

A Literature Review on the Internalization of Qur'anic Values through Religious Activities in Building Students' Religious Character at Islamic Elementary Schools (MI)

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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the limited systematic research on the internalization of Qur'anic values through religious activities in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), despite its significant impact on the formation of students' religious character in Islamic elementary education. The study aims to analyze the concepts and forms of Qur'anic value internalization, to identify strategies, models, and pedagogical approaches employed in previous studies, and to examine supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the process of religious character formation in MI. This research adopts a qualitative literature review design, focusing on peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books published primarily within the last ten years. Relevant studies were selected through purposive sampling based on their alignment with Qur'anic value education, religious activities, and character development in Islamic elementary schools. Data were collected through systematic documentation and analyzed using thematic content analysis to synthesize patterns, relationships, and theoretical insights. The findings reveal that the internalization of Qur'anic values is predominantly understood as a gradual and multidimensional process integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. Religious activities—such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, memorization programs, and school culture-based practices—function as the main mediating instruments of value transmission. Habituation and teacher exemplification emerge as dominant strategies, supported by integrative and holistic school-based models. However, the process is influenced by both supporting factors, including teacher competence and family-school alignment, and inhibiting factors, such as limited instructional time and external socio-digital influences. The study concludes that effective Qur'anic value internalization requires systemic, continuous, and contextually reinforced efforts across school, family, and community settings. The findings contribute theoretically to Islamic character education literature and offer practical implications for educators and institutions in strengthening sustainable religious character formation. Future research is recommended to employ empirical and longitudinal approaches to deepen understanding of this phenomenon.

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary global educational landscape, character education has emerged as a central concern, particularly within religious-based educational institutions. Internationally, scholars have highlighted a growing moral and spiritual crisis among students, driven by rapid technological advancement, digital culture, and the erosion of ethical boundaries (Tambak et al., 2021; Warahmah et al., 2025). This condition has intensified debates regarding the effectiveness of religious education in fostering not only cognitive understanding of faith but also deep moral commitment and spiritual awareness. In many Muslim-majority and minority contexts, Qur'anic education is increasingly challenged to remain relevant and transformative amid globalization and digitalization, necessitating innovative pedagogical approaches that go beyond textual transmission to meaningful value internalization (Hairani & Conermann, 2025).

From an international perspective, several studies emphasize that the internalization of Qur'anic values must be linked to students' lived experiences and social realities. Research indicates that Islamic values, when disconnected from daily practices, tend to remain superficial and fail to shape students' moral behavior (Tambak et al., 2021). Consequently, scholars advocate for the integration of Qur'anic values into structured religious activities that cultivate ethical awareness, spiritual discipline, and moral responsibility in both physical and digital spaces (Warahmah et al., 2025). This international discourse underscores the urgency of developing comprehensive educational models that embed Qur'anic teachings into students' habitual actions and social interactions.

Similar concerns are evident in the Indonesian educational context, particularly within Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) as Islamic elementary schools responsible for laying the foundation of students' religious character. National studies reveal that although religious activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and Islamic extracurricular programs are commonly implemented, their impact on students' character development is often inconsistent (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025; Munawar, 2025). Several scholars note that religious activities in MI are sometimes treated as routine obligations rather than meaningful pedagogical instruments for value internalization, resulting in limited transformation of students' attitudes and behaviors (Alfiannor et al., 2025). These national issues highlight the need for a deeper examination of how Qur'anic values are effectively internalized through religious activities in Islamic elementary education.

In response to these global and national challenges, educational experts argue that internalization of religious values must be approached as a holistic and systematic process. The internalization process involves not only cognitive understanding but also emotional engagement, behavioral habituation, and social reinforcement (Muhaimin, 2015). Studies demonstrate that religious character formation is strengthened when Qur'anic values are consistently embedded in daily school practices, supported by teacher exemplification, institutional culture, and meaningful student participation (Amin et al., 2024; Rifqi & Supriyadi, 2024). This perspective positions religious activities as transformative learning experiences rather than ceremonial routines.

Empirical evidence further supports the role of religious activities in shaping students' religious character. Research has shown that structured religious programs, such as daily prayers, Qur'anic memorization, spiritual mentoring, and Islamic social activities, significantly contribute to students' moral development and spiritual awareness (Siregar et al., 2025; Nazmah et al., 2025). Additionally, internalization processes are reinforced through extracurricular religious activities that provide students with experiential learning opportunities to practice Islamic values in social

contexts (Munir & Saepuloh, 2025). These findings collectively affirm that religious activities function as strategic media for internalizing Qur'anic values within educational settings.

Previous studies have extensively examined internalization processes in Islamic education, yet their scope remains fragmented. Hishnuddin and Jazilurrahman (2025) highlighted the effectiveness of structured religious activities and teacher role modeling in building students' religious character within Islamic institutions. Khoirunissa and Jinan (2025) emphasized habituation as a critical mechanism for strengthening religious character through repetitive religious practices. Iswan et al. (2022) demonstrated that continuous engagement in Qur'anic-based activities positively influences moral behavior among elementary school students, while Munawar (2025) focused on the integration of Qur'an and Hadith values into daily school life at the MI level. Although these studies provide valuable insights, they primarily examine specific cases or institutional contexts, limiting their generalizability and theoretical synthesis.

Moreover, a wide range of studies has explored religious character formation from various angles, including teacher roles, extracurricular programs, and curriculum integration (Atin & Maemonah, 2024; Munawar, 2025; Alfariisy & Iswandi, 2025). However, these studies tend to operate independently, offering isolated findings without a comprehensive synthesis that maps patterns, dominant strategies, and recurring challenges across contexts. Consequently, there is a clear research gap concerning integrative literature reviews that systematically analyze how Qur'anic values are internalized through religious activities in Islamic elementary schools.

The present study addresses this gap by grounding its analysis in robust theoretical frameworks. Value Internalization Theory explains that values are internalized through stages of exposure, appreciation, and habitual practice, ultimately becoming part of an individual's character (Muhaimin, 2015; Lickona, 2016). Religious Character Education Theory emphasizes that moral and spiritual values must be embedded within the educational system, school culture, and learning experiences to foster faith-based character development (Nucci et al., 2018). Habituation Theory further asserts that repeated religious practices reinforce moral behavior and spiritual discipline through consistent behavioral patterns (Bandura, 2018). In addition, Social and Cultural Learning Theory highlights the role of social interaction, institutional culture, and collective religious practices in transmitting and sustaining values within educational environments (Vygotsky, 2018; Huda, 2020). These theoretical perspectives collectively support a comprehensive analysis of Qur'anic value internalization in MI.

Based on the synthesis of international and national issues, empirical findings, and theoretical foundations, this study focuses on conducting a literature review to examine how Qur'anic values are internalized through religious activities in building students' religious character at Islamic elementary schools. The study seeks to analyze conceptual understandings of value internalization, identify dominant religious activities and pedagogical strategies employed in MI, and examine supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the internalization process. By synthesizing research from the past decade, this study aims to contribute a theoretically grounded and empirically informed framework that advances scholarly discourse on Qur'anic value internalization and provides practical insights for improving religious character education in Islamic elementary schools.

METHODS

1. Research Type

This study employed a qualitative research approach, specifically a systematic literature review, to comprehensively examine how Qur'anic values are internalized through religious

activities in building students' religious character at Islamic elementary schools (MI). A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of meanings, concepts, patterns, and theoretical constructions derived from textual sources rather than numerical measurement. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for studies that seek to understand values, beliefs, and educational practices within specific socio-religious contexts (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, a literature review approach allows researchers to synthesize existing scholarly findings, identify conceptual patterns, and construct theoretical insights relevant to character education in Islamic schooling (Snyder, 2019).

2. Research Design

The research design adopted in this study was a systematic and thematic literature **review**. This design was chosen to ensure a structured, transparent, and replicable process of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing previous empirical and theoretical studies relevant to the research focus. A thematic review design is effective for mapping dominant themes, theoretical frameworks, and methodological trends within a body of literature (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Compared to narrative reviews, a systematic thematic approach enhances analytical rigor and minimizes researcher bias by applying explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Previous studies on Islamic character education have often relied on single-site case studies; therefore, this review design provides a broader analytical scope by integrating findings from multiple contexts and scholarly traditions, thus strengthening the analytical depth of the study (Booth et al., 2016).

3. Population and Sample (Data Sources)

The population of this study consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books published within the last ten years (2015–2024) that discuss Qur'anic values, religious activities, character education, and Islamic elementary education. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on publications that were directly relevant to the research objectives and met predetermined academic quality criteria. Purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research when the researcher seeks information-rich sources that can provide deep insights into the phenomenon under investigation (Sugiyono, 2019). Inclusion criteria included indexed journal articles (Scopus, DOAJ, SINTA) and reputable academic books written in English or Indonesian, while non-scholarly sources and publications without clear methodological grounding were excluded.

4. Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Data collection was conducted through systematic document analysis. The primary instrument was a literature review protocol developed to guide the identification, classification, and extraction of relevant information from selected sources. This protocol included bibliographic data, research objectives, theoretical frameworks, methodologies, key findings, and implications related to the internalization of Qur'anic values and religious character formation. Document analysis is a reliable qualitative data collection technique that allows researchers to interpret written materials systematically and contextually (Bowen, 2009). To enhance credibility, the selected sources were cross-checked, and thematic relevance was continuously evaluated during the review process, following established qualitative research procedures (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

5. Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using thematic analysis, involving iterative processes of coding, categorization, and theme development. Initially, relevant texts were read repeatedly to gain a holistic understanding of the content. Subsequently, open coding was applied to identify key concepts related to Qur'anic values, religious activities, and character education. These codes were then grouped into broader themes, such as value internalization mechanisms, pedagogical

strategies, and character outcomes. The thematic analysis followed the interactive model of qualitative data analysis, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). This analytical approach enabled the researcher to construct integrative interpretations and identify research gaps systematically, ensuring analytical rigor and theoretical coherence.

RESULTS

1. Conceptualization and Forms of the Internalization of Qur'anic Values through Religious Activities in Islamic Elementary Schools (MI)

a. Conceptual Foundations of Qur'anic Value Internalization

The internalization of Qur'anic values in Islamic elementary schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, MI) is widely conceptualized in the literature as a gradual, multidimensional process in which cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains intersect to shape students' religious character. Rather than being a simple cognitive acquisition of religious knowledge, value internalization involves an emotional engagement with moral imperatives drawn from the Qur'an and a consistent behavioral enactment of these imperatives within daily life. This conceptualization aligns with broader character education theories which posit that values become entrenched when learners understand religious principles, connect them with personal meaning, and enact them as habitual behavior (Lickona, 2016; Muhaimin, 2015).

Specifically, Qur'anic values are framed as *foundational moral and spiritual principles* that act as both internal standards of action and sources of identity formation for students. In many reviewed studies, these values encompass *tawhīd* (oneness of God), *'ibādah* (devotion), *taqwā* (God-consciousness), and *akhlāq* (ethical conduct), providing the moral anchor for student attitudes and conduct (Amin et al., 2024; Atin & Maemonah, 2024). This view is consistent with research demonstrating that Qur'anic value internalization transcends rote learning; it constitutes the formation of internal moral dispositions that guide thoughts, emotions, and actions in diverse contexts (Siregar et al., 2025). Such dispositions are developed not only through doctrinal learning but also through lived experience with religious practices.

A recurrent theme within the literature is that internalization is not an isolated psychological event but a socially situated process embedded within school culture, peer interaction, and teacher-student relationships. For example, Nazmah et al. (2025) found that Qur'anic values become deeply rooted in students' ethical orientations when these values are reinforced through collective and institutionalized religious routines. This finding echoes social-cultural learning perspectives that emphasize the role of interaction and environment in shaping individual character (Vygotsky, 2018; Huda, 2020).

b. Forms of Qur'anic Value Internalization through Religious Activities

Across the reviewed literature, three broad categories of religious activities emerge as principal forms of Qur'anic value internalization in MI settings: (1) *structured religious activities*, (2) *integrative classroom-based religious practices*, and (3) *school culture-based religious activities*.

First, structured religious activities serve as formal mechanisms for value transmission. Daily congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation sessions, and memorization (*ḥifẓ*) programs are consistently identified as core practices through which students repeatedly encounter, embody, and reinforce Qur'anic teachings (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025; Siregar et al., 2025). These activities function as ritualized educational experiences that not only build procedural competence (e.g., correct prayer performance or accurate recitation) but also cultivate internal moral orientations

such as discipline, sincerity, and reverence. For instance, Khoirunissa and Jinan (2025) demonstrated that habitual participation in morning prayers and Qur'anic recitations correlated with higher observable levels of religious discipline among MI students.

Second, integrative classroom-based religious practices represent pedagogical avenues through which Qur'anic values are woven into everyday lesson contexts. Moral storytelling, reflective discussions, and value-based instruction embedded within broader subject learning allow teachers to explicate Qur'anic principles in ways that resonate with students' everyday experiences. Romadhona and Supriyadi (2024) noted that when teachers scaffold classroom conversations around Qur'anic narratives, students not only comprehend religious content but also reflect on its ethical implications—thus bridging the gap between textual knowledge and moral reasoning. Similarly, Atin and Maemonah (2024) illustrated how reflective practice in *akidah akhlak* classes encouraged students to internalize values such as honesty, empathy, and patience by linking Qur'anic verses to real social behavior.

Third, school culture-based religious activities embed Qur'anic values within the very rhythms of institutional life. This includes ceremonial observances (e.g., weekly *du'a* or Islamic celebrations), codes of conduct, symbolic reminders (e.g., Qur'anic calligraphy in classrooms), and expectations of behavior that align with Islamic ethical norms. Internally, such cultural practices reinforce religious values not as discrete lessons but as *ambient moral cues* that shape everyday student behavior (Munawar, 2025; Nazmah et al., 2025). Munawar (2025) documented that MI schools with strong Qur'anic-oriented cultures saw greater alignment between students' outward behavior and internalized moral norms compared to schools with weaker religio-cultural infrastructure.

Collectively, these sources converge on the conclusion that Qur'anic value internalization in MI is not limited to isolated religious instruction but involves an ecosystem of activities that reinforce moral principles cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally. These forms function synergistically, contributing to the holistic development of students' religious character by creating multiple entry points through which Qur'anic teachings can be internalized, remembered, and lived.

2. Strategies, Models, and Approaches of Religious Activities for Internalizing Qur'anic Values in MI

a. Internalization Strategies Identified in Previous Studies

The literature consistently identifies habituation and exemplification as the two most dominant strategies employed in Islamic elementary schools to internalize Qur'anic values through religious activities. These strategies are not treated as isolated techniques but as complementary processes that reinforce one another within the daily educational environment.

Habituation strategies emphasize repetition, consistency, and continuity of religious practices as foundational mechanisms for cultivating students' religious discipline and moral awareness. Regular engagement in activities such as daily prayers, Qur'anic recitation, morning supplications, and religious routines enables students to gradually transform externally guided behaviors into internally regulated moral dispositions. Studies indicate that repeated exposure to Qur'an-based practices fosters automaticity in religious conduct, which over time becomes an integral part of students' character (Amin et al., 2024; Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025). From a psychological and educational standpoint, habituation strengthens value internalization by aligning behavior with moral cognition through sustained practice (Lickona, 2016).

In parallel, exemplary strategies position teachers as primary moral agents whose conduct functions as a living representation of Qur'anic values. Prior research emphasizes that students are

more likely to internalize values when teachers consistently model honesty, patience, humility, and devotion in their daily interactions (Atin & Maemonah, 2024; Munawar, 2025). This strategy reflects social learning theory, which asserts that moral learning occurs significantly through observation and imitation of respected figures. Within MI contexts, teacher role modeling bridges the gap between abstract Qur'anic teachings and concrete ethical behavior, making values observable, relatable, and meaningful for students.

b. Models of Religious Activity Implementation

Beyond individual strategies, the reviewed studies reveal two dominant models of implementation that structure how religious activities function as vehicles for Qur'anic value internalization: integrative models and holistic school-based models.

Integrative models embed Qur'anic values across both curricular and extracurricular activities. Rather than confining religious values to Islamic studies subjects, this model incorporates Qur'anic principles into general classroom instruction, co-curricular programs, and extracurricular religious activities. Research indicates that integration enhances coherence between knowledge and practice, allowing students to perceive Qur'anic values as relevant to all aspects of learning and social life (Romadhona & Supriyadi, 2024). This model supports the notion that values are more effectively internalized when reinforced across multiple learning contexts rather than delivered through compartmentalized instruction.

Meanwhile, holistic school-based models emphasize the synergy between religious instruction, school culture, and parental involvement. Studies highlight that Qur'anic value internalization is significantly strengthened when schools cultivate a religious ecosystem that aligns instructional content, institutional norms, and home practices (Nazmah et al., 2025; Siregar et al., 2025). In this model, religious activities are supported by consistent expectations, shared values, and collaborative reinforcement among teachers, parents, and the wider community. Such holistic implementation ensures continuity of value transmission beyond the classroom, increasing the sustainability of students' religious character development.

c. Pedagogical Approaches Supporting Qur'anic Value Internalization

The literature further demonstrates that the effectiveness of strategies and models depends heavily on the pedagogical approaches used to mediate students' engagement with religious activities. Two approaches emerge as particularly influential: experiential learning and reflective-dialogical learning.

Experiential learning approaches connect religious activities with students' lived experiences, enabling them to understand Qur'anic values as practical guides for everyday behavior. Through direct participation in worship, social charity, collaborative religious tasks, and moral action, students encounter Qur'anic teachings as lived realities rather than abstract doctrines. Empirical findings suggest that experiential engagement enhances affective involvement and deepens moral understanding, thereby accelerating the internalization process (Siregar et al., 2025; Huda, 2020). This approach aligns with constructivist perspectives, which emphasize learning through meaningful experience and active participation.

Complementing this, reflective and dialogical approaches encourage students to internalize values through understanding, interpretation, and personal meaning-making rather than memorization alone. Reflective discussions, guided questioning, and moral dialogue based on Qur'anic narratives enable students to critically engage with religious teachings and relate them to personal and social contexts. Romadhona and Supriyadi (2024) found that dialogical learning fosters deeper moral reasoning and helps students articulate the ethical significance of Qur'anic

values in their own words. This approach underscores the importance of internal reflection in transforming external norms into internal convictions.

Taken together, these strategies, models, and approaches illustrate that effective Qur'anic value internalization in MI is achieved through systematic habituation, credible moral exemplification, integrative and holistic implementation models, and pedagogies that emphasize experience and reflection. The convergence of these elements supports the formation of students' religious character in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Internalization of Qur'anic Values through Religious Activities

a. Supporting Factors in Qur'anic Value Internalization

The reviewed literature consistently indicates that the success of Qur'anic value internalization through religious activities in Islamic elementary schools is strongly influenced by several supporting factors, particularly those related to teachers, families, and the school environment.

One of the most significant supporting factors is teachers' religious competence and commitment to Islamic moral education. Studies emphasize that teachers who possess a strong understanding of Qur'anic teachings and demonstrate personal commitment to Islamic values are more effective in facilitating value internalization among students. Such teachers function not only as instructors but also as moral guides whose attitudes and behaviors embody Qur'anic principles (Atin & Maemonah, 2024; Munawar, 2025). Empirical findings suggest that students are more receptive to moral messages when they perceive consistency between teachers' verbal instruction and daily conduct, reinforcing the internalization process through credibility and trust.

Another critical factor is consistency between school religious programs and family religious practices. The literature highlights that Qur'anic values are internalized more deeply when students experience continuity between religious activities at school and religious routines at home. Nazmah et al. (2025) found that alignment between institutional religious programs and parental reinforcement strengthens students' moral habituation and reduces value dissonance. This consistency enables students to perceive Qur'anic values as universal life principles rather than situational expectations confined to the school context.

In addition, a supportive school environment that prioritizes religious character as a core educational goal significantly enhances value internalization. Schools that integrate Qur'anic values into their vision, rules, daily routines, and symbolic culture create an atmosphere conducive to moral formation. Research demonstrates that such environments function as moral ecosystems where students are continuously exposed to religious cues that shape behavior implicitly and explicitly (Amin et al., 2024; Romadhona & Supriyadi, 2024). In this context, religious activities are not isolated programs but integral components of institutional identity.

b. Inhibiting Factors Affecting the Internalization Process

Despite the presence of supportive conditions, the literature also identifies several inhibiting factors that constrain the effectiveness of Qur'anic value internalization through religious activities in MI settings.

A frequently cited challenge is limited instructional time allocated to religious activities within the formal school schedule. Several studies report that curricular demands and administrative requirements often restrict opportunities for sustained religious engagement, reducing the intensity and continuity needed for deep value internalization (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025). As a result, religious activities may become routine formalities rather than transformative educational experiences.

Another inhibiting factor involves variations in teachers' pedagogical skills and understanding of value-based education. While many teachers possess strong religious knowledge, not all are equipped with pedagogical strategies that effectively translate Qur'anic values into meaningful learning experiences. Research indicates that insufficient training in reflective, dialogical, and experiential pedagogies can lead to value transmission that emphasizes memorization over internalization (Huda, 2020; Atin & Maemonah, 2024). This limitation weakens students' ability to internalize values at the affective and behavioral levels.

Furthermore, external influences, particularly digital media exposure and unsupportive social environments, are increasingly recognized as significant barriers to religious habituation. Several studies note that uncontrolled access to digital content and peer environments that do not reinforce Islamic values can undermine the moral messages conveyed through school-based religious activities (Siregar et al., 2025). These influences often introduce competing value systems that challenge the consistency required for effective internalization.

c. Implications for the Sustainability of Religious Character Formation

The synthesis of supporting and inhibiting factors underscores that the sustainability of Qur'anic value internalization depends on continuous and coordinated reinforcement across school, family, and community contexts. The literature suggests that isolated interventions are insufficient to produce lasting character outcomes; instead, sustained moral formation requires long-term institutional commitment and cross-contextual collaboration (Nazmah et al., 2025; Lickona, 2016).

Addressing inhibiting factors necessitates adaptive strategies, such as integrating religious values across subjects, enhancing teacher professional development in value-based pedagogy, and strengthening partnerships with parents and community institutions. Institutional support in the form of policy alignment, curriculum flexibility, and moral leadership is also emphasized as essential for maintaining the effectiveness of religious character education (Muhaimin, 2015; Amin et al., 2024). Collectively, these implications highlight that Qur'anic value internalization is a dynamic and ongoing process that must be nurtured systematically to ensure the enduring formation of students' religious character.

DISCUSSION

1. Results Analysis and Interpretation

The findings of this literature review demonstrate that the internalization of Qur'anic values in Islamic elementary schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) is predominantly conceptualized as a gradual, multidimensional process integrating cognitive understanding, affective engagement, and behavioral practice. This conceptualization confirms that Qur'anic value internalization transcends the mere transmission of religious knowledge and instead constitutes a long-term process of moral formation and religious identity construction. Several studies emphasize that students internalize values more effectively when they not only comprehend Qur'anic teachings cognitively but also develop emotional attachment and repeatedly enact these teachings in daily behavior (Amin et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2025). Such findings reinforce the view that religious character formation is rooted in sustained experiential engagement rather than episodic or instruction-centered religious education.

This multidimensional interpretation directly addresses the first research objective by clarifying that Qur'anic value internalization is not an instantaneous outcome of instruction but a continuous process shaped through interaction between individual consciousness and educational environments. Prior research similarly highlights that values become internalized when learners

progress from knowing (knowing the good), to feeling (desiring the good), and finally to acting (doing the good), a sequence that aligns with contemporary character education theory and Islamic moral pedagogy (Lickona, 2016; Muhaimin, 2015). In MI contexts, this process is facilitated through repetitive religious engagement that gradually transforms external norms into internal moral commitments.

The reviewed literature further reveals that religious activities serve as the primary mediating instruments through which this multidimensional internalization process unfolds. Structured religious activities—such as daily congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation sessions, and memorization programs—are consistently identified as formal mechanisms that habituate students to Qur'anic values while simultaneously cultivating discipline, spiritual awareness, and moral sensitivity (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025; Munawar, 2025). Beyond formal rituals, classroom-integrated religious practices, including moral storytelling and reflective discussion, enable students to cognitively and emotionally connect Qur'anic teachings with real-life situations, thereby strengthening moral comprehension and relevance (Romadhona & Supriyadi, 2024).

In addition, school culture-based religious routines play a crucial role in sustaining moral consistency. Studies show that when Qur'anic values are embedded within the hidden curriculum—through institutional norms, symbols, routines, and teacher-student interactions—students encounter religious values continuously rather than sporadically (Nazmah et al., 2025). This finding suggests that value internalization is most effective when Qur'anic teachings permeate formal, informal, and hidden curricula simultaneously, creating a coherent moral learning environment. Such coherence reduces value dissonance and reinforces students' perception of Qur'anic values as guiding principles for everyday life rather than situational expectations.

With respect to the second research objective, the findings indicate that habituation and teacher exemplification are the most frequently employed and effective strategies for internalizing Qur'anic values in MI. Habituation strategies rely on repetition and consistency of religious practices to cultivate discipline and moral awareness, allowing students to internalize values through routine engagement (Amin et al., 2024). Over time, repeated practice transforms externally regulated behavior into internally motivated conduct, supporting the development of stable religious character. This finding aligns with empirical studies showing that students who regularly participate in structured religious routines exhibit stronger moral discipline and religious commitment (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025).

Complementing habituation, exemplary strategies position teachers as central moral agents whose behavior embodies Qur'anic values. The literature consistently emphasizes that teacher role modeling significantly influences students' moral learning, as students tend to emulate values demonstrated through authentic conduct rather than verbal instruction alone (Atin & Maemonah, 2024; Munawar, 2025). These strategies are further strengthened by integrative and holistic implementation models that embed Qur'anic values across curricular and extracurricular activities and align school programs with family involvement. Such models ensure continuity of value reinforcement and address the fragmentation often observed in character education initiatives (Nazmah et al., 2025; Siregar et al., 2025).

Moreover, pedagogical approaches emphasizing experiential learning and reflective dialogue are found to enhance the depth of value internalization. Experiential approaches connect religious activities with students' lived experiences, while reflective and dialogical learning encourages personal meaning-making and moral reasoning rather than rote memorization (Huda, 2020; Romadhona & Supriyadi, 2024). These approaches facilitate the internal transformation of values by engaging students' moral cognition and emotions simultaneously.

Finally, in relation to the third research objective, the findings highlight that successful Qur'anic value internalization is contingent upon supportive structural and contextual factors, including strong teacher competence, alignment between school and family religious practices, and school environments that prioritize religious character as a core educational goal. Consistency across educational contexts reinforces moral messages and enhances sustainability of character formation (Nazmah et al., 2025). Conversely, the literature identifies persistent inhibiting factors such as limited instructional time for religious activities, uneven pedagogical capacity among teachers, and external socio-digital influences that introduce competing value systems (Khoirunissa & Jinan, 2025; Siregar et al., 2025).

Taken together, these findings indicate that Qur'anic value internalization is a systemic and context-dependent process, shaped by institutional design, pedagogical quality, and broader socio-cultural dynamics. This interpretation underscores the necessity of comprehensive, integrated, and contextually responsive approaches to religious character education in MI.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies and Theoretical Perspectives

The findings of this study are largely consistent with previous research on Islamic character education and value internalization. The emphasis on cognitive–affective–behavioral integration aligns with character education theories proposed by Lickona (2016) and with Islamic educational perspectives that frame akhlāq formation as a holistic process (Muhaimin, 2015). Empirical studies conducted in MI and other Islamic school contexts similarly report that religious values become internalized when students repeatedly engage in meaningful religious practices supported by reflective understanding (Amin et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2025).

The prominence of habituation and teacher role modeling corroborates social learning theory, which posits that moral learning is strongly influenced by observation and imitation of significant others. Prior studies have also demonstrated that teacher consistency between instruction and behavior significantly enhances students' moral receptivity (Atin & Maemonah, 2024; Munawar, 2025). Likewise, the identification of integrative and holistic models resonates with research emphasizing whole-school approaches to character education, where curricular coherence and institutional culture play central roles (Nazmah et al., 2025).

However, this study extends existing literature by systematically synthesizing these findings across multiple contexts and explicitly framing them within a Qur'anic value internalization lens. While many prior studies focus on single strategies or isolated programs, the present review highlights the interdependence of strategies, models, and contextual factors, thereby offering a more comprehensive conceptualization of how Qur'anic values are internalized in MI settings.

3. Implications of the Findings

Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic education scholarship by reinforcing the view that Qur'anic value internalization is a process-oriented and contextually embedded phenomenon. By integrating character education theory with Islamic pedagogical perspectives, the findings support the development of a conceptual framework that positions religious activities as central mechanisms linking Qur'anic teachings to students' moral identity formation.

Practically, the findings imply that MI institutions should move beyond fragmented religious programming toward integrated and holistic educational designs. Teachers require continuous professional development not only in religious knowledge but also in value-based pedagogy, reflective teaching, and experiential learning strategies. Furthermore, strengthening collaboration with families and communities is essential to ensure consistency of value reinforcement across contexts, thereby enhancing the sustainability of religious character formation.

At the policy level, the findings suggest the need for curricular flexibility that allows adequate time and space for meaningful religious activities, as well as institutional support for cultivating school cultures grounded in Qur'anic values. Such implications are particularly relevant in contemporary educational environments where competing moral influences increasingly challenge traditional religious education.

4. Research Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, as a literature review, the findings are dependent on the scope, quality, and availability of existing studies, which may reflect publication biases or contextual limitations. Second, most reviewed studies are qualitative and context-specific, limiting the generalizability of conclusions across diverse educational and cultural settings. Third, variations in methodological rigor among the reviewed sources may influence the consistency of synthesized findings.

Future research is therefore encouraged to employ empirical, multi-site, and mixed-methods designs to validate and extend the conceptual insights generated by this review. Longitudinal studies examining the long-term impact of Qur'anic value internalization on students' moral development would also provide valuable contributions to the field.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalization of Qur'anic values in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah constitutes a gradual, multidimensional, and systemic process that integrates cognitive understanding, affective engagement, and behavioral practice. The findings demonstrate that religious character formation is most effectively achieved when Qur'anic values are embedded consistently across structured religious activities, classroom-based learning, and school cultural practices. Habituation and teacher exemplification emerge as the core pedagogical strategies, enabling students to translate abstract Qur'anic teachings into lived moral conduct. These strategies are further strengthened through integrative and holistic implementation models that align formal instruction with informal routines and the hidden curriculum, thereby fostering moral consistency and sustainable religious identity development. Collectively, these findings directly address the research objectives by confirming that Qur'anic value internalization is not merely instructional but experiential, relational, and contextually reinforced.

Despite these contributions, this study is subject to several limitations. As a literature-based investigation, its findings are dependent on the scope, quality, and contextual diversity of the reviewed studies, which may limit generalizability across different educational settings. Additionally, variations in institutional culture, teacher competence, and socio-digital influences are not uniformly represented in the literature, potentially constraining the depth of contextual analysis. The absence of empirical field data also restricts the ability to capture students' lived experiences and longitudinal changes in religious character development.

Future research is therefore recommended to adopt empirical and mixed-method approaches that examine Qur'anic value internalization across diverse madrasah contexts and educational levels. Longitudinal studies would be particularly valuable in tracing the sustainability of religious character formation over time, while comparative research could explore the effectiveness of different pedagogical models and institutional environments. Further investigation into the impact of digital culture and family-school collaboration on Qur'anic value internalization is also essential to address contemporary challenges and strengthen the relevance of Islamic character education in rapidly evolving socio-cultural contexts.

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