

Integrating Islamic Values into Learning Assessment Models: A Qualitative Study of Islamic Religious Education Practice at a Junior Secondary School

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Abstrak

Assessment in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has long been dominated by cognitive measurement, often neglecting the affective and psychomotor dimensions essential to holistic character formation. This study investigates the integration of Islamic values into IRE learning assessment models, examining its implementation forms, pedagogical strategies, outcomes, and the challenges faced by teachers. A descriptive qualitative design was employed, with a single IRE teacher at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura selected purposively as the primary informant. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observation, and document analysis, and were analyzed using the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Findings indicate that Islamic value integration in assessment has been implemented comprehensively across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Cognitively, assessment centers on Qur'anic verse memorization and comprehension; affectively, it addresses students' understanding and spiritual disposition; and psychomotorically, it evaluates classroom participation and the correctness of Qur'anic recitation. Assessment instruments include observational rubrics for daily worship practices, peer evaluation, and teacher observation across recurring assessment events including daily quizzes, midterm, and final examinations. Pedagogical strategies emphasize literacy-based learning, active discussion, and compassionate teacher feedback. The integration of Islamic values has yielded positive effects on student learning motivation and character formation, though results are gradual rather than immediate. The primary challenge identified is the unfiltered use of digital devices and social media, addressed through intensive personal guidance and school-parent collaboration.

The study concludes that integrating Islamic values into learning assessment constitutes an effective strategy for realizing holistic education oriented toward the formation of morally grounded, academically capable Islamic character.

Keywords: Islamic values integration, learning assessment, Islamic religious education, character formation, holistic education

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Introduction

The structural blueprint of Indonesian national education explicitly mandates a symbiotic relationship between secular intelligence and spiritual maturity. As articulated in the amended Article 31, Paragraph 3 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the state is obligated to organize a national education system designed to heighten faith, piety, and noble character in the pursuit of intellectual enlightenment. This is further reinforced by Paragraph 5 of the same article, which commands the government to advance science and technology while upholding religious values and national unity for the advancement of civilization and human welfare (Muspiroh, 2014).

This constitutional mandate clearly requires the integration of religious values into daily classroom practices. It underscores that public schooling should go beyond technical training to foster spiritually mature citizens. In reality, however, contemporary schooling remains heavily skewed toward mechanical conceptualization, abstract formulas, and theoretical memorization. General secular subjects dominate school timetables, relegating religious education to a minimal, isolated timeframe. This structural secularization risks producing highly intelligent students who lack moral and ethical foundations. Without integrating religious values into the core of schooling, fostering faith, piety, and noble character becomes nearly impossible.

Education must serve as a strategic engine for holistic human development. In national curricula, the instructional process is designed to cultivate student potential across three integrated domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Learning assessment serves as a vital anchor within this triad, providing the baseline metrics needed to evaluate instructional efficacy and guide curriculum adjustments (Ramadhani et al., 2020).

Regrettably, conventional assessment practices in schools focus almost exclusively on quantitative cognitive metrics, such as standardized written examinations and GPA tracking. This heavily technocratic, numeric approach sidelines the ethical development and behavioral growth of learners (Uri & Saputra, 2025). Consequently, these assessment practices fail to reflect the broader educational goal of cultivating well-rounded individuals.

From an Islamic educational standpoint, learning assessment should measure both content retention and the internalisation of Islamic values. Core values like honesty (*amanah*), responsibility, justice, self-discipline, and piety (*taqwa*) form the bedrock of Muslim character. Integrating these principles into learning assessment models is essential to keep the evaluation process aligned with the ultimate aims of Islamic education (Masyhudi & Nugraha, 2020).

This integration acts as a guided journey led by educators who serve as moral role models. By weaving religious, cultural, and ethical standards into the curriculum, schools can help students build spiritual intelligence, emotional self-regulation, and the civic skills needed

to serve society (Rahman & Pewangi, 2024). In practice, an integrated assessment model must be comprehensive, fair, objective, and inherently character-driven. Evaluation should move away from punitive testing and toward a model of educative assessment that inspires students to align their conduct with Islamic teachings (Astuti, 2025).

The theoretical imperative for integrating Islamic values across diverse disciplines—including the natural sciences—seeks to establish a cohesive framework for educational goals. As outlined by Ali and Luluk (2004, cited in Muspiroh, 2014), this integrative approach aims to: (1) Deepen students' spiritual insights and build a rational understanding of Islam within broader real-world contexts, particularly regarding natural phenomena (*ayat-ayat kauniyah*). (2) Equip learners with practical scientific literacy. (3) Foster an appreciation for the historical and comparative contributions of Islamic knowledge traditions. (4) Refine emotional responses through imaginative learning, helping students discern moral boundaries. (5) Nurture critical, logical thinking grounded in scientific hypotheses and sound Islamic concepts.

In Islamic education, learning objectives balance intellectual growth with character development. Noble character, honesty, accountability, and justice must manifest in students' daily conduct rather than just on written tests (Nurfadila et al., 2024). Schools serve as primary spaces for this internalisation. Through interactions among teachers, students, the curriculum, and the school culture, Islamic values can be taught systematically. Developing and implementing integrated assessment models is critical to transforming evaluation from a mere grading system into a tool for character cultivation (Mustafida, 2020). This study addresses this need by analyzing how Islamic values are integrated into the learning assessment models at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura.

Method

This study utilizes a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to understand how Islamic values are integrated into junior high school learning assessment models. This design allows for a detailed exploration of the phenomenon based on the real-world experiences and insights of practitioners within their institutional settings.

The primary informant for this study was Mrs. Umi Nila, an Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura. She was selected via purposive sampling because of her direct responsibility for designing, implementing, and managing student learning assessments at the school.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, structured classroom observations, and document analysis. The primary focus was mapping real-world evaluation practices and tracking how core Islamic values—such as integrity, accountability, justice, and respect—are woven into assessment tools.

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using the interactive model of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcriptions and field notes were coded to identify recurring themes regarding value-driven assessment. Data trustworthiness was maintained through source triangulation and contextual member-checking to ensure an accurate depiction of the field realities.

Result

Background and Rationale for Integrating Islamic Values

Integrating Islamic values into the curriculum means structuring the educational environment to nurture spiritual intelligence, moral character, and ethical behavior (Ramadhani et al., 2020). This task extends beyond the religious education department; it is a collective responsibility for the entire school community.

During an interview on December 9, 2025, Mrs. Umi Nila discussed her use of peer tutoring methods and shared her perspective on the necessity of this integration:

"Islamic values must be actively integrated because human systems are inherently limited. In an Islamic assessment framework, we must recognize that a student's spiritual understanding and faith fluctuate. When their faith is high, devotion and daily duties feel light and joyful; conversely, when their faith drops, even basic responsibilities can feel like heavy burdens."

She further expanded on how educators understand this integrative responsibility:

"Because Islam is often inherited from the family, many children follow its practices without fully understanding the underlying reasons. Therefore, foundational legal principles, moral norms, and ethical standards must be taught and reinforced right from the beginning."

The field data show that integrating Islamic values into evaluation models is viewed as a vital educational need rather than just a formal requirement. The informant emphasized that without a spiritual framework, standard testing remains sterile and technical. Weaving these values into the evaluation process brings spiritual meaning to assessment.

These findings indicate that value-integrated assessment can support students' spiritual resilience. When evaluations consider faith, character, and daily attitudes alongside academic scores, the process helps cultivate students who are both academically capable and morally grounded.

Planning and Designing the Evaluation Model

Evaluation planning serves as the foundation for the entire assessment process. Theoretically, it requires systematically defining evaluation goals, choosing target competencies, creating assessment tools, and setting clear criteria to measure learning outcomes. Properly planned assessments produce valid, objective data that teachers can use to improve their instructional strategies (Mahadi, 2022).

At the junior secondary level, such as at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura, evaluation planning must align national benchmarks with the developmental needs of adolescents. Consequently, assessments are designed to track both academic progress and character growth. Mrs. Umi Nila explained her planning approach during our interview:

"Our baseline standard requires students to understand and willingly perform mandatory worship, such as the daily prayers and Quranic recitation. We track this using structured observation sheets where compliance is checked and omissions are crossed out. Performance is then graded as A for active, B for moderate, and C for lacking. To reinforce these habits, we collaborate closely with parents."

She also detailed the specific assessment instruments used in her classes:

"Attitude and character are evaluated through daily classroom habits, including participating in Dhuha prayers, reciting opening supplications, and reading Quranic verses before lessons begin. Our tools combine individual self-assessment, peer evaluation, and teacher observations of student participation. We use structured rubrics aligned with our instructional topics. For the month of Ramadan, we maintain a uniform, consistent rubric across all grade levels from year 7 through year 9."

The interview data demonstrate that the school's baseline evaluation metrics balance cognitive knowledge with religious practice. Student compliance in mandatory worship is

monitored using observational checklists. These metrics are then translated into qualitative marks: active (A), moderate (B), or lacking (C).

Furthermore, the school recognizes that character development requires consistency across different environments. Partnering with parents helps ensure that the religious habits formed at school are supported at home, making the internalisation of values more effective.

The evaluation toolkit includes multiple assessment methods, such as self-appraisals, peer evaluations, and direct teacher monitoring during daily activities. For cognitive testing, written exams are paired with explicit rubrics customized to the material. During Ramadan, a standardized rubric is used across grades 7, 8, and 9, demonstrating a systematic approach to character-based evaluation.

Classroom Implementation

Integrating Islamic values into classroom assessment means embedding ethical principles directly into grading practices. This approach evaluates affective character development—such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and fairness—alongside cognitive performance (Ramadhani et al., 2020). Teachers must use a variety of tools, including behavioral logs, process assessments, and continuous tracking of religious habits (Marhani et al., 2025).

In practice, this value-based evaluation occurs naturally throughout daily school routines, both inside and outside the classroom. It involves self-reflection, peer check-ins, and communication with the home, turning assessment into a supportive tool for moral growth. Mrs. Umi Nila described how this works in practice:

"Our evaluation model spans three distinct domains. For the cognitive domain, we assess students' understanding of scriptural foundations, such as verse memorization and textual comprehension. The affective domain focuses on their moral awareness and structural understanding of values. The psychomotor domain evaluates classroom engagement, task completion, and their technical accuracy in Quranic recitation according to tajwid rules."

She added:

"This integration occurs continuously. It is built into formal final exams (UAS), midterm exams (UTS), and daily quizzes (UH), as well as our standard lesson cycles. We track Islamic character development by observing daily behavior, diligence, and respect for school rules."

The data indicate that assessment at the school covers the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Cognitive testing focuses on scriptural literacy and memorization. Affective grading evaluates students' moral comprehension, while psychomotor assessment tracks classroom participation, assignments, and recitation skills.

This value-driven assessment is embedded into both formal examination periods (UH, UTS, UAS) and daily lessons. Character growth is evaluated through regular observation of student diligence and compliance with rules, ensuring that assessment supports overall character development.

Pedagogical Strategies and Methods

Theologically, applying Islamic values to assessment requires treating evaluation as part of the student's character development rather than just a grading tool (Zubair et al., 2024). This shifts the focus from test scores to behavioral growth during the learning process.

The methods used include behavioral observations, process tracking, self-assessments, and religious habituation. Observations catch spontaneous behavior, process tracking monitors

attitude consistency, self and peer reflections encourage honesty, and daily habits reinforce values over time (Mahadi, 2022). Mrs. Umi Nila described her specific strategies:

"We use a literacy-based strategy. I introduce a topic briefly, and then assign students targeted questions to investigate using their textbooks. They discuss their findings in small peer groups and present their conclusions to the class. Afterward, I provide feedback using a compassionate, highly personal approach. I encourage questions and respond with logical, clear explanations tailored to their current understanding."

The data show that the teacher uses literacy-focused tasks and peer discussions to keep students engaged. Students research topics, collaborate with peers, and present their work, which helps build accountability and academic honesty.

The teacher's feedback style emphasizes compassion and open communication. By tailoring explanations to students' current developmental levels and answering questions logically, the teacher models Islamic values like patience, care, and fairness during the evaluation process.

Outcomes and Evaluation of the Integrated Framework

Integrating Islamic values into the classroom can improve academic engagement and support student character development. Weaving religious principles into standard subjects helps students develop values like honesty, responsibility, and social awareness over time (Taufiq & Ramadhani, 2025).

Evaluating this integrated framework allows teachers to reflect on and refine their instructional strategies while providing continuous guidance to students. This approach helps maintain a balance between intellectual growth and spiritual maturity (Uri & Saputra, 2025). Mrs. Umi Nila shared the outcomes observed at her school:

"Integrating these values has noticeably improved student motivation; students show greater enthusiasm once they truly understand the deeper meaning of the material. We measure success by whether they apply good character in daily life, alongside their memorization and academic progress. Of course, this kind of transformation does not happen overnight."

The field data show that this value-driven approach has a positive effect on student motivation. When students see the deeper relevance of their lessons, they participate more actively in class.

Program success is measured by how well students apply good character, retain knowledge, and demonstrate spiritual growth. The informant noted that character development is a gradual process that requires steady, long-term guidance.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Implementing an integrated assessment model presents challenges, including varying student backgrounds, differing levels of religious literacy, and uneven motivation. Additionally, limited instructional time and the pressure to meet general academic standards can make it difficult to prioritize character-based evaluation (Mahadi, 2022). Teachers may also struggle to find objective tools to measure behavioral growth in large classrooms.

To address these hurdles, teachers can use flexible, process-oriented evaluations like continuous observation and daily habit tracking. Collaboration among teachers, administrators, and parents is also essential to reinforce these values outside of school. At SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura, the primary challenge relates to modern technology:

"A major challenge today is unrestricted smartphone use among students. Without proper boundaries, children are exposed to age-inappropriate content, which can lead

to misinformation on social media. To manage this, we work to build their self-awareness regarding their personal responsibilities as young Muslims. We combine this with intensive personal guidance and regular communication with parents."

The data indicate that unmonitored digital device usage is a significant challenge to character education. Broad access to social media can expose students to negative influences that conflict with the values taught at school.

In response, the teacher uses personal guidance to help students build digital literacy and self-regulation based on Islamic ethics. This effort is supported by a partnership with parents, creating a consistent network between home and school to help navigate digital challenges.

Discussion

Implementation of the Integrated Assessment Model

The assessment practices at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura evaluate the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This comprehensive approach aligns with Ramadhani et al. (2020), who state that value-based evaluation should measure both academic progress and character growth.

Cognitive testing via verse memorization, affective tracking of moral awareness, and psychomotor grading of recitation skills matches the model described by Marhani et al. (2025). They emphasize using diverse assessment tools to capture a student's full development. Building these evaluations into regular school milestones (daily evaluation, mid-semester test, final-semester test) shows that character assessment works best as a continuous practice rather than an occasional event.

Pedagogical Strategies and Evaluation Methods

The instructional strategies used by the teacher focus on active literacy, peer collaboration, and supportive feedback. This approach aligns with Zubair et al. (2024), who argue that assessment in Islamic education should actively support character development rather than just assign grades.

Using textbook research and peer presentations encourages students to take responsibility for their learning while practicing academic honesty. This confirms the views of Mahadi (2022), who notes that process-oriented evaluation and regular religious habits help internalise values effectively. Furthermore, providing compassionate, clear feedback ensures that the evaluation process itself reflects Islamic values like patience and fairness.

Outcomes and Framework Efficacy

The integration of Islamic values shows a positive relationship with student motivation and character development. Students show greater interest in their coursework when they understand its broader ethical context. This supports the findings of Taufiq and Ramadhani (2025), who note that value-integrated education encourages well-rounded student development.

Using daily behavior and moral growth as success metrics aligns with Uri and Saputra (2025), who view value-based assessment as a tool for ongoing reflection and improvement. The gradual nature of these changes reinforces the idea that character education requires long-term commitment and consistency.

Technological Challenges and Solutions

The primary challenge identified in this study is the impact of unmonitored digital media on students. This finding matches Mahadi (2022), who identifies rapid technological shifts as a major challenge for contemporary character education.

The school's response—combining personal mentorship with parent collaboration—offers a practical way to address these challenges. This strategy aligns with previous research highlighting that character education is most effective when supported by both the school and the home. The teacher's active role and the partnership with parents remain key to helping students navigate the digital landscape safely.

Conclusion

The integration of Islamic values into the learning assessment model at SMP Negeri 02 Kartasura covers the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The evaluation system functions as both an academic measure and a tool to support continuous character growth. By utilizing literacy assignments, peer group discussions, and supportive teacher feedback, the school weaves ethical values directly into the learning process. This approach helps foster accountability, honesty, and discipline among students.

While character development is a gradual process, this value-integrated model has shown positive effects on student motivation and behavior. The challenges introduced by unmonitored digital devices are managed through personal guidance and active partnerships with parents. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that integrating Islamic values into learning assessments is an effective way to provide a balanced education that supports both academic ability and moral character.

Conflict of interests

The author(s) declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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