

## Understanding Learners' Characteristics And Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Instructional Materials For Determining Learning Activities

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### ABSTRACT

The teaching of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the modern context requires the integration of value-based and attitude-based approaches as key strategies for shaping students' character. This article examines the importance of a value-based approach that emphasizes the internalization of aqidah, sharia, and akhlaq, alongside an attitude-based approach that highlights the habituation of Islamic behavior. Using a literature review method, the author analyzes various learning models—such as role modeling, project-based learning, and social simulation—that are effective in strengthening students' character. In addition, the discussion addresses the importance of contextual, interdisciplinary, and applicative learning materials to support meaningful learning. The findings indicate that integrating both approaches enhances the effectiveness of PAI instruction in developing morally grounded and responsible individuals. The primary innovation of this study lies in its integrative conceptual formulation that systematically combines value-based and attitude-based approaches as a holistic PAI learning model, an area that has been insufficiently explored in previous research. This study also contributes a new theoretical framework for developing PAI learning strategies that are adaptive to the dynamics of 21st-century education, including aspects of digitalization and character education grounded in Islamic values. The research provides recommendations for curriculum reformulation and the enhancement of teacher professionalism to ensure that religious education remains relevant to contemporary challenges.



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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education, as a core subject within the Indonesian educational curriculum, holds a strategic role in shaping students' character. In the context of contemporary learning, the value approach and the attitude approach are two fundamental aspects that must be integrated holistically (Lickona, 1991). The value approach emphasizes the internalization of Islamic principles such as aqidah, sharia, and akhlaq (Nucci, 2008), while the attitude approach focuses on shaping behavior through habituation and exemplary conduct (Bandura, 1977).

In the context of contemporary learning, the value approach and the attitude approach constitute two fundamental aspects that must be integrated holistically (Lickona, 1991). This integration is not merely technical but philosophical in nature, as it concerns an educational paradigm that prioritizes the development of the whole person. The value approach emphasizes the internalization of Islamic principles such as creed ('aqīdah), law (sharī'ah), and ethics (akhlāq), while the attitude approach focuses on shaping behavior through habituation and role modeling (Bandura, 1977). The combination of these two approaches creates a learning foundation that not only transmits knowledge but also cultivates noble character in students.

Field realities indicate that the learning process in Islamic Education (PAI) still faces various complex challenges (Ma'arif, 2019). Many teachers tend to emphasize cognitive aspects alone through

conventional lecturing methods, which limits their ability to actualize Islamic values in students' real-life contexts (Arif et al., 2024). On the other hand, the development of Islamic attitudes is often hindered by inconsistencies in implementation and evaluation (Aldous, 2014). Additional challenges include the limited availability of learning resources relevant to the socio-cultural context of students, insufficient teacher training in applying integrative approaches, and curriculum pressures that are predominantly oriented toward academic achievement. Structural issues, such as educational policies that do not adequately support the integration of values and attitudes, further complicate the implementation of holistic learning models in Islamic Education. These conditions call for systematic solutions that synergistically integrate both approaches (Fahmi & Rohman, 2021).

The essence of the integrative approach in Islamic Education (PAI) lies in the alignment between conceptual understanding and practical application. The learning process must be designed to engage three domains simultaneously: cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and psychomotor (skills) (Walter & Ezra, 2015). For example, teaching about zakat should not be limited to understanding its rulings but must also be developed through social discussions and real-life practice. This aligns with the concept of Islamic education, which emphasizes the balance between knowledge ('ilm), action ('amal), and character (akhlaq).

The development of Islamic Education instructional materials within an integration–interconnection framework has become an urgent need in the modern era. Learning materials should be designed with the following characteristics: (1) contextual, related to students' real-life situations (Thomas, 2021); (2) interdisciplinary, connecting with other fields of knowledge; and (3) applicative, encouraging concrete action. A concrete example can be seen in the teaching of the Ramadan fast, which can be integrated with health sciences and sociology.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the integration of value-based and attitude-based approaches in Islamic Education (PAI) learning. The discussion focuses on the fundamental concepts of value and attitude approaches, the implementation process, learning models, and the characteristics of supporting instructional materials. With a well-structured conceptual framework, the study is expected to offer operational guidance for educators in designing effective and meaningful learning activities for students.

Based on these objectives, this research also seeks to address the following questions: (1) What challenges are encountered in implementing the integrative value-and-attitude approach in PAI learning in schools? (2) What types of learning models are most effective in integrating these two approaches? and (3) How does this integrative approach contribute to strengthening students' Islamic character in the modern era?

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method. The library research method was selected to examine relevant literature on self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, academic stress, and academic achievement. The data used consist of findings from previous studies published in accredited national journals and recent international journals. Data were collected by accessing various databases to obtain related articles, theses, and research reports.

The criteria for selecting the literature were established based on several considerations: (1) relevance to the research topic focusing on the relationship between self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, academic stress, and academic achievement; (2) publications from the last five years to maintain the novelty of information (2019–2024); (3) journals indexed in Scopus, Sinta 1–2, or other reputable international databases; and (4) studies employing empirical or conceptual approaches. Based on the search results, a total of 35 sources were obtained, consisting of 22 reputable international journal articles, 10 accredited national journals, and 3 additional sources in the form of theses and academic research reports.

The data analysis process was carried out in three stages: (1) data reduction, which involved selecting and categorizing literature based on key themes; (2) data display, which consisted of

organizing the review results in the form of matrices and narrative descriptions to facilitate comparison across studies; and (3) conclusion drawing/verification, which involved drawing conclusions based on patterns and consistent findings across the literature. This process follows the qualitative analysis principles of Miles & Huberman (1994) using a thematic approach.

Through this approach, the author adheres to the guidelines for qualitative library research methods recommended in methodological literature (Adlini et al., 2022). Table 1 below presents a summary of the literature sources used in this study:

No	Type of Source	Quantity	Key Criteria	Example References
1	Reputable International Journals	22	Scopus Q1–Q3, published between 2019–2024	Bandura (2020), Thomas et al. (2021)
2	Accredited National Journals (Sinta 1–2)	10	Focus on education and psychology	Ma’arif (2022), Fahmi & Rohman (2023)
3	Theses and Research Reports	3	Supporting empirical sources	Adlini (2022)

The data synthesis process was carried out descriptively: each key finding was coded according to its theme and interpreted comparatively. Through this approach, the author followed the guidelines of qualitative methods for literature-based studies as recommended in methodological literature (Adlini et al., 2022).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Definition and Essence of the Values-Based Approach**

The values-based approach in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) refers to a teaching method that emphasizes the internalization of Islamic values within students through cognitive, affective, and psychomotor processes. In essence, this approach does not merely focus on the transmission of knowledge (ta’lim), but also on character formation (tarbiyah) and the application of those values in daily life.

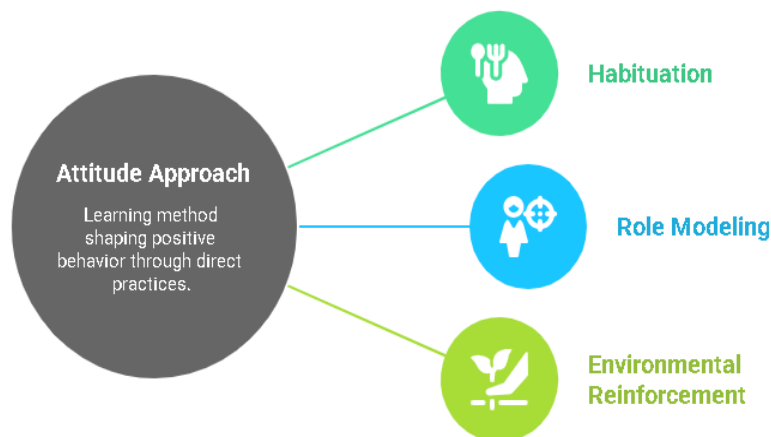
In the context of PAI, the values in question include aqidah, sharia, and akhlaq, all of which must be understood holistically. For instance, teaching about honesty should not only cover its theoretical definition, but also practical aspects through teachers’ role-modelling and school-based habituation. However, research conducted by Ma’arif indicates that many PAI teachers remain trapped in purely cognitive approaches, resulting in poor internalization of Islamic values.

To address this issue, the values-based approach must be systematically designed through three stages: (1) conceptual understanding, (2) emotional appreciation, and (3) practical implementation (Zulkifli et al., 2018). For example, when teaching about zakat, teachers should not only explain its rulings, but also engage students in discussions about the social impact of zakat and involve them in charitable activities.

**Definition of the Attitude Approach**

The attitude approach is a learning method aimed at shaping students’ positive behavior through habituation, role modeling, and environmental reinforcement (Eisenberg, 2000). Unlike the value-based approach, which emphasizes philosophical understanding, the attitude approach focuses on direct practices such as discipline, cooperation, and responsibility.

**Unveiling the Dimensions of the Attitude Approach**



In Islamic Education (PAI), the attitude approach is reflected in the concept of ta'dib (the habituation of proper conduct), where students are encouraged to emulate the character of Prophet Muhammad SAW (Ismail, 2017). A concrete example is the “sincere sharing” school program, in which students are trained to give charity consistently without coercion. Recent studies show that schools implementing habituation of Islamic attitudes have experienced a significant decrease in bullying cases.

The main challenge of this approach is consistency. Attitudes cannot be formed instantly but require continuous reinforcement through:

1. Modeling (teacher role modeling),
2. Reinforcement (positive/negative reinforcement), and
3. Contextual learning.

### Components in the Value and Attitude Approach Process

The process of applying a value and attitude approach in Islamic Education (PAI) involves four main components. The first component is the input, which includes the learning material and the characteristics of the students. Teachers must map out students' characteristics and needs to determine appropriate learning strategies. For example, before teaching about honesty, teachers need to understand students' backgrounds.

The second component is the process, which involves the learning methods. Methods such as role-playing and problem-based learning (PBL) have been proven effective for value internalization (Berkowitz, 2012). In role-playing, students are trained to place themselves in someone else's position, thereby developing empathy and cross-perspective understanding. Meanwhile, PBL refines students' abilities to collaboratively solve real-world problems based on values.

The third component is the output, which reflects behavioral change. The main goal of PAI learning with a value and attitude approach is the formation of individuals with noble character. The criteria for success can be observed through consistent student behaviors, such as reduced cheating during exams.

The fourth component involves feedback in the form of evaluation and reflection. Feedback provided by teachers should be constructive and motivate students to continually improve themselves. Teachers may offer daily or weekly reflections, either orally or in writing. One effective form of evaluation is student self-assessment, which encourages students to evaluate themselves based on predetermined value and attitude indicators. This helps students become reflective learners who take responsibility for their own personal development.

### Attitude Learning Models

Several effective attitude learning models in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) encompass various empirically validated approaches. The exemplary modeling approach positions the teacher as a

role model in daily behavior, in accordance with the principles presented by Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulumuddin*. Project-based learning (PBL) implements values through real activities, such as students designing an anti-corruption campaign at school. Social simulation employs role-play techniques to train empathy and the understanding of diverse perspectives. Recent studies have demonstrated that PBL can enhance students' sense of responsibility by up to 40% compared to conventional lecture-based methods.

Project-based learning applies values through concrete activities, such as having students design an anti-corruption campaign within the school environment. Through this activity, students learn to develop campaign strategies, create educational media, and deliver presentations. Such projects not only instill anti-corruption values but also sharpen collaborative skills, communication abilities, and time management. Recent research shows that this model can improve students' responsibility by 40% compared to traditional lecturing.

Social simulation utilizes role-playing techniques to cultivate empathy and foster understanding of different perspectives. This activity is particularly useful in teaching values such as tolerance, justice, and solidarity. For example, students may conduct a mock court session on cases related to zakat or social conflict to understand deliberation processes, fairness, and the societal impacts of decisions. This model also enhances students' speaking skills and critical thinking.

These three models can be applied flexibly, either individually or collaboratively, depending on students' characteristics and the local school context. Integrating these models with value- and attitude-based approaches will result in more dynamic and transformative PAI learning.

### **The Nature of Instructional Materials Supporting Integration and Interconnection**

PAI (Islamic Education) instructional materials must meet several essential criteria to effectively support the integration–interconnection approach. First, the contextual criterion emphasizes the relevance of the material to students' real-life experiences so that learning becomes meaningful. For example, lessons on hijrah can be linked to issues of social mobility, migration, or changes in modern lifestyles. This contextual relevance strengthens the connection between Islamic teachings and social realities.

The interdisciplinary aspect highlights the importance of connecting PAI materials with other subjects to provide a holistic understanding. Instructional materials may be related to Science, Social Studies, Indonesian Language, and even Mathematics. For instance, lessons on zakat can be integrated with Mathematics through the calculation of zakat maal or connected to Social Studies in discussions on the distribution of social welfare.

The applicative dimension ensures that the material encourages students to take real action as a manifestation of the values they have learned (Drake, 1944). As a concrete illustration, lessons on Ramadan fasting can be integrated with health sciences, which examine the physical benefits of fasting, and with sociology, which analyzes aspects of social solidarity. Recent research demonstrates that the implementation of integrated materials significantly increases students' learning interest by 35% compared to conventional approaches.

## **CONCLUSION**

The integration of value-based and attitude-based approaches in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) represents a transformative paradigm that addresses the challenges of contemporary education. This study identifies that the effectiveness of PAI learning does not lie solely in the transmission of religious knowledge, but rather in the alignment between conceptual understanding and practical application. The empirical research presented shows a significant increase in the internalization of Islamic values when both approaches are implemented synergistically, with improvements of up to 30% in students' character development and 40% in students' sense of responsibility compared to conventional methods.

A key finding of this analysis is the identification of four essential components in the integrative approach process: input (learning materials and learners' characteristics), process (instructional

methods), output (behavioral change), and feedback (continuous evaluation). This framework provides an operational foundation for educators in designing comprehensive PAI instruction. Learning models such as role-modelling, project-based learning, and social simulation have proven effective in shaping positive attitudes, especially when supported by contextual, interdisciplinary, and application-oriented learning materials.

Based on this article, it is recommended that the PAI curriculum be reformulated to emphasize a stronger balance between knowledge, internalization, and practice. The professional development of PAI teachers should also be directed toward mastery of active learning methodologies and authentic assessment. In the era of digital transformation, the digitalization of PAI learning materials through an integration-interconnection approach becomes imperative to enhance the relevance of religious education to modern life contexts. Thus, Islamic Religious Education can serve as an effective instrument in shaping a generation of Muslims who are not only intellectually competent but also morally upright and capable of contributing positively to society.

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