scope of the research.

D. Conclusion

This research shows that the transformation of *Fiqh* learning is not only related to changes in learning strategies, but also reflects a shift in the educational paradigm that places character building as an integral part of the entire learning process. Student character formation occurs through the integration of learning planning, learning implementation, internalization of character values, learning evaluation, and support for a conducive academic environment. The interconnectedness between these components results in the TPFBK, which illustrates that character formation is not the result of a particular learning method, but rather a consequence of a comprehensive and sustainable learning system.

The findings of this study broaden the perspective on the learning of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) in Islamic higher education. *Fiqh* learning is no longer positioned merely as a means of mastering normative Islamic laws, but also as a vehicle for shaping

the professional identity of prospective Islamic education teachers through the internalization of religious values, integrity, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and social concern. Thus, character building becomes an integral part of academic and professional competency development, so that *Fiqh* learning contributes to the formation of prospective teachers who are not only competent in the scientific field but also possess strong moral and professional ethical capacities.

Conceptually, the TPFBK provides an implementable framework that explains the systematic relationship between learning design, the process of internalizing values, and student character formation. This model can serve as an alternative for developing *Fiqh* learning and other educational courses oriented toward character building in Islamic higher education settings. Furthermore, the principles underlying this model can be adapted to the broader context of teacher education, particularly for integrating academic competency development with the formation of educators' professional character.

Future research is recommended to test the implementation of TPFBK at various universities with different institutional characteristics, using more diverse methodological approaches, such as mixed methods, comparative research, or longitudinal research. Developing an instrument capable of measuring the model's effectiveness on sustainable student character change is also needed to strengthen empirical validity and expand the application of TPFBK in teacher education development across various educational contexts.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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