



Between Scores and Reality: Assessing the Impact of Islamic Religious Education on Students' Religious Character in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: This study was conducted to analyze the learning approaches used in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the elementary school level and their role in shaping students' religious character. The research was motivated by the ongoing gap between students' mastery of religious knowledge and the internalization of Islamic values in daily life, as many students achieve high academic scores in PAI but still display behaviors that are inconsistent with Islamic teachings. Using a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, the study involved 120 students from three elementary schools MI Madani, MIS Al-Bashirah, and SD Inpres Mannurukki. Quantitative data were obtained from PAI learning outcomes, while qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews and classroom observations to provide contextual insights into the quantitative findings. The quantitative analysis showed no statistically significant correlation ($p > 0.05$) between PAI learning outcomes and students' achievements in cognitive subjects such as mathematics and science. However, qualitative findings revealed that PAI teachers applied various strategies emphasizing value internalization, including storytelling, group discussions, reflective learning, and the "One Day One Verse" program, which successfully enhanced students' enthusiasm, engagement, and moral awareness. These results indicate that PAI learning functions not only cognitively but also affectively and spiritually. In conclusion, reflective, contextual, and interactive learning approaches in PAI contribute substantially to developing students' understanding and practice of Islamic values. The novelty of this study lies in integrating mixed-method evidence to demonstrate that the formation of religious character depends more on pedagogical approach and teacher commitment than on academic achievement alone. Therefore, strengthening teacher capacity and institutional support is essential to advancing holistic and value-based Islamic education.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Value-Based Learning, Religious Character, Mixed Methods

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education has a very important role in shaping the character and behavior of students, especially at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level (Abdussyukur et al., 2023; Huda et al., 2024; Kharismatunisa, 2023; Khotimah et al., 2024; R. Mulyana, 2023). As a basic education institution based on Islamic values, MI is not only tasked with conveying theoretical religious knowledge, but must also be able to instill and internalize these values in students' real lives.



Learning evaluation is often seen as an instrument to measure the level of achievement of educational goals (Magdalena et al., 2020; Wisman et al., 2021).

Since the early days of Islam, education has not only been oriented towards the transfer of knowledge, but also the cultivation of values and character building. Evaluation in Islamic education has been known since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, who used various methods to ensure that the teachings conveyed were truly understood and practiced by the companions. In the book *Al-Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyah* by Abdullah Nashih Ulwan, it is explained that the Prophet not only taught Islamic values verbally, but also evaluated their implementation in the daily lives of his people through deliberation, direct observation, and personal advice (Zuhri et al., 2022).

During the *Khulafaur Rashidin* period, evaluation was carried out by paying attention to changes in people's attitudes after the implementation of religious policies or programs. Caliph Umar bin Khattab, for example, was famous for his firmness in supervising the behavior of state employees and the people, as well as providing social sanctions for those who were inconsistent between words and deeds (Hayati, 2020; Mubarak, 2021; Setiyowati et al., 2021; Sucilawati, 2020). This form of evaluation became the forerunner of the *hisbah* system in classical Islamic governance. In the medieval *madrassa* tradition, learning evaluation was carried out in stages. Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulumuddin* emphasized that the success of education is not only measured by intellectual ability, but more importantly it is reflected in the morals and real behavior of students. Teachers have the obligation to observe the morals of their students in everyday life, in the mosque, in the market, even in the family environment. The evaluation of this model is holistic by combining cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Hidayat & Wijaya, 2016).

Along with the times, the concept of evaluation in Islamic education then adapts to modern approaches. The contemporary Islamic education system began to adopt quantitative and qualitative approaches at the same time in assessing students' achievements (Harianto & Kandedes, 2023; Juergensmeyer, 2023; Karim et al., 2023; Marjuah et al., 2023; Syarnubi et al., 2023), but unfortunately it is often still dominant in the cognitive aspect. Therefore, research on PAI learning evaluation that not only assesses academic aspects, but also the daily behavior of students is very relevant to do. This is important considering that the main goal of Islamic education is not only to form intellectually intelligent human beings, but also noble and socially responsible ones (Ulhusni & Maragustam, 2024).



Although the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has been conducted regularly, there is still a mismatch between students' academic scores and their daily behavior. Many students achieve high grades in PAI, but do not necessarily demonstrate attitudes such as honesty, discipline, or social care. This indicates that the current evaluation system may not be effective in measuring the internalization of religious values in students, as it focuses more on the cognitive aspects (understanding and memorization) and less on the affective and psychomotor aspects related to character building (Hajiannor et al., 2023; Ihsan et al., 2024; Komariah & Nihayah, 2023; Mizani, 2022; Wasehudin & Syaferi, 2021).

Since the early days of the development of Islamic civilization, education has been placed as the main means in building a whole human character. Religious education is not only intended to improve the mastery of Islamic knowledge, but also to form a personality that is noble, has social care, and is able to apply Islamic values in everyday life (Kurnanto et al., 2023; Maarif et al., 2023; Setyawan et al., 2023; Suyudi & Putra, 2022; Viertel & Reis, 2023). In its history, the Prophet SAW always instilled religious teachings through exemplary and value habituation, not merely by lecturing or rote teaching. This is reflected in the Prophet's habit of assessing the quality of one's faith not only from his knowledge, but from his attitude and social behavior in society. In the context of modern education, especially in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, learning Islamic Religious Education is often still dominated by an orientation towards academic achievement.

Many students are required to memorize verses of the Qur'an, Hadith, as well as theories of fiqh and creed, without being balanced with an in-depth evaluation of the internalization of these values in everyday life (Murharyana et al., 2023, 2024; Sabarudin et al., 2024; Sabarudin, Al Ayyubi, Rohmatulloh, et al., 2023; Sabarudin, Al Ayyubi, Suryana, et al., 2023). Whereas the ultimate goal of Islamic religious education is the creation of people who are able to apply their knowledge in real actions. Evaluation in religious education should touch three main domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain relates to students' knowledge of religious teachings, the affective domain relates to religious attitudes and feelings, while the psychomotor domain concerns real skills in practicing Islamic teachings, such as the ability to pray, recite the Qur'an, or do good to others (Mutaqin et al., 2024). Unfortunately, in practice, affective and psychomotor aspects are often neglected because they are difficult to measure with conventional instruments (Hidayati, 2020).



In addition, a striking phenomenon observed in the field is that high academic scores in religious studies are not always accompanied by corresponding moral behavior in everyday life: many students can recite and memorize Qur'anic verses fluently yet still demonstrate behaviors that do not reflect Islamic values (for example, lack of discipline, dishonesty, or low social care). This mismatch—memorization without moral internalization—is increasingly recognized in the literature as a critical problem for faith-based character education and calls for renewed empirical attention, because recent reviews and empirical studies show that effective character formation depends not only on cognitive learning but on pedagogies that promote habituation, social-emotional skills, and contextualized moral practice. Moreover, broader empirical work on religious schooling indicates that while religious education can positively influence honesty and altruism, the effects vary by method, developmental timing, and institutional context, suggesting that simple measures of academic achievement (test scores, memorization) are inadequate proxies for moral formation.

In the Indonesian and regional context recent studies likewise point to promising approaches (habituation, integration of school culture, play-based character programs) but also highlight a predominance of cross-sectional, small-sample, or teacher-reported designs that limit causal inference and generalizability. For these reasons this research is needed: to move beyond attainment measures toward empirically robust examinations of how particular PAI pedagogies (e.g., storytelling, reflective discussion, habituation programs, and contextualized memorization) translate into observable, sustained behavioral change. The specific research gap therefore is the lack of longitudinal, mixed-methods studies that link classroom practices in elementary PAI to longer-term behavioral outcomes while controlling for institutional supports and home/family influences; accordingly this study frames its inquiry around three explicit questions/hypotheses:

(1) To what extent do value-oriented PAI pedagogies predict measurable improvements in students' everyday prosocial and disciplinary behaviors over time?; (2) Does the effect of such pedagogies differ from the effect of purely memorization-focused approaches on students' moral conduct?; and (3) Are institutional resources and teacher commitment significant moderators of the relationship between PAI instructional methods and behavioral outcomes?. In line with that, in the context of character education, Islamic religious learning in madrasah should be able to act as a moral fortress as well as a shaper of students' religious personality. Religious education not only



functions as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as a transfer of values that can form moral awareness and good habits in students. Thus, the evaluation of PAI learning needs to be designed more comprehensively in order to be able to describe the achievement of the three domains proportionally.

On the other hand, the challenges of modernization, the flow of digital information, and shifting social values in society also affect the character of students in madrasah. Learners in the digital era are more easily exposed to various information that has the potential to conflict with Islamic values. Therefore, Islamic religious education must be able to become a learning space that not only provides textual religious material, but is also able to build awareness of Islamic values and behavior in the social and digital environment. Based on these problems, this research is important to evaluate the extent to which the Islamic education learning process in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is able to reflect students' religious behavior in real terms. This research is expected to find a factual portrait of the suitability between students' academic scores in PAI subjects and their attitudes and behaviors in daily life, as well as identify various supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of holistic learning evaluation (Rahmad & Kibtiyah, 2022).

In connection with that, the researcher reviewed several articles to find novelty and research gaps regarding *Between Values and Reality: Is the Evaluation of PAI Learning in MI Able to Reflect Actual Behavior*. The researcher analyzed the literature review of several journal articles through the VOSViewer application, this aims to analyze existing publications regarding this research so as to see the extent of the relationship that is connected to each other through the matrix network.

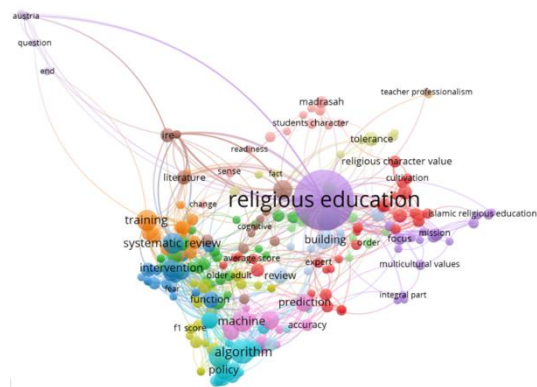


Figure 1. Results of Bibliometric Analysis on *Between Value and Reality: Whether PAI Learning Evaluation in MI is Able to Reflect Actual Behavior*



Through bibliometric analysis using the VOS Viewer application, researchers conducted a study of Sinta indexed articles published between 2020 and 2025, focusing on the theme Between Values and Reality: Is the Evaluation of PAI Learning in MI Able to Reflect Actual Behavior. With the help of the Publish or Perish version 8 application, researchers mapped the bibliometric network to identify trends and research developments related to the topic. The analysis showed that research on Between Values and Reality: Is the Evaluation of Islamic Education Learning in MI Able to Reflect Actual Behavior, is still relatively rare. This can be seen from the limited number of publications that specifically discuss the gap between PAI learning evaluation scores and students' actual behavior in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI).

Based on a literature review of existing articles, as well as field findings, researchers found that this topic has not been explored much in depth. Most previous studies focus more on aspects of learning methodology, the influence of the school environment on the character of the students (Nurhayati et al., 2024), or the effectiveness of PAI teaching (Fathurrohman & Prastowo, 2021), while the evaluation of learning outcomes related to changes in student behavior still receives less attention. Therefore, the researcher felt interested in studying this topic further to fill the gap. This study aims to explore the extent to which PAI learning evaluations in MI are able to reflect students' actual behavior, as well as identify factors that influence the gap between academic scores and behavioral realities. Thus, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of a more holistic PAI evaluation system that is relevant to the objectives of Islamic religious education, especially in shaping students' noble character and morals.

As some of the Qur'anic verses below are related to the topic of discussion above, the first is QS. As-Saff verse 2-3 which reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (2) كَبْرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (3)

“O believers! Why do you say what you do not do? How despicable it is in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do!”

This verse criticizes the difference between words and deeds. In the context of Islamic Education (PAI) learning evaluation in MI (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah), this verse can be interpreted as a reminder that the evaluation results (grades) are not only good on paper, but also reflect the real behavior of students in everyday life. If students get high scores in religious subjects, but do not



apply the teachings, then there is a gap between the value (theory) and reality (practice) (A. Mulyana, 2024). Furthermore, there is Qs. Al-Baqarah verse 44 which reads:

تَعْقِلُونَ أَفَلَا كَتَبَ تَتْلُونَ وَانْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَسْأَلُونَ بِالنَّاسِ أَتَأْمُرُونَ

“Do you preach righteousness and fail to practice it yourselves, although you read the Scripture? Do you not understand?”

This verse emphasizes the importance of consistency between religious knowledge and daily behavior. In the context of PAI learning evaluation, this verse can be a mirror for educators and the assessment system itself. Evaluation should not only measure how much students know about religion, but also how consistent they are in practicing religious values in real life and lastly there is QS. Al-Jumu'ah verse 5 which reads:

اللَّهُ بِآيَاتِ كَذَّبُوا الَّذِينَ الْقَوْمِ مَثَلُ بَيْسٍ ۖ أَصْفَارًا يَحْمِلُ الْحِمَارِ كَمَثَلِ يَحْمِلُهَا لَمْ تُمْ التَّوْرَةَ حَمَلُوا الَّذِينَ مَثَلُ الظَّالِمِينَ الْقَوْمِ يَهْدِي لَا وَاللَّهِ

“The example of those who were entrusted with ‘observing’ the Torah but failed to do so, is that of a donkey carrying books. How evil is the example of those who reject Allah’s signs! For Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.”

This verse likens people who have religious knowledge but do not practice it to a donkey carrying a load of books without understanding its contents. In the context of PAI learning evaluation in MI, this reminds us that the success of learning cannot only be measured by memorization or test scores, but must be seen from how the knowledge is manifested in daily behavior. A good evaluation should be able to capture this aspect, not just the numbers.

In addition to the Qur'anic verses, there are also several hadiths related to learning and evaluation of PAI. Hadith about moral education which reads:

اللَّهُ رَسُولُ سُنِّ قَالَ هُرَيْرَةَ أَبِي عَنْ جَدِّي عَنْ أَبِي حَدَّثَنِي إِدْرِيسَ بْنِ اللَّهِ عَبْدُ حَدَّثَنَا الْعَلَاءِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ كُرَيْبِ أَبِي حَدَّثَنَا فَقَالَ النَّارَ النَّاسِ يَدْخُلُ مَا أَكْثَرَ عَنْ وَسْئِلِ الْخُلُقِ وَحَسُنَ اللَّهُ تَقْوَى فَقَالَ الْجَنَّةَ النَّاسِ يَدْخُلُ مَا أَكْثَرَ عَنْ وَسَلَّمْ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ صَلَّى الْأُوْدِيِّ الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ ابْنِ هُوَ إِدْرِيسَ بْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَبْدُ غَرِيبِ صَحِيحِ حَدِيثِ هَذَا عِيسَى أَبُو قَالَ وَالْفَرْجِ الْفُحْمِ

“Abu Kuraib Muhammad ibn Ala` narrated to us, Abdullah ibn Idris narrated to me, my father and my grandfather narrated to me from Abu Hurairah who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was once asked about the thing that will admit the



most people to Paradise, and he replied: “Fear of Allah and noble character.” And he was also asked about the most things that put a person in hell, so he replied: “The mouth and the private parts.” Abu Isa said: This is a saheeh gharib hadith. Abdullah bin Idris is Ibn Yazid bin Abdurahman Al Audi” (H.R Tirmidzi).

This hadith confirms that piety towards Allah and good manners are the main factors that lead a person to paradise. Conversely, bad speech and abuse of lust are the two things that most plunge people into hell. In the context of evaluating PAI learning in MI, this hadith shows that the success of religion is not only measured by students' understanding of Islamic teachings, but also how these teachings shape their personalities. If students get high scores in religion lessons, but their words and actions still do not reflect Islamic values, then there is a gap between knowledge and real practice. Furthermore, the Hadith from Usman bin Zaid, the Prophet Sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam said:

النَّارُ أَهْلٌ فَيَجْتَمِعُ ، بِرَحَاهُ الْحِمَارُ يَدُورُ كَمَا فَيَدُورُ ، النَّارُ فِي أَفْتَابِهِ فَتَنْدَلِقُ ، النَّارُ فِي فَيْلَقِي الْفِيَامَةِ يَوْمَ بِالرَّجُلِ يُجَاءُ ، آتِيهِ وَلَا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ أَمْرُكُمْ كُنْتُ قَالَ الْمُنْكَرِ عَنِ وَتَنْهَى بِالْمَعْرُوفِ تَأْمُرْنَا كُنْتُ أَلَيْسَ شَأْنُكَ مَا ، فَلَا أَى فَيَقُولُونَ ، عَلَيْهِ وَآتِيهِ الْمُنْكَرِ عَنِ وَأَنْهَائِكُمْ

"There is a person who is brought on the Day of Judgment and then he is thrown into Hell. His intestines are unraveled in hell. Then he circled around like a donkey circling its mill. The inhabitants of Hell gathered around him and asked, “O so-and-so, what is the matter with you? Didn't you used to command us to do good and forbid us from evil?” He replied, “It is true, I used to forbid you from evil but I myself did it” (HR. Bukhari no. 3267 dan Muslim no.2989).

This hadith describes the severe threat for people who convey religious knowledge or invite goodness, but do not practice it in their daily lives. In the context of evaluating PAI learning in MI, this hadith confirms that the main goal of religious education is not only understanding and memorizing knowledge, but also practicing it. Finally, the hadith about knowledge that is not practiced and arrogance reads:

كِبْرًا إِلَّا يَرُدُّهُ لَمْ بِهِ يَعْمَلْ لَمْ عِلْمًا تَعَلَّمَ مَنْ



“Whoever learns knowledge and does not put it into practice will only increase his arrogance” (Imam ADZ-Dzahabi; Al-Kabair, hal. 75).

This hadith emphasizes that knowledge that is not practiced is not only useless, but can actually foster pride in a person. In the context of evaluating PAI learning in MI, this hadith shows that religious education should not only focus on academic achievement. If students are only emphasized to memorize and understand Islamic theory without instilling a humble attitude and practicing their knowledge in real life, then the learning evaluation will not reflect the real success of education.

Educational evaluation is very necessary, in order to see the extent of the achievements that have been achieved. However, in reality, evaluation in PAI learning only assesses the cognitive aspect without paying attention to other aspects, especially changes in the attitude of students. Even many previous studies focused on the aspects of models, methods and strategies in learning without seeing the extent of moral attitudes in students. Therefore, this study aims to explore more deeply how the suitability of Islamic religious education values can be in harmony and influence the behavior of students, assess the effectiveness of Islamic religious learning in measuring students' behavior (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects), and identify what challenges and obstacles are faced in implementing Islamic learning evaluation that reflects the behavior of students.

METHOD

This research uses a mixed methods approach (Sugiyono, 2021), with explanatory sequential design to gain an understanding of the evaluation of student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning which has implications for values and reality in representing student behavior. This research was conducted at MI Madani, MIS Al-Bashirah, and SD Inpres Mannurukki with a population of all students in these schools located in Makassar City, South Sulawesi Province. The sample used was 20 students in grade 3 in each school with a sampling technique using purposive sampling, so that the sample in the study was 60 students. The research instruments used in this study were tests and interviews. Quantitative methods are used to compare more than two independent groups and one factor, namely the school of origin of students. While



the qualitative method used to explore these learning outcomes through interviews and observations.

Based on this, the data analysis techniques used in quantitative methods use descriptive statistics and inferential statistics assisted by SPSS version 26. This is used to describe how the initial condition of the data and test hypotheses in order to produce conclusions that are inherent in generalizing. As for inferential statistics, it was first carried out to see the normality of data based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk and the Variance Homogeneity test using Levene's Test. If the data is normally distributed, it is continued with a parametric statistical test using the one-way ANOVA test, but if the data is not normally distributed, a non-parametric statistical test is carried out using the Kruskal-Wallis test. Then if the ANOVA results show significant differences, the Post Hoc Test is continued to find out more about which groups have significant differences using the Bonferroni test if the data is homogeneous and the Games-Howell test if the data is not homogeneous.

Meanwhile, in the qualitative stage, thematic analysis was conducted to identify, analyze, and report patterns in the data (Creswell, 2010). This method helps to find the meaning contained in interviews, observations, and documentation by classifying information into certain themes. This method is often used in research to understand the experiences, perceptions, and meanings contained in a phenomenon such as the focus of this study. The steps of thematic analysis in this study include (1) Familiarization with the data; (2) Generating initial codes; (3) Searching for Themes; (4) Reviewing Themes; (5) Defining and Naming Themes; and (6) Writing an analysis report

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Descriptive statistical tests are carried out to analyze and visualize the characteristics of data on independent and dependent variables without making inferences to the population. So that the purpose of this test is to provide an overview of the data being studied as presented in the following table.

Sekolah	\bar{x}	<i>s</i>	<i>n</i>
MI Madani	85.05	5.385	20



MIS Al-Bashirah	86.20	6.049	20
SD Inpres Mannurukki	82.25	7.362	20
Total	84.50	6.432	60

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the average value of student learning outcomes in Islamic learning at MI Madani is 85.05 with a standard deviation value of 5.385. Then the average value of students at MIS Al-Bashirah is 86.20 with a standard deviation value of 6.049, while the average value of students at SD Inpres Manurukki is 82.25 with a standard deviation value of 7.362. Based on this, it can be seen that the total of all students' average scores is 84.50 with a standard deviation value of 6.432 from 60 students, of which each school consists of 20 students.

The average value shows a value that represents the center or central tendency of a data set so that it is useful to provide a universal description of the data used in comparing differentiated data groups, while the standard deviation is intended to measure how far the data is spread from the average value or in other words it can be said that the greater the standard deviation value, the greater the variation of data away from the central point, and also vice versa if the standard deviation value is smaller, it can be said that the data is closer to the average value. Thus, the standard deviation value can show how far the data varies from the average value and can also help understand the consistency of the data used to measure uncertainty in data analysis.

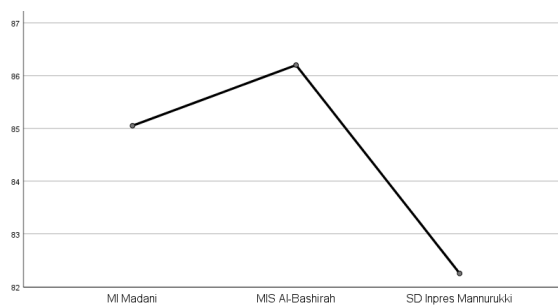


Figure 3. Estimated Marginal Means

Based on the figure above, it can be seen that the highest average student score is at MIS Al-Bashirah then MI Madani and the lowest is at SD Inpres Manurukki in Islamic learning. However, this can only describe the condition of a value without being able to make generalizations inherent in the data. So that to make conclusions about the differentiation of the



average value of students reviewed based on the origin of the school is continued with the inferential statistical test as follows.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		Shapiro-Wilk	
	Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.
MI Madani	.258	.001	.853	.006
MIS Al-Bashirah	.217	.014	.855	.022
SD Inpres Mannurukki	.220	.012	.890	.027

Tabel 3. Tests of Normality

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the statistical values on Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk at MI Madani, MIS Al-Bashirah, and SD Inpres Manurukki are 0.258, 0.217, 0.220 and 0.853, 0.855, 0.890 with a significance value of $0.001 < 0.05$, $0.014 < 0.05$, $0.012 < 0.05$ and $0.006 < 0.05$, $0.022 < 0.05$, $0.027 < 0.05$. So based on the decision-making criteria, it can be said that the data is not normally distributed. This can also be reinforced by the distribution of data on Normal Q-Q as follows.

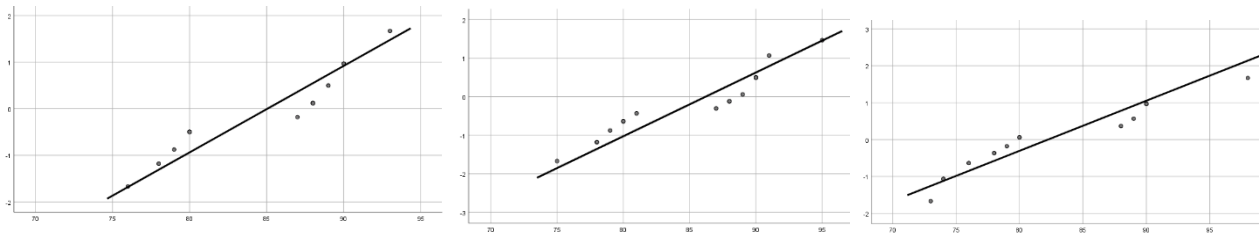


Figure 4. Normal Q-Q Plot of Values

Based on the picture above, it can be seen that the distribution of data or points on the diagram does not spread around the line or can be said to be dominantly far apart on the line. So it can be said that the data in each school is not normally distributed, so the next step is to conduct a non-parametric statistical test using the Kruskal-Wallis test.

	Levene Statistic	Sig.
Based on Mean	1.984	.147
Based on Median	.755	.475
Based on Median and with adjusted df	.755	.475
Based on trimmed mean	1.708	.190

Tabel 4. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^{a,b}

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the value of based on mean has a significance of $0.147 > 0.05$ so it can be said that the data on student learning outcomes in Islamic religious



education learning have the same variance or can be said to be homogeneous.

	Nilai
Kruskal-Wallis H	4.284
Asymp. Sig.	.117

Tabel 5. Kruskal-Wallis Test Statistics^{a,b}

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the significance value of the non-parametric statistical test using Kruskal-Wallis is 0.117. This shows that the significance value is greater than 0.05 so that based on the decision-making criteria it can be said that there is no significant difference in the evaluation of Islamic religious education learning in MI Madani, MIS Al-Bashirah, and SD Inpres Manurukki. This is also evidenced by the statistical tests presented in the following table.

Sekolah	Sekolah	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
MI Madani	MIS Al-Bashirah	-1.15	1.998	1.000
	SD Inpres Mannurukki	2.80		.500
MIS Al-Bashirah	SD Inpres Mannurukki	3.95		.159

Tabel 6. Multiple Comparisons

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the standard error between each school, namely MI Madani with MIS Al-Bashirah and SD Inpres Manurukki as well as MIS Al-Bashirah with SD Inpres Manurukki is 1.998 with a significance value of 1.000, 0.500, and 0.159. This shows that the significance value is greater than 0.05 so that based on the decision-making criteria it can be said that there is no significant difference in the evaluation of Islamic religious education learning at MI Madani with MIS Al-Bashirah and SD Inpres Manurukki also at MIS Al-Bashirah with SD Inpres Manurukki.

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers at MI Madani, it is known that the learning approach used emphasizes the internalization of Islamic values through the method of stories and group discussions. Teachers said that students understand the material more easily when it is connected to their daily lives. One of the PAI teachers stated:

"I usually present moral material through stories of the Prophet or friends. The children understand more easily and they immediately relate it to their daily experiences, for example about honesty or helping each other."



This is reinforced by the researcher's observations during the learning process, where students seemed enthusiastic when the teacher conveyed inspirational stories from the Qur'an and Hadith. Students also actively asked questions and responded to the material provided. Meanwhile, at MIS Al-Bashirah, an interview with the madrasah principal showed that the school actively integrates character values into religious learning. One of the flagship programs implemented is "One Day One Verse." The madrasah principal explained:

"Every morning before learning, we ask the students to read a short verse. After that, they are asked to explain the meaning or wisdom of the verse. It doesn't have to be perfect, the important thing is that they learn to relate the verse to life."

Observations show that the activity creates a reflective learning atmosphere. Teachers provide space for students to express their understanding, such as when a student said,

"If this verse is about gratitude, it means that we should be grateful when our parents give us food."

At SD Inpres Mannurukki, interviews with homeroom teachers revealed that limited time and resources are challenges in implementing PAI learning. The teacher said:

"We have a busy schedule, sometimes religious studies is only taught twice a week. But I still try to have meaningful interactions, at least by linking the material to daily events in the classroom."

The researcher's observations corroborate this, where although the teaching methods are still conventional, the interaction between teachers and students seems lively, especially in the question and answer session that involves comparing Islamic values with real events. In general, the results of interviews and observations show that although there are variations in learning approaches in each school, all teachers have a high commitment in shaping students' religious character through PAI learning. The main difference lies in the intensity of using innovative methods as well as institutional support in value-oriented learning and student experiences.

Discussion

Based on the results of observations and interviews in the three schools, several indicators of affective and psychomotor values were found to be the main concerns of PAI teachers. Affective values include honesty, discipline, sense of responsibility, courtesy, and social care, while psychomotor values are manifested in students' ability to perform worship such as reading the



Qur'an with tartil, performing the obligatory prayers correctly, and the practice of helping in the school environment.

At MI Madani, honesty and discipline are the two main aspects that teachers assess every day. Teachers make special notes about students' honest behavior, for example when students admit mistakes without being told, or when students are disciplined to come on time to the congregational prayer program. The observation results show that most students show honest behavior when participating in learning, although there are still some who need to be assisted.

At MIS Al-Bashirah, students' social care is the focus of habituation. Through the "One Day One Verse" program, teachers not only ask students to read and understand the meaning of the verse, but also relate the verse to students' social attitudes. For example, when reading a verse about helping, the teacher asks students to tell stories about their experiences helping friends at school or at home. The observation results show that this program is quite effective in increasing students' empathy for friends who are experiencing difficulties.

Whereas at SD Inpres Mannurukki, the most observed indicators were the practice of prayer and the procedure for reciting daily prayers. Although the time allocation for religious learning is limited, teachers take every opportunity to ensure that students are able to carry out worship correctly. Teachers make direct observations during the implementation of congregational prayers at school, and provide guidance to students whose movements are not perfect. Despite limited facilities and time, the active involvement of teachers is an important factor in achieving the habituation of religious psychomotor values.

The findings in this study show that the three schools have tried to build a religious culture through PAI learning, although with their respective approaches and limitations. The phenomenon of the gap between high academic scores and daily behavior that is not yet optimal is a reflection of the madrasah's challenge in balancing cognitive and affective-psychomotor achievements. On the one hand, value-based programs such as "One Day One Verse" have proven to have a positive impact in building students' religious awareness. However, on the other hand, time and resource constraints, such as those experienced by SD Inpres Mannurukki, hamper the implementation of a more thorough affective and psychomotor evaluation.

This reinforces the results of previous research by Pranajaya et al. (2023) which stated that Islamic religious education at the primary level in Indonesia still emphasizes the assessment of



cognitive aspects rather than character and religious skills. Therefore, there needs to be a systematic effort to revitalize Islamic education evaluation instruments in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah to capture the dynamics of students' character development more objectively and holistically.

The results of this study show that there is a systematic effort from educators in various basic education units to shape students' religious character through the learning approach of Islamic Religious Education. This approach not only emphasizes the cognitive aspects, but also the affective and psychomotor aspects of students, which are in line with the main goal of Islamic education, namely to form people of faith, piety, and noble character.

Contextual and Narrative Approaches in Islamic Education Learning

From the results of the research, it was found that Islamic Education teachers at MI Madani use a story and discussion approach to internalize Islamic values. The use of stories from the Qur'an and Hadith proved to be able to increase students' engagement and understanding, as seen from students' enthusiastic and reflective verbal responses. This is in line with Syaiful Bahri Djamarah's opinion that the storytelling method in religious education effectively builds students' imagination and emotional attachment to the values taught (Nurhikmah, 2024).

At MIS Al-Bashirah, the "One Day One Verse" program is a meaningful learning practice that combines memorization, reflection, and contextual application of values. This activity demonstrates a value-based learning approach that creates a religious atmosphere at school and strengthens students' character. This is in accordance with Tilaar's concept of value internalization, where values are not just taught, but lived through learning (Tamphu et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, SD Inpres Mannurukki shows limited resources and time as the main challenge. However, teachers still try to make learning contextual and interactive, which reflects the importance of the teacher's role as a facilitator of values, as affirmed by Ki Hajar Dewantara in his philosophy of education that emphasizes exemplary and personal approaches (Sumantri & Ahmad, 2019).

Teachers' Commitment and the Role of Institutional Environment

Although there are variations in approaches in each school, in general, the research found a high commitment from teachers in shaping students' religious character. The results of observations and interviews show that the success of PAI learning is greatly influenced by teachers' creativity in adapting the material to the context of students' lives as well as institutional support



for value-based programs. This corroborates Bandura's theory in *Social Learning Theory*, that value and character learning can be strengthened through observation and interaction in a supportive social environment. Institutions that are able to create a religious and participatory climate will increase the chances of students absorbing values deeply.

Relationship between PAI Learning and Thinking Ability

In the quantitative dimension, research conducted in other contexts (e.g.) in correlational studies between PAI and logical mathematical thinking ability or science comprehension), shows that the relationship is not always linear or statistically significant. Weak or insignificant correlation results (e.g. Sig. > 0.05 in the Spearman test) indicate that strengthening spiritual aspects does not automatically improve other academic cognitive aspects, although both remain important in holistic student development.

This suggests that PAI learning focuses more on the moral and spiritual dimensions, which may not directly correlate with academic achievement in exact subjects. However, the values instilled through PAI can be an important foundation in shaping students' scientific attitudes and learning ethics, which in turn impact long-term academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at the elementary school level has been directed not only toward the mastery of religious knowledge but also toward the internalization of Islamic values in students' daily lives. PAI teachers actively develop learning strategies that emphasize values, such as storytelling, group discussions, spiritual reflection, and contextual approaches. These strategies have proven effective in increasing student engagement, deepening understanding, and nurturing a spirit of religiosity in the learning process. Each school demonstrates distinct characteristics in applying these approaches, depending on institutional conditions and teacher creativity. MI Madani prioritizes storytelling and reflective discussion methods; MIS Al-Bashirah implements a "One Day One Verse" program that integrates memorization with contextual meaning; while SD Inpres Mannurukki focuses on building emotional closeness and interaction despite limited resources. This indicates that teacher commitment remains the key factor in the effectiveness of PAI learning, while institutional support strengthens the implementation of value-based education.



Quantitatively, although no significant correlation was found between PAI learning outcomes and students' cognitive achievements in other subjects such as mathematics or science, the religious values instilled through PAI continue to influence students' learning attitudes, discipline, and moral character. Therefore, PAI plays a crucial role in shaping students' holistic development, even if the effects are not directly reflected in academic grades.

The findings of this study have several practical implications. For curriculum developers, it is essential to design learning frameworks that integrate value-based and reflective learning models into religious education curricula. For teachers, professional development programs should focus on strengthening pedagogical creativity, especially in contextualizing Islamic teachings into students' real-life experiences. Meanwhile, policymakers are encouraged to provide institutional support and resources that enable schools to sustain innovative and character-oriented PAI programs. However, this study is limited by its qualitative scope and contextual focus on three elementary schools, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other settings. In addition, the assessment of behavioral and attitudinal outcomes relies partly on teacher observations and student self-reports, which may involve subjective interpretation. Further studies are recommended to employ longitudinal designs to examine how value-based PAI learning influences students' long-term character development. Comparative studies across different regions or religious contexts would also provide deeper insights into how cultural and institutional factors shape the effectiveness of faith-based education. In conclusion, the success of faith-based character education relies on the integration of reflective and applicative teaching methods, supportive classroom environments, and consistent reinforcement of values in daily practice. Strengthening teacher capacity and institutional collaboration will be vital to ensuring the continued development of holistic and value-driven education.

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