

CHALLENGES IN THE EVALUATION OF ISLAMIC CHARACTER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (PAI) LEARNING

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Submitted: Maret 7, 2025 Revised: Maret 7, 2025 Accepted: Maret 7, 2025 Published: Maret 7, 2025 Citation:	The evaluation of Islamic character education in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning remains a significant challenge due to difficulties in assessing students' character development comprehensively. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the challenges encountered in evaluating Islamic character education in PAI learning and identify strategic efforts to improve the evaluation process. This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with two PAI teachers and 30 students at MA Suniyyah Selo, and documentation. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that the main challenges include teachers' limited understanding of character evaluation, inadequate evaluation instruments, insufficient integration of character education into the curriculum, excessive reliance on cognitive assessment, limited parental involvement, and constraints in school resources. To address these challenges, teacher professional development, the implementation of comprehensive evaluation methods, greater collaboration with parents, and the integration of character assessment into the overall learning process are required. In conclusion, optimizing the evaluation of Islamic character education requires a holistic evaluation system that assesses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains to support the development of students' Islamic character effectively. Keywords: evaluation, Islamic character education, Islamic Religious Education (PAI), challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic character education is an integral part of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instruction, aiming to mold students into individuals of noble character who are honest, responsible, and grounded in strong religious values in their daily lives (Miftahul Huda, 2020). Lickona states that effective character education comprises three components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. From an Islamic educational perspective, these three components are integrated with moral values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), responsibility, discipline, and piety to cultivate individuals of noble character. Research conducted at SD Alam Islami eLKISI indicates that the implementation of character education at the school incorporates these three components through various strategies, including classroom instruction, role modeling, habituation, parent-teacher communication logs, briefings, and evaluation (Nur Qomariyah, 2023).

Research by Miftahul Huda (2020) indicates that the evaluation of character education within Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instruction remains dominated by the assessment of cognitive aspects, preventing the optimal measurement of students' character development. Mulyono's (2020) study also found that teachers face difficulties in developing valid and comprehensive character assessment instruments. Meanwhile, Nasrullah (2020) revealed that character evaluation is conducted primarily through written tests rather than through the observation of students' actual behavior. These findings demonstrate that the evaluation of Islamic character education still faces various challenges regarding instruments, teacher competence, and assessment techniques.

Various studies have addressed the implementation of character education in schools. However, most research has focused on program execution, while studies regarding the challenges of evaluating Islamic character education within Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instruction remain limited. Yet, evaluation is crucial for ensuring that Islamic character values genuinely develop across students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the challenges associated with evaluating Islamic character education, with the aim of providing recommendations for a more comprehensive and applicable evaluation model. (Ika Rismawati, 2023)

Character education requires continuous evaluation to assess the achievement of objectives and the effectiveness of program implementation, as well as to serve as a basis for improving education policy. Jadid and Widodo (2023) explain that evaluating character education using the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) model provides comprehensive information on program success and serves as a foundation for enhancing the quality of character education implementation in schools. Therefore, evaluation focuses not only on

outcomes but also on the process of shaping students' character.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the effectiveness of formative evaluation in enhancing students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material. The research was conducted at MA Suniyyah Selo, involving two PAI teachers and 30 students as informants. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was performed using thematic analysis techniques, comprising data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, thereby establishing a high level of credibility for the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Challenges in Evaluating Islamic Character Education in PAI Learning

The challenges in evaluating Islamic character education within Islamic Religious Education (PAI) are diverse and complex. The following are some of the main challenges faced in evaluating Islamic character education in PAI learning (Prasyetyo, 2021):

A. Lack of Teacher Understanding about Character Evaluation

Many teachers do not fully understand the importance of character evaluation in PAI learning. Character evaluation involves not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor domains. Therefore, many teachers struggle to design and implement appropriate evaluations to assess students' character development holistically.

B. Limited Evaluation Models

Character evaluation often remains focused on cognitive assessments, such as written exams or tests, which are not sufficiently effective in measuring changes or development in students' character. More comprehensive evaluation models, such as observation, interviews, or portfolios, are still rarely implemented in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

C. Lack of Integration with Curriculum

Islamic character education should be thoroughly integrated into all aspects of PAI learning. However, in practice, character education is often considered a separate subject or an extracurricular activity rather than an integral part of PAI learning itself.

D. Dependence on Quantitative Assessment

Many schools still overly rely on quantitative assessments, such as exam scores or grades, to evaluate the success of character education. These assessments do not reflect deep changes in students' attitudes or behaviors and cannot precisely measure character development in daily life.

E. Minimal Role of Parents and Community

Islamic character education is not only the responsibility of schools but also parents and the community. However, parents and the community are often less involved in supporting students' character education. Collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to building strong character in students.

F. Limited Resources and Infrastructure

Many schools lack sufficient resources or infrastructure to support character education evaluation. Existing facilities are often inadequate to carry out effective evaluation activities, such as teacher training or the creation of quality character evaluation materials.

G. Evaluation Culture Still Focused on Academics

In many educational systems, there is a tendency to emphasize academic achievement in evaluation, while character aspects are often neglected. Islamic character education must be an inseparable part of PAI learning and be assessed in ways aligned with Islamic values.

2. Strategies to Overcome These Challenges to Achieve Optimal Results

To overcome the challenges in evaluating Islamic character education in PAI learning, several strategic steps can be taken to achieve optimal results. The following are recommended approaches (Fitriani Sari, 2020):

A. Enhancing Teacher Understanding of Character Evaluation

- 1) *Training and Workshops for Teachers*: Providing training and workshops focused on the importance of character evaluation in PAI education is crucial. Teachers need to understand that character

evaluation is not only about knowledge but also about changes in attitudes, behavior, and students' spiritual values. Such training can include holistic evaluation methods like direct observation, self-assessment, and peer assessment.

- 2) *Continuous Socialization and Discussion*: Organizing regular evaluation forums or discussions among teachers to share experiences and strategies for integrating character evaluation into PAI learning.

B. Implementing Comprehensive Evaluation Models

- 1) *Using Various Assessment Instruments*: To assess student character more comprehensively, evaluations should involve diverse instruments including daily behavior observations, student self-assessment, peer assessments, and self-reflection. The use of student character portfolios can also help document long-term character changes.
- 2) *Continuous Character Development Assessment*: Instead of only assessing at the end of a semester or academic year, character evaluation should be conducted continuously to track students' character development in various contexts.

C. Integrating Character Education into Curriculum

- 1) *Developing an Integrated Curriculum*: Islamic character education must be systematically integrated into every subject, not limited to PAI alone. Teachers should link Islamic values with every learning material so that students can understand and apply character values across life domains.
- 2) *Making Character Education Part of Daily Learning*: Besides teaching character values in class, teachers should emphasize character application outside the classroom, such as in extracurricular activities, group assignments, and social events involving students.

D. Reducing Dependence on Quantitative Assessments

- 1) *Developing Qualitative Assessments*: Besides quantitative assessments like exams, character education evaluation should involve more qualitative assessments, such as project-based tasks or portfolios measuring students' abilities to apply character values in real-life situations.
- 2) *Providing Constructive Feedback*: Constructive feedback is essential in character evaluation. Teachers need to give feedback aimed at

character formation, for example by suggesting actions or attitude changes that students should further develop.

E. Involving Parents and Community

- 1) *Collaboration with Parents*: To support character evaluation, collaboration with parents is vital. Parents can be involved through character development reports or participation in character evaluation activities involving families.
- 2) *Community as Partners in Character Education*: Communities should also be involved in supporting students' character education, through cooperation programs between schools and communities or by modeling behaviors aligned with Islamic values.

F. Improving Resources and Infrastructure

- 1) *Enhancing Human Resources (HR)*: Schools need to improve the quality of teaching staff through regular training in character education evaluation and provide incentives to teachers who effectively apply evaluation methods.
- 2) *Developing Learning Infrastructure*: Develop facilities supporting character evaluation, such as providing diverse evaluation materials, observation tools, or technology applications to help document and assess student character.

G. Changing the School Evaluation Culture

- 1) *Exploring Student Potential in Various Aspects*: Schools should create a culture that not only prioritizes academic achievement but also character development. Schools can conduct activities assessing students not only academically but also regarding behavior, attitudes, and social values.
- 2) *Creating an Environment that Encourages Character Formation*: The school environment must foster an atmosphere supporting character development by providing structured character-building programs, facilitating social activities, and setting good examples in interactions among teachers, students, and the community.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of Islamic character education in PAI learning faces various challenges, such as limited teacher understanding of character evaluation, restricted evaluation models, and insufficient integration with the curriculum. To overcome these challenges, it is important to improve teacher understanding through training, apply more comprehensive evaluation models, and integrate character education into all aspects of learning. Additionally, reducing dependence on quantitative assessments, involving parents and the community, and enhancing resources and infrastructure are crucial steps to achieve optimal results in shaping student character. By creating a more holistic evaluation culture, Islamic character education can be more effective in forming attitudes, behaviors, and values in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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