The Mediating Role of Prophetic Character (FAST) in Linking Quran Memorization, Emotional Intelligence, and Student Discipline in Pesantren Indonesia

Zhafirah Syarafina[1], Fajri Ismail[2], Karoma[3], Indah Wigati[4], Maryamah[5], Wildan Miftahussurur[6]

[1] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, South Sumatra Indonesia; syarafinazhafirah@gmail.com

[2] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia; fajriismail_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

[3] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia; karoma_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

[4] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia; indahwigati_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

[5] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia; maryamah_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

[6] Institut Agama Islam At-Taqwa Bondowoso, East Java, Indonesia; wildanmiftahus@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationships among Quran memorization activity, emotional intelligence, prophetic character, and student discipline in pesantren, with prophetic character operationalised through the FAST framework as a mediating mechanism. Employing a quantitative causal explanatory design, data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 95 students at Pondok Pesantren Jamiatul Qurro Palembang. Structural Equation Modelling with a partial least squares approach was used to analyse direct and indirect relationships among the variables. The findings indicate that Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence both have significant positive effects on prophetic character and student discipline. Prophetic character emerged as the strongest predictor of discipline (β = 0.412, p < .001) and significantly mediated the effects of Quran memorization (β = 0.157, p = .002) and emotional intelligence (β = 0.186, p < .001) on disciplined behaviour. These results suggest that discipline in religious educational settings is best understood as an internally regulated outcome shaped by moral internalisation and emotional self-regulation. The study contributes to character education literature by empirically validating prophetic character as a central mechanism linking religious practice and psychological capacity to behavioural outcomes in pesantren education.

Corresponding Author:

Zhafirah Syarafina

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, South Sumatra Indonesia; syarafinazhafirah@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why it is important. It should define the purpose of the work and its significance. The current state of the research field should be reviewed carefully, and key publications cited. Please highlight controversial and diverging hypotheses when necessary. Finally, briefly mention the main aim of the work and highlight the principal conclusions. As far as possible, please keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists outside your particular field of research. References should be cited as (Kamba, 2018) or (Marchlewska et al., 2019) or (Cichocka, 2016; Hidayat & Khalika, 2019; Ikhwan, 2019; Madjid, 2002) or (Miller & Josephs, 2009, p. 12) or Rakhmat (1989). See the end of the document for further details on references. Technical terms should be defined. Symbols, abbreviations, and acronyms should be defined the first time they are used. All tables and figures should be cited in numerical order.

Student discipline continues to represent a persistent challenge in contemporary education, particularly in contexts where institutions are expected to cultivate not only academic competence but also moral integrity and responsible behaviour. In recent decades, disciplinary problems have increasingly been interpreted as indicators of weak self regulation, limited moral internalisation, and insufficient emotional development rather than mere resistance to institutional rules (Maziyah & Muttaqin, 2024; Muchtar et al., 2022). This shift has encouraged educational researchers to reconsider discipline as a developmental outcome rooted in character formation and psychological capacity rather than as a product of external control or punishment.

Within this evolving discourse, character education has emerged as a central framework for understanding how disciplined behaviour can be sustained over time. Discipline grounded in character reflects an individual's ability to regulate actions based on internalised values, moral awareness, and personal responsibility (Brand, 2010; Lickona, 1999). Research in moral psychology and educational studies suggests that when discipline is internal rather than imposed, learners demonstrate greater consistency, autonomy, and ethical sensitivity in their behaviour (Adeel et al., 2023; Badri, 2018). Despite this recognition, many educational studies continue to examine discipline through isolated variables, without adequately integrating moral values, emotional processes, and behavioural outcomes into a unified analytical model.

Religious educational institutions provide a particularly rich context for exploring discipline as a multidimensional phenomenon (Barrett, 2010; Supriyono et al., 2025). In Islamic education, pesantren represent holistic learning environments in which academic instruction, religious practice, communal life, and moral cultivation are inseparably intertwined (Abror & Rohmaniyah, 2023; Ali & Halim, 2023). Discipline within pesantren is not limited to compliance with formal regulations but is embedded in daily routines of worship, communal responsibility, and ethical conduct (Azra, 2016; Dhofier, 2011). As such, discipline is conceptualised as an expression of moral maturity shaped by sustained engagement with religious practices and value based education.

One of the most prominent educational practices within pesantren is Quran memorization. Traditionally understood as a means of preserving sacred knowledge and strengthening spiritual identity, Quran memorization also entails a demanding process of repetition, perseverance, attentional control, and emotional resilience (Jamil, 2024). These qualities align closely with core elements of disciplined behaviour, including consistency, self control, and responsibility (Rohmatillah & Shaleh, 2018). Recent studies have begun to highlight the positive associations between Quran memorization and character development, as well as between Quran memorization and behavioural outcomes such as discipline and academic persistence (Anam, Ahamad, et al., 2025; Syah et al., 2025). However, much of this literature remains focused on direct relationships, offering limited explanation of the psychological and moral mechanisms through which Quran memorization influences discipline.

Emotional intelligence has been widely identified as a critical psychological factor supporting disciplined behaviour in educational settings. Defined as the capacity to recognise, understand, regulate, and utilise emotions effectively, emotional intelligence contributes to self regulation, empathy, and adaptive decision making (Goleman, 1999; Grewal et al., 2006). Empirical research

consistently demonstrates that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to exhibit stronger behavioural regulation and greater adherence to institutional norms (Darmayanti et al., 2021; Putri, 2019). Nevertheless, emotional intelligence alone does not fully account for the moral dimensions of disciplined behaviour, particularly in faith based educational contexts where ethical conduct is deeply informed by religious values and exemplars.

In Islamic moral tradition, ethical behaviour is shaped through the internalisation of prophetic character traits, most notably *Fathonah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh* (Setyowati, 2020). These traits represent intellectual wisdom, trustworthiness, honesty, and moral responsibility in communication, respectively, and together form a comprehensive moral framework guiding personal and social conduct (al-Qaradawi, 1991; Al-Attas, 1980). Within educational discourse, these prophetic traits resonate with contemporary character education principles, such as integrity, responsibility, moral reasoning, and ethical leadership (Ahmad, 2015; Bush, 2020). Despite their normative significance, prophetic character traits have rarely been translated into empirically measurable constructs suitable for quantitative analysis in educational research.

The limited operationalisation of prophetic character represents a significant gap in the literature on character education in Islamic contexts. Existing studies often treat character as a general or abstract concept, without distinguishing specific moral dimensions or examining their functional role within behavioural processes (Achmadin et al., 2024). Moreover, few studies have explored character as a mediating mechanism that explains how religious practice and emotional capacity jointly influence behavioural outcomes. This omission restricts our understanding of discipline as a product of moral internalisation rather than as a direct consequence of religious participation or emotional competence (Alazmi & Bush, 2024).

Addressing this gap, the present study conceptualises prophetic character, operationalised through the FAST framework, as a mediating variable linking Quran memorization, emotional intelligence, and student discipline. Quran memorization is positioned as a sustained moral practice that exposes students to ethical narratives and normative guidance, while emotional intelligence is understood as a psychological capacity enabling emotional regulation and adaptive behaviour. Prophetic character functions as the internal moral structure through which these influences are translated into disciplined conduct. This conceptualisation aligns with theoretical perspectives that view discipline as the outcome of repeated moral engagement supported by emotional self regulation (Bandura, 2001; Lickona, 1999).

Methodologically, this study employs Structural Equation Modelling to examine both direct and indirect relationships among the variables. SEM enables a comprehensive analysis of complex causal structures and mediation effects, providing a more nuanced understanding of how discipline is formed within educational systems (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). The pesantren context offers a particularly appropriate setting for this investigation, as it embodies an educational environment where religious practice, emotional development, and behavioural regulation are systematically integrated into daily life (Amri et al., 2017).

The contribution of this study is twofold. Theoretically, it advances character education literature by introducing prophetic character as a measurable construct and by empirically demonstrating its mediating role in the formation of disciplined behaviour. By integrating moral, emotional, and behavioural dimensions within a single analytical framework, this study extends existing models of discipline beyond direct-effect explanations. Practically, the findings provide insights for educators and policymakers seeking to strengthen discipline through value-based and psychologically informed educational strategies, particularly within religious schooling environments.

Building on this framework, the study is guided by the following research questions: (1) To what extent do Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence influence student discipline in pesantren? (2) How do Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence contribute to the development of prophetic character? (3) Does prophetic character mediate the relationship between Quran memorization, emotional intelligence, and student discipline? Accordingly, this study

hypothesises that Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence have positive effects on student discipline, both directly and indirectly through prophetic character as a mediating mechanism.

In sum, this study seeks to deepen understanding of discipline as an internally grounded outcome shaped by the interaction of religious practice, emotional intelligence, and character formation. By foregrounding the mediating role of prophetic character, it offers an integrative empirical model that bridges Islamic moral education and contemporary educational psychology, contributing to broader discussions on discipline in faith-based educational contexts.

2. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a causal explanatory design to investigate the relationships among Quran memorization activity, emotional intelligence, prophetic character, and student discipline in pesantren (Venkatesh et al., 2013). The primary purpose of the study was to examine not only the direct effects of Quran memorization and emotional intelligence on student discipline, but also the indirect effects operating through prophetic character as a mediating construct. By adopting this approach, the study sought to explain how moral and psychological factors interact to shape disciplined behaviour within a religious educational context.

The research was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Jamiatul Qurro in Palembang, Indonesia, an Islamic boarding school that integrates formal education with structured Quran memorization programmes and character development initiatives (Wijaya, 2024). This setting was selected because it represents an educational environment in which religious practice, emotional development, and behavioural regulation are systematically embedded in daily institutional life. The population of the study consisted of all students enrolled at the pesantren during the data collection period. Given the manageable population size, a census technique was applied, resulting in a total of 95 respondents. This approach ensured that the data reflected the full range of student experiences within the institution and reduced potential sampling bias.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure four latent variables central to the research objectives. Quran memorization activity was measured through indicators reflecting the regularity, consistency, and personal commitment of students to memorisation practices. Emotional intelligence was assessed through indicators related to emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, motivation, and social interaction, drawing on established conceptualisations of emotional intelligence in educational research (Goleman, 1999). Prophetic character was operationalised through the FAST framework, which encompasses *Fathonah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh*. These dimensions were translated into measurable indicators capturing intellectual wisdom, trustworthiness, honesty, and moral responsibility in communication (Setyowati, 2020). Student discipline was measured through indicators related to punctuality, adherence to institutional rules, responsibility for assigned duties, and consistency of behaviour in daily activities.

All questionnaire items were measured using a five point Likert type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instrument was developed based on relevant theories of character education, emotional intelligence, and discipline, as well as findings from previous empirical studies in similar educational contexts (Amirudin et al., 2025; Lickona, 1999). Prior to full scale data collection, the instrument was reviewed by subject matter experts to ensure content validity and contextual relevance. A pilot test was also conducted to assess item clarity and preliminary reliability.

The collected data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with a partial least squares approach. SEM PLS was selected because it is well suited for testing complex causal models involving multiple latent variables and mediation effects, particularly when sample sizes are relatively small (Hair Jr. et al., 2021). Data analysis proceeded through a two-stage evaluation of the measurement model and the structural model using SEM-PLS. The measurement model assessment focused on construct reliability and validity, including internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity. The structural model evaluation examined the strength, direction, and statistical significance of the

hypothesised relationships among variables. The significance of both direct and indirect (mediated) effects was assessed using a bootstrapping procedure with repeated resampling, enabling robust estimation of path coefficients and mediation effects in line with recommended PLS-SEM practices.
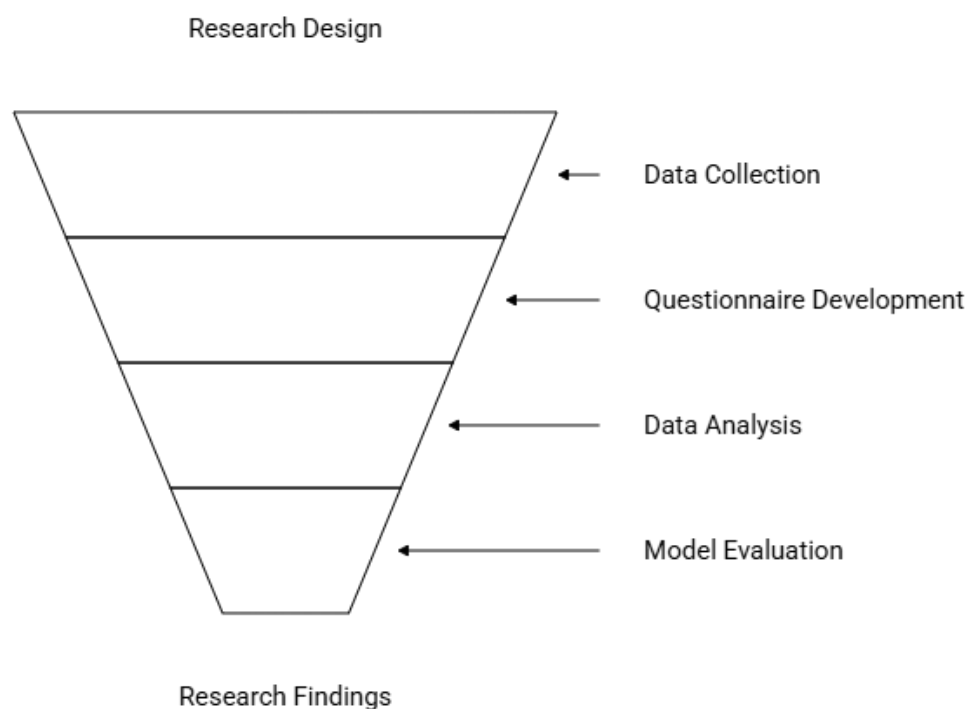
Figure 1 Research Process Funnel

Figure 1 presents the research framework in the form of a conceptual diagram illustrating the hypothesised relationships among the variables. The framework positions Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence as exogenous variables influencing student discipline both directly and indirectly through prophetic character. Prophetic character, operationalised through the FAST dimensions, is conceptualised as the central mediating mechanism that translates religious practice and emotional capacity into disciplined behaviour. This conceptual model guided the formulation of hypotheses and the subsequent empirical analysis.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings on Quran Memorization, Emotional Intelligence, and Student Discipline

The empirical findings of this study are derived from data collected from 95 students at Pondok Pesantren Jamiatul Qurro Palembang and analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with a partial least squares approach. The analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among Quran memorization activity, emotional intelligence, prophetic character, and student discipline, as well as to test the mediating role of prophetic character within the proposed conceptual framework (Zadeh, 2015). Overall, the findings reveal a coherent and empirically robust pattern that highlights the central role of moral character in translating religious practice and emotional capacity into disciplined behaviour.

The descriptive analysis indicates that students generally reported high levels of engagement in Quran memorization activities. Respondents perceived memorization not merely as an academic obligation, but as a structured daily practice requiring consistency, persistence, and personal responsibility, which conceptually positions Quran memorization as a formative antecedent contributing to the development of prophetic character as a mediating construct in the model. (Alsharbi et al., 2021; Keskin, 2025). This perception reflects the pesantren's institutional emphasis on routine

memorization targets and continuous monitoring of students' progress. Emotional intelligence was also reported at a relatively high level, particularly in aspects related to emotional awareness and self regulation (Rippin, 1997; Suherman et al., 2025). These results suggest that the pesantren environment fosters emotional maturity through close social interaction, moral guidance, and communal living. Similarly, prophetic character, operationalised through the FAST framework, demonstrated strong endorsement across all dimensions, with *Amanah* and *Shiddiq* emerging as particularly salient moral traits (Affandi et al., 2024; Qurtubi M.A, n.d.). Student discipline was likewise perceived positively, especially in relation to punctuality, compliance with institutional regulations, and responsibility for assigned duties. Together, these descriptive patterns provide an initial indication that religious practice, emotional capacity, character formation, and discipline are closely intertwined within the pesantren context.

Before examining the structural relationships among the constructs, the measurement model was evaluated to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments used. The results demonstrate that all constructs met the recommended criteria for convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity, indicating that the latent variables were measured accurately and consistently (Achmadin et al., 2024; Hair Jr. et al., 2021). Composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70, confirming strong internal consistency. Average variance extracted values were also above the recommended cut off of 0.50, suggesting that a substantial proportion of variance in the indicators was captured by their respective constructs.

Table 1. Measurement Model Quality Indicators

Construct	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Quran Memorization Activity	0.921	0.904	0.698
Emotional Intelligence	0.934	0.918	0.712
Prophetic Character (FAST)	0.947	0.931	0.736
Student Discipline	0.926	0.909	0.705

The high reliability and validity values reported in Table 1 provide a strong foundation for subsequent structural analysis. Discriminant validity was further confirmed through the Fornell Larcker criterion and heterotrait monotrait ratio, which indicated that each construct was empirically distinct from the others. This confirmation is particularly important given the conceptual proximity between emotional intelligence, character, and discipline, as it demonstrates that each construct captured a unique dimension of the educational process rather than overlapping conceptually (Anshori, 2017; Khaidir & Suud, 2020).

The structural model analysis reveals significant and theoretically meaningful relationships among the constructs. Quran memorization activity was found to have a positive and statistically significant effect on prophetic character. This finding suggests that sustained engagement with Quran memorization contributes to the internalisation of moral values embodied in the prophetic character traits of *Fathonah, Amanah, Shiddiq, and Tabligh* (Faisol et al., 2024). The result supports the notion that religious practices function not only as ritual activities but also as formative processes that shape moral cognition and ethical behaviour through repetition, reflection, and commitment (Ghozali, 2024).

Emotional intelligence also demonstrated a strong and significant effect on prophetic character. This finding indicates that students with greater emotional awareness and self regulation are more likely to internalise and enact moral traits associated with prophetic character (Finck et al., 2003; Lickona, 1999). Emotional intelligence appears to facilitate the translation of moral knowledge into lived ethical conduct by enabling individuals to manage emotions, respond empathetically, and

regulate behaviour in accordance with moral values. This result aligns with theoretical perspectives that emphasise the role of emotional processes in moral development and character (Goleman, 1999).

Both Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence were found to have direct positive effects on student discipline. Students who reported higher levels of engagement in memorisation activities and stronger emotional intelligence tended to exhibit more disciplined behaviour (Arqam et al., 2026). However, the magnitude of these direct effects was lower than the effect of prophetic character on discipline. This pattern suggests that while religious practice and emotional capacity contribute to disciplined behaviour, their influence is substantially strengthened when mediated through character formation.

Prophetic character emerged as the strongest predictor of student discipline in the structural model. The positive and significant relationship between prophetic character and discipline indicates that students who internalise the moral traits of intellectual wisdom, trustworthiness, honesty, and moral responsibility are more likely to regulate their behaviour consistently and adhere to institutional norms. This finding reinforces the conceptualisation of discipline as an internally grounded disposition rather than as a response to external enforcement. The structural model demonstrates adequate explanatory power, with the endogenous construct of student discipline achieving an R^2 value of 0.52, indicating that 52% of the variance in disciplined behaviour is explained by Quran memorization activity, emotional intelligence, and prophetic character. Discipline, in this sense, reflects the alignment between moral values and behavioural practice.

Table 2. Structural Model Path Coefficients

Path	Standardised Coefficient	t Value	p Value
Quran Memorization → Prophetic Character	0.382	4.875	< 0.001
Emotional Intelligence → Prophetic Character	0.451	5.632	< 0.001
Quran Memorization → Student Discipline	0.261	3.421	0.001
Emotional Intelligence → Student Discipline	0.298	3.875	< 0.001
Prophetic Character → Student Discipline	0.412	4.987	< 0.001

The mediation analysis further clarifies the role of prophetic character within the model. The indirect effects of Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence on student discipline through prophetic character were both statistically significant. These findings confirm that prophetic character functions as a mediating mechanism that explains how religious practice and emotional capacity are translated into disciplined behaviour (Anam, Wahidmurni, et al., 2025). In practical terms, this means that memorisation routines and emotional skills alone are insufficient to fully account for discipline unless they contribute to the internalisation of moral character.

Table 3. Indirect Effects Through Prophetic Character

Indirect Path	Indirect Coefficient	t Value	p Value
Quran Memorization → Prophetic Character → Student Discipline	0.157	3.125	0.002
Emotional Intelligence → Prophetic Character → Student Discipline	0.186	3.542	< 0.001

The presence of significant indirect effects supports a partial mediation model, indicating that prophetic character both complements and strengthens the direct effects of Quran memorization and emotional intelligence on discipline (Maulidia et al., 2022). These results highlight the importance of character as a central moral mechanism within the educational process. Discipline, as demonstrated by the findings, is not merely a behavioural outcome of structured routines or emotional competence but a reflection of moral internalisation shaped by sustained engagement with religious values and emotional self regulation.

Taken together, the findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed conceptual framework and offer a nuanced understanding of discipline formation in pesantren education. The results demonstrate that Quran memorization and emotional intelligence contribute meaningfully to character formation, and that prophetic character plays a decisive role in shaping disciplined behaviour. By empirically validating prophetic character as a mediating construct, this study advances the literature on character education and discipline within religious educational contexts and offers a robust foundation for further theoretical and empirical exploration.

Discussion

The present study set out to examine how Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence contribute to student discipline in pesantren, with prophetic character operationalised through the FAST framework positioned as a mediating mechanism (Ali & Halim, 2023; Alsharbi et al., 2021). The findings offer a nuanced understanding of discipline as an internally regulated outcome shaped by the interaction of religious practice, emotional capacity, and moral character. This discussion interprets the findings in relation to existing literature and highlights their theoretical and practical significance.

The positive and significant relationship between Quran memorization activity and prophetic character underscores the formative role of sustained religious practice in character development (M.Chalis et al., 2024). Quran memorization, as implemented in the pesantren context, is not a passive cognitive exercise but a disciplined practice that requires consistency, perseverance, and moral commitment. Through repetitive engagement with Quranic texts, students are continuously exposed to ethical narratives and moral exemplars that reinforce values associated with intellectual wisdom, honesty, trustworthiness, and moral responsibility (Wijaya, 2024). This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting that religious practices can function as mechanisms of moral internalisation when embedded within structured educational environments. The result also supports theoretical perspectives that view moral learning as a process shaped by habituation and reinforcement, in which repeated moral engagement gradually becomes part of an individual's character (Bandura, 2001)

The strong effect of emotional intelligence on prophetic character further emphasises the psychological foundations of moral development. Emotional intelligence enables students to recognise and regulate their emotional responses, empathise with others, and navigate social interactions in ways that are consistent with moral norms (Arqam et al., 2026). The finding that emotional intelligence significantly predicts prophetic character suggests that moral traits are not merely acquired through doctrinal instruction but are enacted through emotional self regulation and interpersonal awareness. This interpretation is consistent with moral psychology literature that highlights the role of emotions in ethical reasoning and behaviour (Abu-Raiya, 2014). Within the pesantren context, emotional intelligence appears to facilitate the embodiment of prophetic values by enabling students to align moral knowledge with emotional responses and behavioural choices.

The direct effects of Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence on student discipline indicate that both religious practice and emotional capacity independently contribute to disciplined behaviour (Hashi, 2024). Students who engage consistently in memorisation routines tend to develop habits of punctuality, responsibility, and self control, which are directly reflected in disciplinary outcomes. Similarly, students with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate greater behavioural regulation and adaptability, supporting findings from previous research linking emotional intelligence to discipline and self regulation in educational settings (Cooper, 1981). However, the relatively smaller

magnitude of these direct effects compared to the effect of prophetic character suggests that their influence on discipline is not fully realised without the mediation of moral character.

The emergence of prophetic character as the strongest predictor of student discipline is a central contribution of this study. This finding reinforces the conceptualisation of discipline as an internally grounded disposition rooted in moral character rather than as a response to external enforcement. Students who internalise the FAST traits are more likely to regulate their behaviour consistently because their actions are guided by internal moral standards rather than situational compliance (Anshori, 2017; Setyowati, 2020). This interpretation resonates with character education theories that emphasise the integration of moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action as the foundation of ethical behaviour (Lickona, 1999). In this sense, discipline becomes an expression of moral identity rather than a reaction to institutional rules.

The mediation analysis provides further insight into the mechanisms through which discipline is formed. The significant indirect effects of Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence on student discipline through prophetic character confirm that character functions as a critical intermediary linking practice and capacity to behaviour (Faisol et al., 2024; Lickona, 1999). These findings suggest that religious practice and emotional intelligence contribute to discipline primarily by shaping moral character, which then governs behavioural regulation. This mediation model advances existing literature by moving beyond direct effect explanations and offering a more integrated account of how discipline emerges from the interplay of moral and psychological factors.

The partial mediation observed in the model indicates that while prophetic character plays a central role, Quran memorization and emotional intelligence also exert direct influences on discipline. This pattern reflects the complexity of behavioural formation in educational settings, where multiple pathways contribute simultaneously to outcomes (Zadeh, 2015). Discipline is thus best understood as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by routines, emotional skills, and moral commitments (Dewi & Hsb, 2023). Such an understanding challenges simplistic approaches to discipline that rely solely on rule enforcement or behavioural control and highlights the importance of holistic educational strategies.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to character education literature by operationalising prophetic character as a measurable construct and empirically demonstrating its mediating role. Previous studies in Islamic education have often discussed prophetic character normatively, without subjecting it to rigorous quantitative analysis (A'la & Makhshun, 2022). By translating the FAST framework into empirically testable indicators, this study bridges normative Islamic moral discourse and contemporary empirical educational research (Choli, 2019). This integration enhances the analytical robustness of character education models and provides a framework that may be adapted for further comparative studies in religious and value based education.

The findings also contribute to broader discussions on discipline in education by reframing discipline as an outcome of moral internalisation rather than institutional coercion. This perspective aligns with contemporary critiques of punitive disciplinary models, which have been shown to produce short term compliance but limited long term behavioural change (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). In contrast, discipline grounded in character and emotional self regulation is more likely to be sustained across contexts and over time. The pesantren context, with its emphasis on communal life and moral cultivation, offers empirical support for this alternative approach.

Practically, the findings indicate that strengthening discipline in pesantren and similar institutions is most effective when character formation and emotional development are integrated with religious instruction, rather than treated as separate educational components. Quran memorization programmes appear to be more impactful when accompanied by reflective activities that emphasise the moral meanings of the texts, while interventions targeting emotional intelligence support the internalisation of these values and contribute to consistent behavioural regulation. This integrative approach underscores the importance of balancing cognitive, emotional, and moral dimensions in educational design.

These implications also extend to educational policy. While some studies have approached discipline primarily as a behavioural issue managed through rules and sanctions, often reporting short-term compliance with limited internalisation, the present findings suggest a different pathway. By demonstrating that discipline is more strongly shaped through moral character and emotional competence, this study contrasts with enforcement-oriented models and supports policy approaches that prioritise value-based and character-centred education. In this regard, the FAST framework offers a culturally grounded and analytically robust model that can inform character education initiatives within Islamic education systems.

Despite its contributions, the study is not without limitations. The use of a cross sectional design limits causal inference, and the findings are specific to a single pesantren context (Azra, 2016). Future research may employ longitudinal designs to examine how character formation and discipline develop over time and to assess the long term effects of Quran memorization and emotional intelligence (Zadeh, 2015). Comparative studies across different educational contexts may also provide further insight into the generalisability of the proposed model.

Figure 2 Shaping Student Discipline Through Character
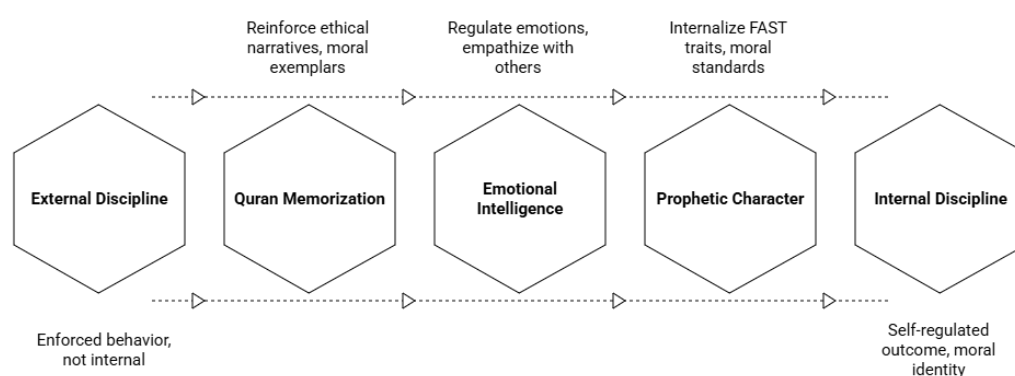
In conclusion, the discussion highlights that discipline in pesantren education is best understood as the outcome of an integrative process involving religious practice, emotional intelligence, and moral character. By demonstrating the mediating role of prophetic character, this study advances theoretical understanding and provides practical insights for educators seeking to foster disciplined behaviour through value based education. The findings underscore the importance of moving beyond externally imposed discipline towards educational approaches that cultivate internal moral regulation as the foundation of ethical and disciplined conduct.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among Quran memorization activity, emotional intelligence, prophetic character, and student discipline in pesantren, with prophetic character operationalised through the FAST framework as a mediating mechanism. The findings provide clear empirical evidence that discipline in religious educational settings is not merely the result of institutional control or routine enforcement, but emerges from an integrative process involving moral practice, emotional capacity, and character internalisation.

The results demonstrate that both Quran memorization activity and emotional intelligence contribute significantly to the formation of prophetic character. Quran memorization functions as a sustained moral practice that reinforces ethical values through repetition and commitment, while emotional intelligence enables students to regulate emotions and enact moral principles in daily interactions. Prophetic character, in turn, emerges as the most influential factor in shaping disciplined

behaviour, confirming its central role in translating religious practice and psychological capacity into consistent behavioural regulation.

The mediation analysis further reinforces the conclusion that discipline is best understood as an internally regulated disposition grounded in moral character. Although Quran memorization and emotional intelligence exert direct effects on student discipline, their influence is substantially strengthened when mediated through prophetic character. This finding highlights the importance of character formation as the primary mechanism through which educational practices foster sustainable discipline.

From a theoretical perspective, this study advances character education literature by operationalising prophetic character as a measurable construct and empirically validating its mediating role within an integrated moral–psychological model. By bridging Islamic moral education with contemporary educational psychology, the study extends existing approaches to discipline that rely primarily on direct behavioural or cognitive explanations.

Practically, the findings suggest that pesantren educators and curriculum designers should prioritise the integration of character formation and emotional development alongside structured religious instruction. Quran memorization programmes are likely to be more effective when complemented by reflective and dialogical activities that emphasise the moral meanings of the texts being memorised, rather than focusing solely on technical mastery. In addition, educational practices that intentionally cultivate emotional intelligence—such as mentoring, guided self-reflection, and emotionally supportive disciplinary approaches—can strengthen the internalisation of prophetic character and promote consistent disciplined behaviour.

Overall, this study affirms that discipline in pesantren education is most effectively cultivated through the internalisation of moral values supported by emotional self-regulation. By foregrounding prophetic character as the core mechanism of discipline formation, the research provides a robust foundation for future empirical studies and offers practical insights for the development of value-based educational strategies in religious schooling contexts.

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