

NURTURING RELIGIOUS AND MORAL VALUES AT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Hernik Farisia

State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

E-mail: hernikfarisia@uinsby.ac.id

Abstract: This study aims to describe the process of nurturing religious and moral values to children at early childhood education since the development of this aspect is urgent to establish the laying foundation of students' character in the next future. This research is a qualitative descriptive study which uses participative observation, in-depth-interview, and documentation to conduct the data. Meanwhile, the data analyses techniques used Miles & Huberman concept. The findings showed that nurturing religious and moral values within children at Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten have been cultivated through scientific-based learning and indirect learning through morning activities. In the process of scientific-based learning, the teachers integrated the latest curriculum, al-Islam curriculum, and *Kemuhammadiyah* with such materials that are faithful, worship, and morals. Based on the students' performance, it is known that almost students achieved very good growth related to spiritual attitude. The last part of the article identifies the factor that supports students in enhancing religious and moral values that is the curriculum framework that accommodates religious classroom environment design and the role of teachers and principals. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors of internalizing religious and moral values to early childhood were teachers got difficulties in integrating the core material of Curriculum 2013, al-Islam, and specific content based on the school affiliated to such as *Kemuhammadiyah*.

Keywords: Nurturing Religious and Moral Values, Scientific-based Learning, BCCT Model.

Introduction

Early childhood is an important and fundamental early period in the process of growth and development of human life because all the potential of children develops very quickly at that age. Moreover, an early childhood education preferably takes a significant role in nurturing religious values and lifelong skills for children in the next future.¹ This period is often referred to as the golden age (golden age). At this time, children have excellent learning abilities because the child's brain is evolving hastily. As the results of Benjamin S. Bloom's research, it was mentioned that in the first four years of birth, the brain develops very rapidly at 50%. The other 30% develops in the following year (ages 4-8 years), and the rest develops in the next ten years.² The results of this study indicate that the things a person learns throughout his life are built on this basis, particularly at the age of 0-8 years. Early childhood is an individual who is undergoing a process of growth and development that is very rapid. It can even be said as a leap of development.³

Therefore, early childhood education must be optimized through appropriate parenting and education patterns. At the Early Childhood Education level, there are six aspects of development that are built as the main pillars of spiritual and moral development, cognitive development, language development, physical-motor development, social-emotional development, art and creativity. In Chapter I, article 1, paragraph 14 of the National Education System Law, it is stressed that early childhood education is a coaching effort aims at children from birth until the age of 6 years which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to assist the physical and spiritual growth and development of children in order to have the readiness to attend the further education (Law Number 20, 2003). To achieve this goal, a curriculum is needed as one of the determining factors that encourage students' growth and development optimally. In the National Education System Law, it is stated that the curriculum

¹ Hernik Farisia and Mukhlisah, "Principal's Leadership to Improve the Quality of Early Childhood Education in the 4.0 Era," in *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Education Innovation (ICEI 2019)* (Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Education Innovation (ICEI 2019), Surabaya, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2019), 1, <https://doi.org/10.2991/icei-19.2019.4>.

² Ahmad Susanto, *Perkembangan Anak Usia Dini: Pengantar Dari Berbagai Aspeknya* (Kencana Pranada Media, 2011), 34.

³ Mulyasa, *Manajemen PAUD* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012), 16.

is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the methods used to guide the implementation of learning activities to achieve certain educational goals.

Align with one of the goals of early childhood education that puts forward the formation of attitudes. The 2013 curriculum is present as a guide for the development of early childhood education. The 2013 curriculum is a competency-based curriculum, where the learning process carried out is directed towards the achievement of spiritual attitude competencies, social attitudes, knowledge, and skills that involve six aspects of integrated development for early childhood development. Therefore, learning at early childhood education is carried out with an integrated learning model based on a scientific approach. Learning with a scientific approach is learning that adopts scientific steps in building knowledge through scientific methods. This conception, as stated by Kurniasih approves that the scientific approach includes: observing, questioning, experiencing, associating, and communicating.⁴ Through scientific-based learning, students are expected to have critical, constructive, and innovative thinking skills.

These thinking skills are very important in developing better human resources which have attitude competence, knowledge, and skills. At each level of education, the development of these three aspects has a different composition. The earlier the level of education is, the greater the composition of attitude competency development is. This is because early childhood education is expected to establish and as the basis to shape the attitudes and students' character. Unfortunately, in early childhood learning, teachers often only convey knowledge so that the cognitive aspects of students develop more, while their affective and psychomotor abilities are often forgotten. As a matter of fact, the affective aspect is an aspect that must be widely developed at Early Childhood Education level as the most basic level of education.

Its implementation in the 2013 curriculum for early childhood, building children's character is held by sharpening attitudes through developing the spiritual attitude and social attitude competencies. The development of attitude competence is not only a nurturant effect from the development of knowledge and skills but a component that

⁴ Asih Kurniasih Berlin Sani, *Implementasi Kurikulum 2013 Konsep dan Penerapan* (Surabaya: Kata Pena, 2014), 141.

must be planned integratively with the other competences. The problem is, the implementation of the scientific approach in religious learning at early childhood education is difficulty confronted, for example in observing activities related to the spiritual aspect that is understanding and accepting their religion and its values, the teacher still has difficulty in finding ways that help students understand these competencies because the material is categorized as metaphysical-eschatological matters. Students also have difficulty in understanding the material that is supernatural, for example, about angels, the afterlife, heaven or hell, God's power, and others.⁵ Moreover, at the early childhood education level, children are at the stage of concrete pre-operational thinking skills. At this stage, children begin to think with a different perspective from other people around them, so they appear to be inclined to argue and ask lots of questions. The children develop language and drawing skills, but it is more ego-centrism, and they are not able to understand abstract reasoning.⁶

Moreover, such materials in religious education is not only in the form of physical-material objects.⁷ In this regard, teachers are then required to have creativity in designing scientific-based activities to foster students' understanding, so that the development of religious and moral values optimally achieved and internalized in their daily lives properly. Through learning activities while playing, direct demonstrations and concrete examples, children will learn easily. In addition, critical thinking skills are needed to help children receive material that is not in the form of physical-material.

Therefore, it is necessary to choose the right learning model, which scientific approach based so that the learning objectives can be achieved and the students' reasoning ability is increasingly developed through the learning process. The scientific approach is considered as an effective way in cultivating students' creativity, imagination, and ideas to develop the aspect of religious and moral values, motoric, cognitive, language, social-emotional, art and creativity.⁸ Based on the pre-survey data, it was found that a centre learning model-sentra

⁵ Teachers at Aisyiyah Kindergarden 13, The results of interviews about material for early childhood, September 18, 2018.

⁶ Ahmad Susanto, *Perkembangan Anak Usia Dini: Pengantar Dari Berbagai Aspeknya*, 49.

⁷ Rosidin, *Epistemology of Islamic Education* (Yogyakarta: Diandra Kreatif, 2013), 29.

⁸ Erni Munastiwi, "Manajemen Ekstrakurikuler Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD)," *MANAGERIA: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (January 25, 2019): 45, <https://doi.org/10.14421/manageria.2018.32-09>.

model is the most widely applied learning model at early childhood education in which a scientific approach is eased to integrate. *Sentra* is a learning model adapted from the BCCT (Beyond Centre and Circle Time) learning model developed by Phamela Phelp in Florida.⁹ This model represents how learning activities are carried out in centres where the educator acts as a motivator and facilitator who provides scaffolding.¹⁰ As a facilitator, educators have an important role in facilitating students to learn (facilitating learning) in a fun, happy, full of enthusiasm, confident, and enthusiastic atmosphere. In this way, students are more motivated in learning so that learning objectives can be achieved. In addition, the term scaffolding in the learning centre model shows the stages in learning, namely the scaffolding before playing, scaffolding when playing, and scaffolding after playing. This step is intended to facilitate the stages of the implementation of learning in order to be more systematic and help children think coherently and logically.

Sentra model has two characteristics, namely activity and experience. As mentioned by al-Tabany that Beyond Centre and Circle Time has two main characteristics; activities and experiences which facilitate meaningful learning that helps develop children's critical thinking in dealing with social affairs such as cooperation, tolerance, communication, and assertiveness to different.¹¹ In addition, the centre learning model has special characteristics, which are; 1) giving a scaffolding to build concepts, rules, ideas, and knowledge of children, as well as the concepts of density and intensity of playing, 2) children learn in playing-centre and in a circle.¹² Through this learning model, children will play motor-sensory, capture stimuli through the use of the five senses, play roles to help present concepts that they have, and play constructive, namely the

⁹ Farida Yusuf, *Pedoman Pengelolaan Kelas Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* (Jakarta: Kemendikbud, 2015), 12.

¹⁰ Rachma Hasibuan, *Materi Workshop Implementasi Kurikulum 2013 PAUD* (Surabaya: PPS UNESA, 2015), 34.

¹¹ Zulkipli Lessy, Amin Sabi'ati, "Thematic-Integrative Learning with the Beyond Centres and Circle Time Approach at Tunas Harapan Preschool, Salatiga Central Java," No. 1 January 2018, *Asia Pacific Journal of Research*, Vol. 12 (n.d.): 41, <http://dx.doi.org/10.17206/apjrece.2018.12.1.39>.

¹² Ayu Asmah and Rina Wijayanti, "Pendampingan Penerapan Model Pembelajaran *Sentra* Di Gugus Paud Iii Kecamatan Pakisaji Kabupaten Malang," *JAPI (Jurnal Akses Pengabdian Indonesia)* 3, no. 1 (June 1, 2018): 42, <https://doi.org/10.33366/japi.v3i1.837>.

ability to realize thoughts, ideas, and ideas in a real work. All those activities are aligned with the concept of a scientific approach which focused on developing students' critical thinking so that they are actively able to construct and understand a concept.

In relation to learning material, aspects of the development of moral and religious values, the centre model, especially the centres of faith and piety (*Iman dan taqwa*), showed positive contributions in shaping students' character as the results of Ar-Raisul Karama Arifin's research in his article entitled *The Role of Early Childhood Educators in Implementing Character Education through the Beyond Centre and Circle Time (BCCT)*.¹³ The results of this study indicated that educators' strategy in teaching has an effective role in implementing character education in early childhood through learning centres.

Meanwhile, studies on the development of religious and moral values are also evident in research conducted by Meti Fatimah entitled *Concept of Islamic Education Curriculum; a Study on Moral Education in Muhammadiyah Boarding School Klaten*. This study examines the concept of moral education in the curriculum used by the Klaten Muhammadiyah Boarding School.¹⁴ The results showed that moral education must be based on the Islamic concept. At schools affiliated with Muhammadiyah religious institutions, internalization of religious education is carried out through the integration of general subjects and religion, habituation, and the 3T program (*Tahfiẓ, Tahfīm, and Taf'īl*). Thus, this study tries to look at how to internalize Islamic education as a basis for shaping student character. Another study conducted by Abdurrahman entitled *Efforts to Improve the Development of Religious and Moral Values through Early Childhood Methods* shows that the optimization of the development of aspects of moral and religious values is strongly influenced by the role of parents as models and the effectiveness of learning methods used by teachers at early childhood education.¹⁵

¹³ Nur Ainy Fardana Ar-Raisul Karama Arifin, "Peran Pendidik PAUD Dalam Mengimplementasikan Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Metode Pembelajaran Sentra Dan Lingkaran," *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan Dan Perkembangan* 3, no. 3 (2014): 188.

¹⁴ Meti Fatimah, "Concept of Islamic Education Curriculum: A Study on Moral Education in Muhammadiyah Boarding School, Klaten," *Didaktika Religia* 6, no. 2 (February 15, 2019): 191–208, <https://doi.org/10.30762/didaktika.v6i2.1103>.

¹⁵ Abdurrahman, "Upaya Meningkatkan Perkembangan Nilai Agama Dan Moral Melalui Metode Keteladanan Pada Anak Usia Dini," *Jurnal Penelitian Keislaman* 14 (2018): 105.

Referring to the second result of this study, further research is needed on how to internalize religious education in early childhood education through a holistic learning model.

In another study conducted by Kusaeri and Ranga Sa'adillah, entitled Epistemological Study of Scientific Approaches for Islamic Religious Education Subjects, it was explained that in Islamic Religious Education (PAI-Pendidikan Agama Islam) learning, the scientific approach is a series of thinking mechanisms that are inseparable and integrated so that PAI do not know scientific polarization.¹⁶ In contrast, PAI has an integrative view between general and religious studies. However, both have their own characteristics. Prominent characteristics of PAI are the dimensions of revelation, five senses, reason, and intuition. Judging from its characteristics, this dimension is suprarational, logical, empirical, rational, meta-empirical, and value-bound. While the scientific approach has characteristics in the learning patterns that are developed, namely observation, reasoning, discovery, and validation, this dimension emphasizes rationality, is empirical, logical, and objective. This research leads to the conclusion that the scientific approach is a series of thinking mechanisms that are inseparable and mutually integrated into PAI learning, so it is necessary to follow up research on how the scientific approach is applied by the teacher as one of the efforts in the process of internalizing religious education. This is important, considering that students at early childhood education have religious attitudes that tend to be repressive and tend to believe in God through concrete reasoning, along with their age and maturity.

Besides that, such research also emphasizes the way to foster religious and moral values within children at school through daily routine activities and habituation, as research by Mubasyaroh entitled Model of Religious Study and Moral Values in TK Putra Harapan Nalumsari Jepara.¹⁷ The findings in this research show that the cultivation of religious and moral values among children revolves around daily activities implemented through edutainment, habituation, and *uswah hasanah*.

¹⁶ Kusaeri Kusaeri and Ranga Sa'adillah, "Telaah Epistemologis Pendekatan Saintifik Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 9, no. 2 (March 15, 2016): 344, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2015.9.2.344-372>.

¹⁷ Mubasyaroh, "Model of Religious Study and Moral Values in TK Putra Harapan Nalumsari Jepara," *Ta'dib; Journal of Islamic Education* 21, no. 2 (2016).

Referring to some of the results of the above research, a further research is needed on how to develop children's ability in understanding cognitive religious knowledge into holistic meaning and full-values so that students more ease in internalizing religious and moral values in daily life through direct and indirect learning. Internalization of values in Nurdin (2017) is described as the process of experiencing and absorbing the value system so that it is personal and is reflected in behaviour. Therefore, the development of religious and moral values is not something that can be achieved instantly but need a process. The development of this aspect could be done through the process of direct and indirect learning, specifically through habituation, example, and school culture.¹⁸ Through scientific-based learning at BCCT, especially the faith and piety learning centre model (*Imtaq*), students are expected to have a holistic understanding of Islamic education material, both material and non-material. In the long term, the learning process through the inquiry process will build the knowledge for the last longer so that children are able to act/ behave align with religious and moral values they believed.

This research uses descriptive qualitative method because it intends to explore the phenomenon of the process of internalizing religious education through a scientific approach in learning centre models. Qualitative descriptive research is intended to describe the current state of the subject or object of research based on facts that appear as they are. This is as stated by Sugiyono that descriptive qualitative research is a research method used by researchers to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the main instrument.¹⁹

The various data needed in this study were extracted through participative observation, in-depth interview, and documentation. Participative observation technique is used to directly observe the process of internalizing religious education and moral values through a scientific approach to the learning centre models of 4 – 5 years age groups at Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya. We intended to choose a class of 15 students as a sample. This sample is relatively a small

¹⁸ Hernik Farisia, "Integrasi Nilai-Nilai Pancasila Dan Civic Education Dalam Buku Tematik Kurikulum 2013," *Jurnal Handayani* 8, no. 1 (December 26, 2018): 3, <https://doi.org/10.24114/jh.v8i1.10561>.

¹⁹ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*, 20th ed. (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2012), 9.

sample because this research aimed at seeking the deepest understanding of how scientific-based learning process in nurturing religious and moral values onto children in early childhood education and to look at whether this approach effectively facilitated children in behaving religious and moral values through learning.

Meanwhile, to explore data related to the challenges encountered in the process of internalizing religious education, in-depth interviews are conducted with class teachers and school principals. All documents related to the 2013 curriculum, Weekly Learning Implementation Plan (RPPM), Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH), and students' achievement documentation are secondary data in this study. To examine the data that has been found, this study uses qualitative data analysis techniques that refer to the concepts offered by Miles & Huberman. Data analysis is performed continuously and thoroughly, using data reduction, data display, and verification.²⁰ The data collected is tentational and verified the process of research thoroughly. According to Sugiyono, data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation by organizing data into categories, describing into units, synthesizing, composing into patterns, choosing which is important and what will be learned, and make conclusions.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data used in this study, triangulation techniques were chosen. For example, to cross-check the data related to the information from a class teacher that students are actively engaged in the process of questioning the material about Allah and his Almighty, a participative observation are conducted more than once. Documents related to the scientific-based learning in which integrated the aspects of moral and religious attitudes in learning were also observed carefully and continuously to ensure the truth of the data found and the accuracy of the data described.

Internalization of Religious and Moral Values through Scientific-based Learning

The implementation of Curriculum 2013 has brought and emphasizes more on the achievement of religious and social

²⁰ Miles & Huberman and Saldana, J., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook and The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Thousand Oaks., 2014), 20.

competences for students, especially students at the kindergarten level. However, the development of this aspect is still trying to find a form and not necessarily in accordance with the stages of child development. Even though, students at kindergarten are repressive religious and moral values, learners who are indicated by giving many questions to understand about God and his Almighty. They believe in God through *anthropomorphic*-personification and superficially reveal spiritual a religious act. In accordance with the level of children's cognitive abilities, they think God based on their personal imagination. Therefore, the school seeks to design curriculum related to aspects of religious and moral values development as well as possible because the successful internalization of religious and moral values greatly influences the quality of character, intelligence, and behaviour of children in their social lives as it is stated by Corrigan that values, morality, and ethics are part of our life and these cannot be separated from society. Values are linked to beliefs and attitudes and guide human behaviour to build a good character.²¹ Morals, values, and ethics are strongly attached to society, spirituality, and culture.

Therefore, it is important to design a curriculum framework of religious and moral values learning to improve students' understanding and reasoning in believing God and being a good human. The latest curriculum for early childhood in Indonesia has covered an aspect of religious and moral values development. Other aspects that related to students' development are physical motor development, cognitive development, language development, social-emotional development, and art development. All those aspects were integratively developed through learning and habituation. Regarding the internalization of religious education, the aspect that is strongly related to that is religious and moral values development. Religious and moral education is about inner change, which is a spiritual matter and comes through the internalization of Universal Islamic values.²² At Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal 13 Kindergarten Surabaya, the development of religious and moral values is also one of the main priorities in line with the vision of this institution which is "morality,

²¹ Mohammad Chowdhury, "Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Science Education and Science Teaching," *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences* 4, no. 2 (2016): 6.

²² *Ibid.*, 3.

character, and quality”. Religious and moral values internalization efforts are carried out through scientific-based learning processes referring to the 2013 curriculum, combined with *al-Islam* and *Kemuhammadiyah*.

Based on data from in-depth interviews with principals of Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya, it knew that this school has a special learning centre for the development of moral and religious aspect that is centre of faith and piety learning (*sentra imtaq*). *Sentra imtaq/Imtaq* centre is one type of centre that focuses on the introduction of religious life, faith, worship, and morals, as conveyed by the principal of Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya as follows.

“To strengthen children’s knowledge about religion and encourage them to practice religious and moral values in everyday life both at school and at home, our school deliberately chooses and provides a type of centre that is specifically related to the development of religious and moral values. We call the learning centre as a centre of faith and piety learning (*sentra imtaq*)”. Through learning at this centre, students were derived from learning by playing and indirectly identifying the religious and moral values taught.²³

The use of *imtaq* centre to enhance students’ understanding about religion and moral values is align with the concept of how to intentionally nurture children spirituality as it is stated in (Adams, 2009) that teaching and learning activities and strategy are intentionally and explicitly nurture the spiritual aspects of childrens’ lives and their learning. Additionally, he states that the important factor in the intentional nurturing young children’s spirituality is the classroom environment itself which must be open and sensitive to the spiritual.²⁴ Therefore, utilizing *imtaq* centre is appropriate for students as a media for religious environmental learning.

Based on an in-depth interview with the teacher at *imtaq* centre, it is also known that to achieve the expected learning objectives, the teacher always begins by preparing a lesson planning document as a blueprint for the religious education learning activities to be carried

²³ Principal of Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, Interview, Developing morals and religious aspects, September 10, 2019.

²⁴ Jan Grajczonek, “Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Opportunities and Challenges for Early Years Religious Education,” *Journal of Religious Education* 59, no. 3 (2011): 25.

out.²⁵ The teacher prepares the document of daily learning lesson plan along with its learning tools such as learning media, worksheets, and individual assessment instruments. Then, it is coordinated and discussed with other class teachers to get the reflection. The lesson plan is designed with a scientific approach (observing, questioning, experiencing, associating, and communicating) in which religious education content-based—the lesson plan implemented at *sentra imtaq* class three times a week.

From those findings, it could be stated that at the *imtaq* centre, the formulation of material developed was derived from the 2013 curriculum, *al-Islam*, and the distinctive curriculum of the institution’s affiliation. The 2013 curriculum was adapted from the curriculum designed by the government, while the curriculum related to *al-Islam* and the institution’s specific curriculum was formulated by a board of schools’ founding father affiliation. The scope of material based on the 2013 Curriculum is taken from Basic Competency (Kompetensi Dasar-KD) 1.1, KD 1.2, KD 2.14, KD 3.1 - 4.1, KD 3.2 - 4.2 as described in the following table.

Table 1.
Coverage of *Imtaq* Centre Learning Materials Group A

Basic Competency (KD)	Indicator	Material
Believe in the existence of God Almighty	Knowing about the religion believed	Believed-religion
Appreciate yourself, others, and the environment as gratitude to God.	Imitate the practical of worship	Ablution
	Doing daily prayers	Prayer movements
2.14. Having behaviour that reflects a humble and polite attitude towards parents, educators, and friends.	Behave politely	Daily prayers
3.1 Know your daily worship activities	Behave well	Manners and manners
	Have good character	Saying <i>salam</i>
4.1. Doing daily worship activities with adult guidance	Accustomed to mutual respect and say <i>salam</i>	
3.2. Recognize behaviour as an example of good morals.		
4.2. Showing polite behaviour as an example of		

²⁵ Teacher at *Imtaq* Centre of Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarden, Interview, Developing morals and religious aspects, September 03rd 2019.

good morals		
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Based on the table above, it is known that the materials given in the learning centre are derived from the basic competencies of Curriculum 2013, from Core Competencies (Kompetensi Inti-KI) 1 – spiritual attitude, KI 2 – social attitude, KI 3 – cognitive competence, and KI 4 – skills competence. From the entire scope of the material described above, it appears that learning conducted at the *Imtaq* centre is directed to enable the growth of positive habits (nurturant effect) that show attitudes and behaviour obedient to God, including *aqīdah*, worship *maḥḍah*, and morals. Learning is also oriented to realize the growth of positive habits (nurturant effect) associated with good behaviour with humans and good behaviour patterns with nature. For example, on the theme of animals, children are taught to love and care for animals. This material is then related to the nature of Allah in Asmaul Husna, namely *al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm*. Through this way, children's piety to Almighty God will improve and also build students' attitude as a foundation for children to be a good citizen.

As in other centres, the learning design at the *Imtaq* centre uses play platforms known as scaffolding. In implementing learning at the *Imtaq* centre, the teacher uses three themes that are integrated into a general theme, which was adapted from the 2013 Curriculum, Islamic themes, and the specific themes related to *Kemubammadiyah*. The three themes mentioned above become a unity basis in designing learning and learnt by students through a scientific approach. For example, based on observational activities at the Aisyiyah Kindergarten 13 on the fourth learning with animal themes and animal sub-themes, the teacher designs learning related to Islamic themes, namely *al-khāliq*, and with the theme of *Muhammadiyah*²². In the main learning activities (main scaffolding), the activities undertaken are students invited to draw fish and cut out fish images. The teacher then invites students to ask questions about who created the fish and invites students to love other creatures created by God, such as fish, by caring for them. The teacher then invites students together to mention the attributes of Allah *al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm*. The last activity carried out by students is to write *hijāyah* letters individually.

In the teaching and learning process described above, students' critical thinking develops despite material related to eschatological-metaphysics, such as understanding material about God's attributes.

In more detailed, holistic description of scientific-based learning on religious and moral values, described as follows.

Table 2.
Stage of Scientific Method on Religious and Moral Values Learning

Scientific Methods	Description of Learning Activities	Students' Achievement
Observing	Teachers derive students to using all their senses to recognize the topic discussed	Students able to processed and received more information related to the spiritual and social attitude
Questioning	Students are engaged to address questions related to the subject	Students able to interpreted confirmed and linked their experience and their previous knowledge with the new knowledge about spiritual and social attitude
Experimenting	Teacher call students to conduct information gathering through a conversation about religious and moral values in their daily life, finding the information on representatives pictures, learning by doing, and or concluding the material by comparing many sources related to religious and moral values	In these steps, students try to convey ideas by drawing, singing, describing, demonstrating, and answering the questions they found at the observation stage
Associating	Making predictions and arriving at hypothesis to build a scheme of knowledge	This process enhances students; motivation to know, accept, absorb, and understand the relationship between concepts, knowledge, and behavioural religious & moral values
Communicating	Students communicate and justify their proposed explanations	Students are able to tell/show the result of their work and relate it to

		spiritual and social attitude so others could get a lesson learned and relevance material.
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The learning activities as described above shows that in the teaching and learning process which scientific-based have involved more activities, so that students get various experiences that can improve their understanding and competence of religious education and moral values. This way made students ease in internalizing their religious experience into religious attitudes. Besides, students-centred model at *imtaq* sentra allows students to develop higher critical thinking skills, such as observing, analyzing, associating, etc. Moreover, at the stage of communicating, students have learnt to explore and improve the process of thinking and reasoning.

Consequently, this approach sharpened students understanding especially for eschatological-metaphysical material of Islamic education. Moreover, through scientific-based learning, students were able to inquire concepts, knowledge, and religious & moral values as a basis and guidance of their daily life. Thus, the strategy of implementing a scientific approach in nurturing religious and moral values through learning is the novelty of this study. Through a scientific approach, we could learn about how to integrate three domains of learning that are knowledge, skills, and attitude to enhance students’ religious and moral values development at the habituation level.

As it was shown in the learning activities with a theme “school”, the activities carried out by the teacher during the initial step are the teacher invites students to observe and name various objects in the class. Observing activities is one aspect of scientific-based learning. The teacher then encourages students to ask questions through an interactive dialogue session about who created the objects in the class. Teacher, then derive students from gathering information about God and its creatures. Then students are asked to retell who is God and what is its creature and how is the concept of human as God’s creature. In this process, it appears that scientific aspects have been addressed by the teacher to develop students’ critical thinking in understanding and accepting God’s Almighty. By identifying and understanding God’s Almighty ant its creature, students will able to connect their mind, body, and spirit to accept the knowledge holistically.

Since in early childhood setting, children develop a sense of belonging when they feel accepted, develop attachments and trust those that care for them. In this construction, it is implicitly stated that the development aspect of religious and moral values on children is, therefore, an attribute of children's' belonging, being, and becoming,²⁶ align with the stage of children thinking and maturity.

Measuring the Achievement of Religious and Moral Values Development

A part of learning process, teacher also conducted evaluation to measure the achievement of learning objectives. The teacher uses authentic assessment, which is an assessment of the process and learning outcomes to measure the level of attainment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills based on actual facts. Assessment of child development includes a variety of information related to increased psychological function of children, namely religious and moral values, physical-motoric development, social-emotional, cognitive, art and creativity. Six development programs are the areas for assessment of the achievement of core competencies that become the standard level of achievement of child development. However, the students' achievement described in this section is specifically related to the achievement of religious and moral values development. In addition, teachers have also conducted an assessment to know students' mastery related to the material of *Kemuhammadiyah*.

Evaluations conducted by teachers to measure students' learning achievement in religious and moral values are observation and performance assessment. To know the internalization of religious and moral values during the learning process, the teacher uses the observation checklist. Meanwhile, to determine student performance related to skills, teachers use a rating scale. To find out the child's developmental achievements using the checklist instrument, the teacher monitors the child's activities while carrying out various activities. The teacher observes everything the child does or says, including facial expressions, movements and children's work. In making observations, the teacher takes notes as evidence as well as a reminder of everything that has been observed.

²⁶ Grajczonek, "Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Opportunities and Challenges for Early Years Religious Education," 30.

In addition to the two instruments above, the teacher also uses the assignment and portfolio models. Narrative notes related to very prominent matters as well as obstacles experienced by children in learning were made. The teacher reports it using anecdotal notes. Based on the results of these anecdotal notes, the teacher provides more intensive guidance to children who are still experiencing difficulties in the learning process. Based on data from interviews with teachers, the information observed was:

The highest achievement (very good growth) from the religious and moral values aspect is related to indicator 1.1, which is to believe in the existence of God through His creation. Most students have the ability to develop very well in terms of mentioning the attributes of God and identifying creatures created by God to understand His Almighty. While the competence of students who are just developing is related to the ability to perform daily worship activities with adult guidance, all students still need guidance and assistance from the teacher in practising daily worship activities. This can be seen from the level of independence of students in carrying out daily worship related to the ability to practice prayer and perform ablution in an orderly manner while at school.²⁷

The data of students' achievement is also taken from the observation described in the table below.

Table 3.

Students' Achievement According to Religious and Moral Values Indicator

Basic Competencies	Achievement				Total Subjects
	Less Growth	Just Growth	Good Growth	Very Good Growth	
Believe in the existence of God Almighty			20%	80%	Total of students; 15
Appreciate yourself, others, and the environment as gratitude to God.			74%	26%	
Having behaviour that reflects a		47%	53%		

²⁷ Teacher at *Imtaq* centre, Interview about students' achievement at Aisiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya, September 17, 2019.

humble and polite attitude towards parents, educators, and friends.					
Know your daily worship activities	20%	47%	33%		
Doing daily worship activities with adult guidance	100%				
Recognize behaviour as an example of good morals.		60%	40%		
Showing polite behaviour as an example of good morals			73%	27%	

Data Source: documentation of learning process assessment at sentra *imtaq*

Based on the result of teacher observation, it showed that the highest achievement (very good growth) was the ability to believing the existence of God through His creation. In this level, 80 % of students were able to mention God’s Almighty and able to identify the creatures of God consistently. Meanwhile, almost students achieved just developing (just growth) competence in performing daily worship activities with adult guidance represent. These results show that students’ ability on shaping religious and moral values developed from knowing the good, thinking the good, feeling good, acting the good, and habituating as represented on the figure below.²⁸

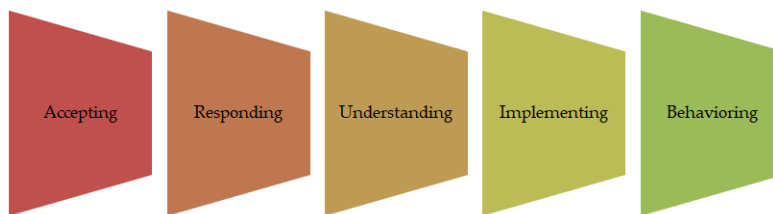


Figure 1.

The stages of Religious and moral values

From the description above, it appears that to reach the level of behavior, students need to be introduced to the cognitive process.

²⁸ Enah Suminah et.al., *Kurikulum PAUD; Apa, Mengapa, dan Bagaimana* (Jakarta: Dirjen PAUD, 2015), 18.

Thus, the process of internalizing religious and moral values, actually can not be achieved without integrating cognitive and skill domain. They have to learn the knowledge of attitudes/values that will be built and continuously engaged to the process of learning. In this case, scientific approach take role in building students' capability to think critically the concept so they are able to inquire, receive, respond, and apply the knowledge they have learn.

Internalization of Religious and Moral Values through Indirect Learning

Discussing religious and moral development within children is directly linked to the aspect of cognitive development (how children think), social development (how children relate to and learn from others), and moral development (how children understand and integrate moral and (abstract) religious concept. In the setting of children development, those aspects were some of children development that could be improved through direct and indirect teaching.

Based on the result of participative observation, it could be seen that the process of internalizing religious and moral values is provided in several ways, such direct and indirect teaching and learning. At Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, understanding of *aqidah*, worship, and morals is also developed through indirect learning, both through morning material programs and school culture. In the morning activities, the children learn and practice daily prayer readings, short letters, hadith, Quran, and worship practices. As supporting materials for Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, material about the Muhammadiyah is also given every day in the morning activities. This was stated by the principal in an interview passage stated as follows.

“All students in Kindergarten Aisyiah are required to follow routine activities that we call morning material which is held every day starting at 07.15 - 08.00”. The activity begins with saying a greeting, the initial prayer of the activity, reading the pledges, morning material and the final prayer of the activity.”²⁹

Nurturing religious and moral values through habituation/ routine activity was one of the keys in nurturing religious and moral values as stated by Thomas and Lockwood that the elements to

²⁹ Principal of Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, Interview, September 10th 2019

intentionally nurtured religious and moral values within children are practice the value of being, connecting and relating, routines and ritual, connecting with the natural world, and cultivating compassion.³⁰ Furthermore, another research by Mubasyaroh stated that routine activities are effective to build students' character because the activity performed continuously in everyday life at school, so that become a habit. The developmental aspects addressed in this way are the development of religious and moral values, development of social, emotional, and self-reliance. From those aspects they were hopefully expected to foster piety of children to God Almighty and strengthen children life skills.³¹

At Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, morning material conducted every morning routinely which covers such material as described in the following table.

Table 4.
Coverage of Morning Materials at Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya

No.	Day	Material
1.	Monday	Short prayers
2.	Tuesday	Short Surahs
3.	Wednesday	Hadits
4.	Thursday	Prayer recital
5.	Friday	Recite and practice of worship The Quran activity is carried out on Sundays 1,2 and 3, while the practice of worship is carried out on Sundays 4 and 5
Note: Each activity, ended by reading Asmaul Husna together		

In addition to the above activities, students are also introduced to *hijāyah* letters every day. The introduction of *hijāyah* letters is done by means of all teachers wearing a bandana that holds *hijāyah* letters. In this way, every child can read and recognize *hijāyah* letters every time they meet their teacher. Instead, the teacher must ask the child what letters are listed in the bandana so that the child is able to mention the letters. Through these activities, it is expected that

³⁰ Thomas P. Lockwood V., *Nurturing the Spiritual Child; Compassion, Connection, and A Sense of Self* (Watson: ACT; Eraly Childhood Australia Inc., 2009), 17-25.

³¹ Mubasyaroh, "Model of Religious Study and Moral Values in TK Putra Harapan Nalumsari Jepara," 195.

students will be able to develop themselves better and show religious behaviour according to Islamic teachings.

In addition to the material above, the teacher also provides reinforcement of the material as a characteristic of the institutional affiliation. The coverage of *Kemuhammadiyah* materials was knowing and identifying the symbol of *Muhammadiyah* and '*Aisyiyah*', knowing and identifying the autonomous organization of *Muhammadiyah* and '*Aisyiyah*', knowing and identifying the meaning of *Muhammadiyah* and '*Aisyiyah*', knowing and identifying the founding fathers, *Muhammadiyah* songs, *Muhammadiyah* and '*Aisyiyah* charity.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Internalizing Religious and Moral Values to Early Childhood Students

Based on the result of the evaluation, it seems that almost students are able to achieve the competence of religious and moral values development at the expected development level. At Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, the process of internalizing religious and moral values has been developed through direct and indirect learning in which the curriculum design has considered the students' level age and students' thinking ability level. Also, the teacher addressed learning processes which integrated such material based on the latest curriculum, *al-Islam*, and *Kemuhammadiyah*. Through learning, teachers provided opportunities for students to inquire about the concept of God, to find the relationship between God and his creature, to decide which is bad and good, etc. For example, to understand about Gods' almighty, the teacher does not give lectures to help students understand the material, but rather by giving students the opportunity to compare Gods' creature and human creation. By giving concrete examples, moreover for the eschatological-metaphysical materials, students have inquired and find the way on how to believe in God. Students were also pleased to interact and giving question from what they have learnt and experienced. These facts show that to nurture religious and moral values onto students, Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten has set a religious classroom environment and maximized teachers' role in fostering religious and moral values. Besides that, the principals also intensively supervise teachers' performance to ensure all the process of learning suits to the goal.

Some relevance research on nurturing children's spirituality such as de Souza and Hyde (in Jan Grajczonek, 2011)³² found that educators' role are key at the planning stage of curriculum that seeks to nurture children's spirituality and educators are urged to not only attend to the cognitive domain in their planning but also to both the affective (the felt sense) and spiritual domains. Besides that, the teacher should creatively design teaching-learning process with a range of ways in nurturing values such as role-play, educational game, group work, etc.³³ Additionally, the classroom environment considered as an important factor in the intentional nurturing children's spirituality in which the environment itself must be open and sensitive to the spiritual.³⁴

At Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten, the curriculum designed to nurture religious and moral values implemented through direct and indirect learning. In the teaching and learning process, the teacher uses a scientific approach. The way students learn has fulfilled scientific-based learning characteristics that are applying and developing rational and objective thinking, correlating concepts and empirical facts that could be proved, and formulated simple-clear learning objective. The scientific process trains students' ability to understand and discover a concept through the inquiry process. In the inquiry process, students are actively involved in the process of gaining understanding and discovering new schemata of knowledge, as stated by David L. Haury in his article entitled teaching science through inquiry that inquiry is an active engagement (behaviour) on phenomena that arouse curiosity.³⁵ Thus, scientific-based learning contributed to help students finding a concept through scientific thinking skills. Through the process of scientific thinking, students' critical thinking has developed and will last longer. Furthermore,

³² Jan Grajczonek, "Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Opportunities and Challenges for Early Years Religious Education," *Journal of Religious Education* 59, no. 3 (2011), 25.

³³ Tengku Sarina Aini Tengku Kasim and Yusmini Md Yusoff, "Active Teaching Methods: Personal Experience of Integrating Spiritual and Moral Values," *Religious Education* 109, no. 5 (October 20, 2014): 551, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2014.956560>.

³⁴ Adams K., "The Rise of The Child's Voice; The Silencing of The Spiritual Voice," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 30, no. 2 (2009): 117, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617670903174991>.

³⁵ David L. Haury, "Teaching Science through Inquiry," *Columbus OH*, 1993.

internalizing religious and moral values will establish as a value system in daily life.

Internalization of religious and moral values through learning at early childhood education was not only done at the *imtaq* centre but also integrated to all learning centre classes provided by the school. The various centres developed at TK Aisiyah 13 are centres of preparation, centres of art and creativity, and centres of blocks. Similarly, in the process of learning in an art centre class, a teacher linked all the activities linked to aspects of basic competence that is trusting God through His creation and basic competences which relate to respecting yourself, others, and the environment as gratitude to God.³⁶ The teacher in this class said that in learning about plants, the teacher invites students to recognize and mention the names of plants. The teacher then demonstrates the procedures for caring for plants. Students are then invited to play the role of farmers and practice how to care for plants. At the end of class, students were asked to retell why as human we need to respect other God creation include to the environment. Through this way, hopefully, religious and moral values enter into and or implied in the thinking and children behaviour.

However, in some cases, during the learning activities, not all of the three themes can be combined and matched in a unity basis to integrate learning so that the learning activities undertaken are not interrelated. As seen in the first week of learning with the theme “me”, the sub-theme “me and my family”. In this study, the material covered is getting to know the pillars of Islam, reading prayers, getting to know the nature of God, and knowing the word Aisiyah. The activities carried out are mentioning the pillars of Islam, mentioning the objects of God’s creation with picture cards, colouring pictures of prayer to learn, and ending with playing letters forming the word Aisiyah. From the description of these activities, it seems that the activities and theme is irrelevant and separated subject. The teacher felt that it became an inhabitant factor in the process of teaching and learning that caused students to learnt partially.

³⁶ Teacher of The Arts and Creativity Centre Class, Interview about How Religious and Moral Values Integrated at Other Learning Centres At Aisiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya, September 10th, 2019.

Conclusion

The strategy of developing early childhood competencies in Indonesia has systematically designed into a curriculum, but somehow, the competencies have not maximally achieved. One of the development programs is religious and moral values which transformed through direct and indirect learning. In this study, some findings could be concluded as follows;

First, At Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten Surabaya, the curriculum designed was integrated Curriculum 2013, *al-Islam*, and *Kemuhammadiyah*. To achieve the goal of learning, teachers implemented scientific-based learning which significantly improves students' ability within critical thinking, leads students to inquire a concept of knowledge which mainly characterized as eschatological-metaphysic, and suppose students to act the values. In its entirety, the material taught is laying the foundations of the worship, faithful, and morality. Specifically, the learning process held at *imtaq* learning centre class. It is because, *imtaq* learning centre class facilitate students to learn and play motor-sensory, capture stimuli through the use of the five senses, play roles to help present concepts that they have, and play constructive to realize thoughts, ideas, and ideas in real work. To derive students' religious knowledge into meaning and values, children need to inquire about the concept they believe as a virtue to cultivate a sense of belonging, being, and becoming. Therefore, the teacher should consider that the learning process in the class aims to impart knowledge, skills, and affective domain.

Second, based on students' performance, it showed that 80 % of students achieved very good growth related to basic competence 1.1, that is the ability to believing the existence of God through His creation. Meanwhile, almost students achieved just developing (just growth) competence in performing daily worship activities with adult guidance.

Third, in the case of indirect learning, religious and moral values transformation is supposed to be carried out through morning activities (daily routine habituation) that linked to cognitive development and social development. In the morning activities, the children learn and practice daily prayer readings, short letters, hadith, Quran, worship practices, and *Kemuhammadiyah*.

Forth, the supporting factors in intentionally nurturing religious and moral values to children at Aisyiyah 13 Kindergarten were

curriculum framework that accommodates religious classroom environment design and the role of teachers and principal in fostering religious and moral values. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors of internalizing religious and moral values to early childhood were teachers got difficulties in integrating the core material of Curriculum 2013, al-Islam, and specific content based on the school affiliated to such as Kemuhammadiyah.

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