



Implementing Performance Character Internalization in Entrepreneurship Education: A Qualitative Case Study in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - This study aims to analyze the implementation of performance character internalization in entrepreneurship education and examine its role in shaping students' entrepreneurial character, particularly within the context of Islamic higher education. The study addresses the gap between skill-oriented entrepreneurship education and character-based approaches that emphasize behavioral and ethical development.

Methods - This study employed a qualitative single-case study design at Universitas Islam Tasikmalaya, Indonesia. The research was conducted from January to June 2025 and involved 20 informants, consisting of 15 students with entrepreneurial experience and five entrepreneurship lecturers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis process involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by source and method triangulation and member checking.

Findings - The findings reveal that performance character internalization occurs through three interconnected mechanisms: curriculum integration, experiential learning, and habituation through continuous business practice. However, character integration in the curriculum remains largely implicit and is not yet supported by structured and measurable assessment indicators. Successful student entrepreneurs demonstrate discipline, responsibility, resilience, consistency, and adaptability. These characteristics develop gradually through cognitive (knowing), affective (believing), and behavioral (acting) stages, with behavioral embodiment representing the most advanced stage of internalization.

Research Implications - Entrepreneurship education should move beyond the development of technical competencies by explicitly integrating character development into curriculum design, experiential learning, mentoring, and assessment systems. In Islamic higher education, values such as *amanah* and *sidq* can provide an ethical foundation for responsibility, accountability, honesty, and consistency in entrepreneurial behavior. Institutions are therefore encouraged to develop measurable indicators of character development alongside conventional business-performance outcomes.

Originality - This study contributes to character-based entrepreneurship education by demonstrating how performance character is internalized through an integrated process of experience, reflection, and habituation. Its originality lies in positioning performance character internalization as a mechanism linking entrepreneurship learning to sustainable entrepreneurial behavior while interpreting *amanah* and *sidq* as ethical foundations of entrepreneurial character within Indonesian Islamic higher education.



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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has become a critical driver of economic growth and social transformation in the twenty-first century, particularly in addressing educated unemployment, technological disruption, and global

economic uncertainty. Higher education institutions are therefore increasingly expected not only to produce graduates who seek employment but also to develop individuals capable of creating employment opportunities. In response, entrepreneurship education has been widely integrated into university curricula worldwide. Nevertheless, its effectiveness in producing sustainable student entrepreneurs remains limited, as many student-led ventures fail to survive beyond their initial stages (Aparicio et al., 2026; Ratten & Usmanij, 2021; Shi et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2023).

One major limitation of current entrepreneurship education is its predominant emphasis on cognitive and technical competencies, including business planning, market analysis, and financial management. Although these competencies are essential, they are insufficient to ensure entrepreneurial success in uncertain and dynamic environments. Contemporary research indicates that entrepreneurial success is also strongly influenced by non-cognitive factors, particularly personal attributes such as discipline, perseverance, responsibility, and resilience (Audretsch et al., 2026; Bachmann et al., 2021; Glosenberg et al., 2022; Lackeus, 2020). These attributes are commonly conceptualized as performance character, which refers to the values and dispositions that motivate individuals to pursue excellence through sustained effort, commitment, and responsible action.

Developing performance character requires more than conventional classroom instruction. It involves a process of value internalization through which students move from understanding particular values cognitively to embodying them consistently in their behavior. This process is more effective when supported by experiential and reflective learning environments that allow students to engage directly with real-world entrepreneurial challenges, evaluate their experiences, and translate acquired values into practice (Banha et al., 2022; Fellnhöfer, 2022; Loi & Fayolle, 2021; Morris, 2022; Yasin & Nabi, 2026). However, in many higher education contexts, the integration of character values into entrepreneurship education remains superficial and fragmented, often being confined to theoretical instruction without structured opportunities for practical application and critical reflection (Lackeus, 2020; Ratten, 2023).

Previous studies have proposed various approaches to entrepreneurship education, including experiential learning, entrepreneurial mindset development, and value-creation pedagogy. Lackeus (2020), for example, positions value creation as a central component of entrepreneurship education, whereas Morris (2022) argues that entrepreneurial learning should promote behavioral transformation rather than merely facilitate knowledge acquisition. Empirical evidence also demonstrates that entrepreneurship education can strengthen entrepreneurial intention, although its contribution to long-term entrepreneurial success is influenced by character development and other behavioral factors (Fellnhöfer, 2022; N. A. Newman, 2020). Despite these developments, limited scholarly attention has been given to the specific process through which performance character values are internalized in entrepreneurship education and subsequently translated into the behaviors required for sustaining student entrepreneurial ventures.

This research gap is particularly relevant in Islamic higher education, where moral and spiritual values such as amanah (trustworthiness), *ṣidq* (honesty), and responsibility constitute important foundations of students' personal and professional development. Although these values are closely aligned with entrepreneurial ethics, their incorporation into entrepreneurship education remains underdeveloped and is rarely supported by a systematic internalization framework. In Indonesia, this challenge is further complicated by the need to develop globally competitive entrepreneurs while maintaining local cultural and religious values. Previous studies have indicated that inadequate character-based approaches to entrepreneurship education may contribute to low levels of entrepreneurial persistence and business sustainability among university students (Ismail, 2022; Mambali et al., 2024; Nelly et al., 2024; Ratten, 2023, 2025).

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of performance character internalization in entrepreneurship education and examine its role in developing entrepreneurial character among university students. By shifting the analytical focus from technical skill acquisition to the process through which character values are understood, practiced, and embodied, this study contributes to the discourse on character-based entrepreneurship education. It also offers a more holistic perspective for developing student

entrepreneurs who are not only competent in managing business activities but also persistent, responsible, resilient, and capable of sustaining their entrepreneurial ventures.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative single-case study design to examine the internalization of performance character in entrepreneurship education and its role in shaping students' entrepreneurial character. This design was selected because it enabled an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, behaviors, and interpretations within a specific educational context (Fellnhöfer, 2022; Morris, 2022).

The study was conducted at Universitas Islam Tasikmalaya, Indonesia, from January to June 2025. The institution was purposively selected because it integrates entrepreneurship education with Islamic character values. The six-month research period covered participant recruitment, interviews, observations, document collection, data analysis, and member checking.

A total of 20 informants participated in the study, consisting of 15 students and five entrepreneurship lecturers. Participants were selected using purposive sampling (Ratten, 2025). Student participants were required to have completed or be enrolled in an entrepreneurship course, have at least six months of business experience, and be actively involved in managing a business. Lecturer participants were required to have taught entrepreneurship for at least two academic years and to have experience supervising student business activities. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted face-to-face with all participants and lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The interviews explored discipline, responsibility, perseverance, resilience, business-management practices, responses to failure, and behavioral changes resulting from entrepreneurship education. Eight observation sessions, each lasting approximately 90-120 minutes, were conducted during entrepreneurship classes, mentoring activities, business simulations, product-development activities, and student business practices. Observations focused on punctuality, task completion, consistency, accountability, responses to feedback, persistence in solving business problems, and resilience when facing setbacks.

Document analysis covered course syllabi, semester learning plans, teaching modules, assessment rubrics, student business proposals, progress reports, and business-evaluation records. These documents were examined to identify how performance character values were integrated into instructional content, learning activities, and student assessment. The use of multiple data sources supported source and method triangulation (Ismail, 2022). The researchers served as the primary research instruments and were supported by semi-structured interview guides, observation checklists, document-analysis matrices, audio recordings, and field notes. The instruments were developed based on performance character and experiential entrepreneurship education concepts (Fellnhöfer, 2022; N. A. Newman, 2020). Two experts in entrepreneurship education and qualitative research reviewed the instruments, and pilot interviews were conducted with two students who were not included in the final sample.

Data were analyzed concurrently with data collection through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and coded manually using Microsoft Excel and structured coding matrices. The analysis combined deductive codes derived from the performance character framework with inductive codes emerging from the data. Related codes were grouped into categories and broader themes concerning discipline, responsibility, perseverance, resilience, role modeling, habituation, reflection, mentoring, and experiential learning. The themes were then compared across interviews, observations, and documents to identify recurring and contrasting patterns (Ratten, 2025).

Trustworthiness was ensured through source and method triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking, an audit trail, and researcher discussion. Interview findings were compared with observations and documents. Member checking was completed by 17 of the 20 participants, representing 85% of the informants. Participants reviewed summaries of their interviews and preliminary interpretations and were given opportunities to clarify or correct the findings. Coding and thematic interpretations were also reviewed by two members of the research team.

Institutional permission was obtained from the relevant research authority at Universitas Islam Tasikmalaya before data collection. All participants received information about the research objectives, procedures, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw. Written informed consent was obtained before interviews and observations. Student participants were coded as S1-S15, while lecturers were coded as L1-L5. All recordings, transcripts, and research documents were stored in password-protected files accessible only to the research team.

RESULTS

The findings are presented according to four major themes identified through thematic analysis of interviews, observations, and document analysis: (1) patterns of performance character internalization, (2) characteristics of successful student entrepreneurs, (3) stages of performance character internalization, and (4) supporting and inhibiting factors. Student informants are coded as S1-S15, while lecturer informants are coded as L1-L5. Table 1 summarizes the thematic structure and supporting data.

Table 1. Thematic Categories of the Findings

Main Theme	Subthemes/Categories	Main Evidence	Representative Informants
Performance character internalization	Curriculum integration; experiential learning; habituation through business practice	Interviews, observations, RPS and learning documents	L1, L3, S2, S5, S8
Characteristics of successful student entrepreneurs	Discipline; responsibility; resilience; consistency; adaptability	Interviews and business-practice observations	S3, S6, S9, S11, S14
Internalization process	Knowing; believing; acting	Interviews, observations, reflective business experiences	S1, S4, S7, S10, L2
Supporting factors	Experiential learning; lecturer mentoring; supportive campus environment	Interviews and observations	S5, S8, S12, L3, L5
Inhibiting factors	Unstructured character assessment; outcome-oriented evaluation; unstable motivation	Interviews, document analysis, observations	S4, S13, S15, L1, L4

1. Patterns of Performance Character Internalization

The findings indicate that performance character is internalized through three interconnected mechanisms: curriculum integration, experiential learning, and habituation through continuous business practice.

At the curriculum level, values such as discipline, responsibility, hard work, and resilience have been incorporated into entrepreneurship learning. However, document analysis showed that these values were not consistently formulated as explicit and measurable assessment indicators. As one lecturer explained:

“Values such as discipline and responsibility have actually been included in the learning process, but they have not been explicitly formulated as measurable assessment indicators in the RPS.” (L1)

This finding was also reflected in the analysis of course documents, which showed stronger emphasis on learning outcomes and business assignments than on specific indicators for evaluating students’ character development.

The second mechanism is experiential learning. Students reported that direct involvement in business projects transformed abstract entrepreneurial concepts into practical experiences. One student stated:

“At first, I only understood the theory, but when I started running my own business, I learned to be disciplined and not give up easily.” (S5)

Observations supported this finding. Students actively involved in business projects demonstrated greater consistency in production schedules, marketing activities, task completion, and group responsibilities. The third mechanism is habituation through repeated business practice. Continuous engagement in entrepreneurial activities gradually strengthened students' sense of responsibility and persistence. As one student explained:

"It is through the routine of running a business that I learned to be responsible and more serious." (S8)

The observational data further indicated that students who experienced business setbacks tended to develop stronger resilience through reflection, strategy adjustment, and repeated attempts to maintain their businesses.

Overall, the findings show that performance character internalization develops through a recurring process of experience, reflection, and habituation rather than through theoretical instruction alone.



Figure 1. Student Engagement in Entrepreneurship Learning as a Contextual Illustration of Experiential Learning

Figure 1 is presented as contextual documentation of the learning environment. The analytical evidence for performance character internalization is derived primarily from the thematic findings summarized in Table 1, supported by interviews, observations, and document analysis.

2. Characteristics of Successful Student Entrepreneurs

The second theme concerns the characteristics of students who were able to sustain their entrepreneurial activities. Five dominant characteristics emerged from the data: discipline, responsibility, resilience, consistency, and adaptability.

Discipline was reflected in students' ability to organize production, promotion, academic activities, and business responsibilities. One student stated:

"I have a fixed schedule for production and promotion even when I have many academic assignments."
(S3)

Observations showed that disciplined students maintained more structured business routines and were more consistent in balancing academic and entrepreneurial responsibilities.

Responsibility was particularly evident in students' commitment to maintaining product quality and responding to customer problems. As one informant explained:

"This business is my responsibility, so if customers complain, I have to handle it immediately." (S6)

Resilience also emerged as an important characteristic. Students who sustained their businesses tended to interpret failure as a learning opportunity rather than a reason to discontinue their activities:

"I once experienced losses because of the wrong strategy, but I learned from it and tried again with a different approach." (S9)

Successful students also demonstrated consistency in maintaining their businesses despite limited time and resources, as well as adaptability in responding to market conditions. One informant stated:

"If the product does not sell well, I change the packaging or promote it differently on social media." (S11)

These findings indicate that sustainable student entrepreneurship is associated not only with entrepreneurial knowledge but also with the internalization of performance character that guides students' behavior when dealing with routine tasks, customer demands, market changes, and business failure.



Figure 2. Student Entrepreneurial Activities as Contextual Documentation of Performance Character Development

Figure 2 provides contextual documentation of students' experiential entrepreneurial activities. The interpretation of character development is based on the triangulated interview, observation, and documentary evidence presented in the thematic analysis.

3. Process of Performance Character Internalization

The findings identify three stages in the internalization of performance character: cognitive understanding (knowing), affective acceptance (believing), and behavioral implementation (acting).

At the knowing stage, students acquire an initial understanding of discipline, responsibility, hard work, and resilience through classroom instruction. One student explained:

"We were taught the importance of discipline and responsibility in business, but initially it was still theoretical." (S1)

At this stage, students understood the importance of entrepreneurial character but had not consistently translated these values into behavior.

The believing stage emerged when students encountered real entrepreneurial challenges. Experiences such as declining sales, financial losses, customer complaints, and competitive pressures encouraged students to reconsider the practical meaning of the values learned in class. One student stated:

"After experiencing how difficult running a business is, I realized that discipline and responsibility are truly important." (S4)

The final stage, acting, was characterized by consistent behavioral application. Students at this stage demonstrated improved time management, persistence, independence, and responsibility:

"Now I am used to managing my time and running my business regularly even when there are many challenges." (S10)

Observations confirmed that students who reached this stage displayed greater independence in decision-making and greater persistence when facing business problems.

These findings suggest that performance character internalization follows a gradual transition from understanding values to accepting their importance and finally embedding them in repeated entrepreneurial behavior.

3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The internalization process was influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors.

The strongest supporting factor was experiential learning. Direct business practice enabled students to develop entrepreneurial character through authentic challenges. One student stated:

"It is through direct practice that I learn the most, especially about responsibility and dealing with business problems." (S12)

Lecturer mentoring also played an important role. Students reported that guidance, motivation, feedback, and lecturers' practical experiences helped them understand how entrepreneurial values should be applied:

"Lecturers provide guidance and share real experiences, so we understand better how to face business problems." (S5)

Observations further showed that a supportive campus environment, including entrepreneurship programs, mentoring activities, and opportunities to develop student businesses, facilitated the internalization process. However, several barriers were also identified. The most prominent was the absence of a structured character-assessment system. One lecturer stated:

"We have included character values in the learning process, but there is still no specific assessment system to measure their development." (L4)

Document analysis confirmed that assessment remained predominantly focused on business outputs, assignments, and reports rather than changes in discipline, responsibility, perseverance, or resilience.

A further constraint was unstable student motivation. One student explained:

"Sometimes motivation is strong at the beginning, but when the business declines, I become less motivated to continue." (S13)

Observations indicated that students with fluctuating motivation were generally less consistent in maintaining their entrepreneurial activities and more likely to withdraw when encountering difficulties.

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that experiential learning, repeated business practice, lecturer mentoring, and institutional support facilitate performance character internalization. In contrast, the absence of explicit character-assessment indicators and unstable student motivation limit the consistency of this process.

DISCUSSION

1. Patterns of Performance Character Internalization

The findings show that performance character internalization in entrepreneurship education occurs through three interconnected patterns: curriculum integration, experiential learning, and habituation through continuous business practice. These patterns indicate that character development cannot be achieved merely by transmitting entrepreneurial knowledge, but requires a learning process that repeatedly connects values with concrete entrepreneurial experiences.

The relatively implicit integration of character values in the curriculum suggests that character development has not yet been fully positioned as an explicit and measurable learning outcome. This finding supports Lack  s (2020), who argues that entrepreneurship education often gives greater attention to cognitive competence and business knowledge than to behavioral and value transformation. In this context,

entrepreneurship education needs to move beyond teaching students what entrepreneurship is toward facilitating the formation of how students should behave as entrepreneurs.

The findings also demonstrate that experiential learning plays a central role in transforming abstract values into practical dispositions. Students developed discipline, responsibility, perseverance, and resilience when they were required to manage real business activities, respond to customer demands, maintain production schedules, and deal with failure. This finding is consistent with Kuratko & Morris, (2024) and Rosário & Raimundo (2023), who emphasize that entrepreneurial competencies and behavior are strengthened through direct engagement with authentic business situations.

From the perspective of Islamic higher education, this experiential process also provides an important space for the internalization of Islamic ethical values. Although students did not always explicitly describe their behavior using the terms *amanah* and *sidq*, the behavioral patterns identified in the study reflect important dimensions of these values. Responsibility for completing business obligations, maintaining product quality, responding to customer complaints, and fulfilling agreed tasks reflects the principle of *amanah*, understood as trustworthiness and accountability. Similarly, consistency between commitments, information provided to customers, and actual business practices reflects the ethical orientation of *sidq*, or truthfulness and integrity.

This interpretation extends the meaning of performance character beyond general psychological traits. Discipline and responsibility, for example, are not merely instrumental attributes for achieving business performance, but can also be understood as ethical commitments to fulfilling entrusted responsibilities. Therefore, within Islamic entrepreneurship education, performance character may be strengthened when entrepreneurial behaviors are explicitly connected to moral meanings. This is important because the findings reveal that character values are currently embedded largely through practice rather than through a systematically articulated Islamic value framework.

Habituation through repeated business activities further strengthens this process. Repetitive engagement allows values to move from externally required behaviors to more stable personal dispositions. In this sense, habituation is not simply behavioral repetition; it is a process through which students learn to become accountable for their decisions, consistent in fulfilling obligations, and persistent in maintaining their business commitments. The combination of experiential learning, reflection, and habituation therefore creates a potential mechanism through which *amanah* and *sidq* can be translated from normative religious concepts into observable entrepreneurial behavior.

2. Characteristics of Successful Student Entrepreneurs

The study identifies discipline, responsibility, resilience, consistency, and adaptability as the dominant characteristics of students who were able to sustain their businesses. These findings indicate that entrepreneurial sustainability is not determined solely by technical knowledge but is also shaped by non-cognitive and ethical dimensions of behavior.

This finding is consistent with Newman et al., (2024), who emphasize the importance of resilience, self-efficacy, and other non-cognitive factors in entrepreneurial outcomes. Students with stronger performance character were more capable of maintaining business routines, responding to customer problems, recovering from financial losses, and adjusting their strategies to changing market conditions.

However, in the context of this study, responsibility and consistency acquire a broader meaning when interpreted through Islamic values. Responsibility toward customers, products, and business commitments can be understood as manifestations of *amanah*. An entrepreneur who treats a business as a trust is expected not only to pursue profit but also to fulfill obligations to customers, partners, and other stakeholders. Thus, the student's willingness to respond immediately to customer complaints is not simply an indicator of service quality, but also reflects accountability for obligations that have been accepted.

The value of *sidq* is similarly relevant to the development of entrepreneurial character. Truthfulness in product information, consistency between promises and delivery, transparent communication, and honesty in managing business transactions are essential to sustaining customer trust. Although these elements were

not always verbally identified by participants as *şidq*, they represent the ethical content underlying responsible entrepreneurial practice. This suggests that the novelty of character-based entrepreneurship education in Islamic higher education lies not only in producing persistent and adaptive entrepreneurs, but in shaping entrepreneurs whose performance is ethically grounded.

Resilience and adaptability also require critical interpretation. These characteristics should not be understood merely as the capacity to survive competition or maximize business outcomes. Within an Islamic ethical framework, resilience should remain bounded by integrity. Adaptation to market pressures should not lead students to compromise product quality, misrepresent information, or abandon ethical responsibilities. Therefore, *amanah* and *şidq* function as moral boundaries that distinguish ethical adaptability from purely opportunistic behavior.

This finding suggests that successful student entrepreneurship should be evaluated using a broader definition of success. Business continuity, sales performance, and market adaptation remain important, but they should be accompanied by responsible, trustworthy, and honest conduct. In this respect, performance character integrated with Islamic values offers a more holistic conception of entrepreneurial success.

3. Process of Performance Character Internalization

The findings reveal that performance character internalization occurs through three stages: cognitive understanding (*knowing*), affective acceptance (*believing*), and behavioral embodiment (*acting*). These stages illustrate that value internalization is a gradual transformation in which knowledge becomes personally meaningful and is eventually translated into repeated behavior.

At the cognitive stage, students are introduced to the importance of discipline, responsibility, hard work, and resilience through classroom instruction. However, the findings show that knowledge at this level is insufficient to produce behavioral change. Students begin to understand the deeper meaning of these values only after confronting real entrepreneurial challenges.

The affective stage becomes particularly important because entrepreneurial experiences transform abstract principles into personally experienced values. Business losses, customer complaints, time pressures, and resource limitations encourage students to reconsider the practical consequences of discipline, responsibility, and perseverance. This supports the argument that values become internalized when learners are emotionally and practically engaged with the consequences of their choices.

The three-stage process is consistent with Ramdani et al., (2022), who emphasize the relationship between moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. It also supports McGee & Terry (2024), who argue that value-oriented entrepreneurship education becomes meaningful only when values are translated into observable behavior.

In the Islamic context, this process provides a useful framework for understanding how *amanah* and *şidq* can move from normative knowledge into entrepreneurial conduct. At the knowing stage, students may understand *amanah* as responsibility and *şidq* as honesty. At the believing stage, direct experience enables them to recognize why these values matter in maintaining customer trust, business relationships, and personal credibility. At the acting stage, these values become visible through consistent responsibility, transparent communication, fulfillment of commitments, and ethical decision-making.

This interpretation is particularly important for the novelty of the study. The contribution of Islamic values does not lie merely in adding religious terminology to entrepreneurship education. Rather, their contribution lies in providing a moral structure that gives meaning and direction to performance character. Discipline becomes more than time management; it becomes part of fulfilling responsibility. Responsibility becomes more than task completion; it becomes *amanah*. Consistency becomes more than persistence; it becomes the alignment between commitment and action. Honesty becomes more than a desirable personality trait; it becomes *şidq* as a foundation of trustworthy entrepreneurial relationships.

Thus, the internalization process can be understood as a transformation from *value knowledge to value conviction and finally to ethical entrepreneurial behavior*. This provides a stronger conceptual foundation for character-based entrepreneurship education in Islamic higher education.

4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The findings show that experiential learning, lecturer mentoring, and a supportive institutional environment strengthen the internalization of performance character, whereas the absence of explicit character indicators, limited character-based assessment, and unstable student motivation constrain the process.

The role of lecturers is particularly important because students require not only theoretical instruction but also guidance in interpreting entrepreneurial experiences. This finding is consistent with Rosário & Raimundo, (2024), who emphasize the role of educators in shaping entrepreneurial mindset and behavior. In the present study, lecturers function as instructors, mentors, and role models who help students interpret failure, responsibility, and business challenges.

In Islamic higher education, this mentoring role can be expanded further. Lecturers can explicitly connect entrepreneurial decisions with the principles of *amanah* and *sidq*. For example, customer service can be discussed not only as a marketing strategy but also as a responsibility toward others; financial reporting can be understood not only as an administrative requirement but also as an expression of honesty and accountability. Such integration can prevent Islamic values from remaining abstract moral messages disconnected from actual business practice.

The main institutional challenge identified in this study is the absence of structured indicators for assessing character development. This gap has important implications. If entrepreneurship assessment emphasizes only reports, business outcomes, or financial performance, students may perceive character values as supplementary rather than integral to entrepreneurial competence. More importantly, *amanah* and *sidq* may remain rhetorical values if they are not translated into observable indicators.

Therefore, character assessment should incorporate behavioral indicators such as fulfillment of commitments, honesty in reporting, consistency in product quality, responsibility toward customers, responsiveness to feedback, and ethical decision-making. In this way, Islamic values can be operationalized without reducing them to purely symbolic religious content.

Unstable student motivation represents another important constraint. The findings show that some students become less persistent when business performance declines. This indicates that performance character has not yet been fully internalized in all students. From an Islamic ethical perspective, this also demonstrates the need to strengthen the meaning of entrepreneurial responsibility beyond short-term outcomes. When entrepreneurial activities are understood only in terms of profit, motivation may decline when financial results deteriorate. In contrast, when entrepreneurship is framed as a responsibility, a process of learning, and a form of accountable economic activity, students may develop stronger reasons to persist while maintaining ethical standards.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of performance character internalization depends on the interaction between experiential learning, repeated practice, mentoring, institutional support, and explicit ethical meaning. The distinctive contribution of this study is therefore the proposition that Islamic values, particularly *amanah* and *sidq*, can function as the ethical foundation of performance character. Rather than standing apart from discipline, responsibility, resilience, consistency, and adaptability, these values provide a moral orientation that directs how those characteristics should be expressed in entrepreneurial behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalization of performance character in entrepreneurship education is developed through three interconnected mechanisms: curriculum integration, experiential learning, and habituation through continuous business practice. These mechanisms enable students to move gradually from understanding character values at the cognitive level, to accepting their importance at the affective level, and finally to embodying them in entrepreneurial behavior. The findings further show that successful student entrepreneurs are characterized by discipline, responsibility, resilience, consistency, and

adaptability, which are strengthened through direct entrepreneurial experience, lecturer mentoring, reflection, and a supportive institutional environment.

In the context of Islamic higher education, the study also highlights the relevance of *amanah* and *sidq* as ethical foundations of performance character. *Amanah* is reflected in students' responsibility, accountability, commitment, and fulfillment of business obligations, while *sidq* is associated with honesty, integrity, and consistency between entrepreneurial commitments and actual behavior. These values therefore extend the meaning of performance character beyond individual achievement by providing an ethical orientation for responsible and trustworthy entrepreneurial conduct.

However, the internalization process remains constrained by the limited explicit integration of character indicators in the curriculum, the absence of structured character-based assessment, and fluctuations in student motivation. Entrepreneurship education should therefore move beyond the assessment of business outputs alone and incorporate measurable behavioral indicators related to responsibility, discipline, resilience, integrity, and ethical decision-making. Lecturers should also strengthen their roles as mentors and role models by explicitly connecting entrepreneurial experiences with Islamic ethical values.

This study has several limitations. First, it employed a single-case study design within one Islamic higher education institution, Universitas Islam Tasikmalaya, which limits the transferability and generalizability of the findings to other institutional, cultural, and educational contexts. Second, the study relied primarily on qualitative data from a relatively limited number of students and lecturers, meaning that the identified patterns should not be interpreted as statistically representative of the wider population of university students. Third, the study focused on participants' experiences and observable entrepreneurial practices within a specific research period and therefore did not measure the long-term sustainability of character development or business performance.

Future studies are recommended to involve multiple higher education institutions and more diverse student populations to examine whether similar internalization patterns emerge across different contexts. Quantitative research may be conducted to test the relationships among entrepreneurship education, performance character, Islamic values, and entrepreneurial outcomes using larger samples. Mixed-methods research is also recommended to combine the explanatory strength of quantitative analysis with an in-depth understanding of how *amanah*, *sidq*, discipline, responsibility, resilience, and other character values are internalized over time. Longitudinal studies would further be valuable in assessing whether character internalization contributes to the long-term sustainability and ethical performance of student entrepreneurial ventures.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

AR was responsible for all stages of the research, including the conceptualization of the study, research methodology design, data collection, data analysis, manuscript writing, and final revision and editing of the article.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author used artificial intelligence tools (ChatGPT) during the preparation of this manuscript for language refinement, translation, and structural editing purposes. After using the tool, the author thoroughly reviewed, verified, and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the final publication.

The author also declares that the research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of findings were conducted independently, and the manuscript was developed without reliance on AI-generated research data or analytical outputs.

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