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ANALYZING THE QUALITY OF THEMATIC BASED QUR'AN LEARNING IN INTEGRATED ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN PEKANBARU

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Kata Kunci:	ABSTRAK
Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an, inovasi pedagogis, pendidikan Islam, integrasi kurikulum, perkembangan moral	Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kualitas pembelajaran Al-Qur'an berbasis tematik di SDIT Pekanbaru dengan fokus pada aspek perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi pembelajaran oleh guru. Metode: Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen pada tiga SDIT di Pekanbaru, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil: Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran Al-Qur'an berbasis tematik berpengaruh positif terhadap keterlibatan aktif siswa dalam proses belajar serta perkembangan moral dan spiritual mereka. Siswa menjadi lebih antusias, berpartisipasi aktif dalam diskusi tematik, dan menunjukkan peningkatan perilaku religius seperti kejujuran, tanggung jawab, dan kepedulian sosial. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting bagi pengembangan ilmu pendidikan Islam, khususnya dalam memperkuat paradigma pembelajaran Al-Qur'an yang integratif dan kontekstual. Secara teoretis, temuan ini memperkaya wacana tentang inovasi pedagogis berbasis nilai Qur'ani, sedangkan secara praktis, hasil penelitian ini dapat menjadi rujukan bagi sekolah Islam dalam meningkatkan kompetensi guru, penyediaan media pembelajaran, serta desain evaluasi yang menyentuh ranah kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotorik secara seimbang. Kesimpulan: Secara keseluruhan, pembelajaran Al-Qur'an berbasis tematik terbukti sebagai model inovatif yang tidak hanya meningkatkan kualitas akademik, tetapi juga menumbuhkan karakter Qur'ani yang kuat pada peserta didik.

Keywords:	ABSTRACTS
Qur'an Learning, Pedagogical Innovation, Islamic Education, Curriculum Integration, Moral Development	Purpose: This study aims to analyze the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools (SDIT) in Pekanbaru, focusing on the aspects of lesson planning, implementation, and evaluation by teachers. Method: The research employs a qualitative approach using a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis at three SDITs in Pekanbaru and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman. Result: The findings indicate that thematic-based Qur'an learning has a positive impact on students' active engagement in the learning process as well as on their moral and spiritual development. Students become more enthusiastic, actively participate in thematic discussions, and demonstrate improved religious behavior such as honesty, responsibility, and social awareness. Theoretically, the findings enrich the discourse on pedagogical innovation based on Qur'anic values, while practically, they serve as a reference for Islamic schools in enhancing teacher competence, providing learning media, and designing balanced evaluations that address cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Conclusion: Overall, thematic-based Qur'an learning proves to be an innovative model that not only improves academic quality but also fosters strong Qur'anic character among students.

A. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in the global era is moving toward a paradigm of learning that is more integrative, contextual, and oriented toward developing Qur'anic character (Nurhayati, Dina Liana, 2025). This shift occurs not only in higher education but also at the elementary level, particularly in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools (SDIT), which implement thematic based learning to integrate Qur'anic values into students' real-life experiences (Ndrian, Aharuddin, Umiran, & Ohammad, 2025). This approach aligns with global educational trends emphasizing whole child learning, where cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects of learners are developed harmoniously (Kurnianingsih, Fauzi, & Puspitaningsih, 2025).

However, the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning implementation in Islamic elementary schools still shows variations and inconsistencies in planning, implementation, and evaluation. In many schools, the integration of Qur'anic values within thematic learning tends to be symbolic, lacking methodological grounding, and dominated by cognitive orientation (Sugiarto, 2025). This gap indicates that Qur'an-based character education has not yet fully aligned with modern pedagogical practices rooted in constructive alignment between learning objectives, methods, and assessments (Khan et al., 2025).

Previous studies have discussed the integration of Islamic values into general curricula (Y. I. Prasetyo & Sari, 2025), the enhancement of learning motivation through value based approaches (Prasnanda & Yusuf, 2024), and the role of Qur'an education in strengthening moral formation at the elementary level (Siregar, Al Hafizh, Putra, Aldi, & Izzat, 2025). However, most of these studies have not specifically examined the quality of thematic based Qur'an learning comprehensively, especially in practical aspects how teachers design lesson plans, manage thematic learning in classrooms, and conduct holistic evaluations (Fadlillah & Kusaeri, 2024).

Furthermore, in the era of global education, there is a growing need to strengthen Qur'an learning models that can conceptually align with international

value based education frameworks (Nurhamsalim & Sofa, 2025). Thematic Qur'an learning offers a promising response to global trends in character education emphasizing moral intelligence and spiritual literacy (Fatoni & Subando, 2024). Thus, this study contributes not only to the local context of Islamic elementary education but also to the global theoretical discourse on value-integrated learning models.

Specifically, the research gap addressed in this study involves three main aspects. First, there is a lack of empirical research comprehensively mapping the quality of thematic Qur'an learning in SDIT contexts, particularly regarding planning, implementation, and evaluation (Basri & Abdullah, 2024). Second, most previous studies have focused on institutional and managerial domains rather than pedagogical practices and classroom dynamics (Nurhayati, Latif, & Anwar, 2024). Third, few studies have linked thematic Qur'an learning to global trends in holistic education and experiential learning that emphasize internalizing values through contextual experiences (Khairunnisa, Vedira, Charles, & Pratama, 2024).

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning in SDIT Pekanbaru comprehensively, encompassing planning, implementation, and evaluation dimensions. The approach not only assesses internal instructional effectiveness but also highlights its contribution to the evolving global discourse on value based and spirituality oriented education. Accordingly, this research contributes in two dimensions: (1) theoretically, enriching the discussion of modern Islamic education on integrating Qur'anic values within thematic learning, and (2) practically, offering concrete recommendations for curriculum developers and educators to enhance pedagogical competence and establish balanced assessment systems that harmonize cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of learners . (Ichsan et al., 2024)

This research has novelty because it specifically evaluates thematic practices in Qur'an learning, not just Islamic religious education in general. In addition, the focus on Pekanbaru city with rapid SDIT growth provides a specific geographical and sociological context. Although this study is qualitative and does not use statistical hypotheses, the researcher starts from the initial assumption that thematic based Qur'an learning has not been fully implemented effectively in schools, thus requiring a more in depth study based on empirical data (A. Prasetyo, 2024).

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study method because its main focus was to gain an in-depth understanding of how the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning is implemented at Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools (SDIT) in Pekanbaru (Sugiyono, 2022). This research does not aim to generalize the findings but rather to reveal the actual realities occurring in the field through rich and contextual descriptions. The focus of this study lies on three main components of learning quality: lesson planning, lesson implementation, and the evaluation of thematic Qur'an learning by teachers (Nabella et al., 2022).

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from classroom observations, in-depth interviews with Qur'an teachers, curriculum coordinators, and school principals, as well as from documentation of learning tools such as learning objectives (ATP), lesson plans (RPP),

and assessment instruments used by the teachers. Secondary data included curriculum policy documents, thematic learning guidelines, and school reports related to Qur'an learning programs (Sutopo, 2022). The main informants were selected using purposive sampling, with the criteria of Qur'an teachers who actively teach upper-grade classes (grades IV–VI) and have applied thematic approaches in their teaching. The number of informants could develop through the snowball technique according to the data needs until data saturation was reached (Moleong, 2021).

The research subjects were Islamic Education (PAI) teachers who teach Qur'an subjects at three SDITs in Pekanbaru City, namely SDIT Al-Fityan, SDIT Ar-Royyan, and SDIT Nurul Fikri. The schools were selected using purposive sampling, considering schools that have consistently implemented thematic approaches in Qur'an learning for at least the past two years. In addition to teachers, supporting informants included school principals and students in grades IV–VI to obtain triangulative perspectives on the learning process (Arikunto, 2021).

The main instrument in this study was the researcher themselves as the key instrument (human instrument), supported by interview guides, observation sheets, and documentation formats. In depth interviews were conducted with teachers and school principals using open-ended guides that allowed free yet directed exploration. Observations were carried out on Qur'an learning activities in the classroom, noting aspects such as lesson planning (RPP), core learning activities, teacher-student interactions, use of media, and evaluation activities. The documents examined included syllabi, lesson plans (RPP), student worksheets, and student learning records (Creswell, 2022).

The data obtained were analyzed interactively through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researcher used source and method triangulation techniques to test the validity of the data by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, the researcher's participation in classroom learning activities served as a form of moderate participant observation (Nurhayati, Dina Liana, 2025). This study did not use statistical analysis techniques because the data were qualitative and descriptive in nature. However, coding techniques were used to group the main themes that emerged from the field data (Saldana, 2020). The quality of interpretation was maintained by conducting member checks and peer debriefing to ensure that the analysis results remained objective and could be verified by other researchers (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2020).

To ensure analytical transparency, the qualitative data in this study were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2020). The analysis process began with manual coding of interview transcripts, classroom observation notes, and documentation results. The coding was conducted through three stages:

1. Open coding, to identify initial concepts emerging from the raw data.
2. Axial coding, to link and categorize related codes.
3. Selective coding, to synthesize central themes that represented the key dimensions of Qur'an learning quality planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Themes were refined through iterative analysis cycles, continuously comparing the data with emerging patterns to ensure conceptual coherence. Each theme was verified by cross-checking with multiple data sources to maintain analytical accuracy.

To strengthen validity and reliability, several credibility strategies were employed:

1. Triangulation across data sources (teachers, principals, and students) and methods (interviews, observations, and document analysis).
2. Member checking, where participants reviewed and confirmed the researcher's interpretations to ensure accuracy and trustworthiness.
3. Peer debriefing, involving consultation with qualitative research experts to test the logical consistency of coding and interpretation.
4. Audit trail documentation, recording all analytic decisions, coding categories, and memos throughout the research process to ensure dependability and confirmability (Duli, 2020).

These systematic procedures ensured that the data analysis was rigorous, transparent, and aligned with qualitative research standards for credibility and trustworthiness.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are presented based on data analysis from in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and reviews of lesson plans (RPP) and Qur'an learning syllabi at Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools (SDIT) in Pekanbaru City. The researcher classified the results into three main focuses: learning planning, thematic implementation process, and evaluation of Qur'an learning.

1. Thematic-Based Qur'an Learning Planning

The planning of thematic-based Qur'an learning at SDITs in Pekanbaru City shows efforts to integrate Qur'anic values with the learning themes listed in the national curriculum. Document analysis at SDIT Al-Fityan revealed that teachers had prepared lesson plans (RPP) linking the theme "Love for the Environment" with QS. Al-Baqarah: 205, which speaks about corruption and destruction on earth. In practice, the RPP included indicators for achieving spiritual, social, cognitive, and psychomotor competencies, all of which were connected to the messages of the verse. Similarly, at SDIT Ar-Royyan, an RPP was found that linked the theme "Compassion" with QS. Al-Ma'un, which was then used as the basis for activities such as reading, interpreting, and relating the verse to students' daily behavior.

However, interviews with teachers at the three schools showed that preparing thematic-based RPPs still faces challenges. At SDIT Nurul Fikri, for instance, a Qur'an teacher stated that finding verses that are explicitly relevant to certain themes is not always easy, especially for general themes such as "Energy" or "Natural Events." This has caused some teachers to rely more on national thematic textbooks or to use online search engines to find verses they consider suitable. This dependence shows that teachers' understanding of integrating Qur'anic material and learning themes is still largely textual and not yet fully contextual, meaning the thematic planning has not been fully developed.

Observations of learning tools and internal MGMP (subject teacher group) activities at SDIT Al-Fityan and Ar-Royyan also reinforced the finding that there are no systematic guidelines available for all Qur'an teachers to follow. Teachers tend to work individually in interpreting the relationship between verses and themes, which leads to significant variations in approach among teachers. At SDIT Ar-Royyan, one teacher stated, "We don't have a special guidebook for thematic verses, so it all depends on each teacher's understanding." This condition indicates the need for systematic efforts from the school or the foundation to provide resources that can facilitate such integration in a structured way.

In addition, not all Qur'an teachers have received specific training in planning thematic-based Qur'an learning. At SDIT Nurul Fikri, only one of the three Qur'an teachers had attended integrative thematic training in the past two years. The lack of training has affected their pedagogical understanding in designing indicators and learning activities that truly reflect Qur'anic values aligned with the theme. Therefore, it can be concluded that although planning efforts already exist, their quality still needs to be improved through regular training, the development of a thematic verse guidebook, and collaboration among teachers to enrich references for meaningful and contextual learning planning.

2. Implementation of Thematic-Based Qur'an Learning

The implementation of thematic-based Qur'an learning at SDITs in Pekanbaru shows teachers' initiatives in connecting Qur'anic verses with students' real-life themes. At SDIT Al-Fityan, for example, under the theme "Responsibility," the teacher read QS. Al-Isra': 34 and then invited students to discuss forms of responsibility toward parents in their daily lives. This process involved not only the cognitive aspect but also the affective aspect, as students were asked to share personal experiences related to the topic. The teacher used visual media and storytelling to strengthen students' understanding, which demonstrated creativity in adapting the thematic approach to Qur'an learning.

Observations at SDIT Ar-Royyan showed that teachers used group discussions and role-play to convey the message of QS. Al-Hujurat: 11 under the theme "Tolerance and Respecting Differences." Students were given roles to illustrate respectful attitudes toward friends with different opinions or backgrounds. This approach facilitated active and participatory learning. However, interviews with teachers revealed that not all themes in the thematic textbooks are easily connected directly to Qur'anic verses, so in some cases, teachers had to teach the verses without strong thematic context merely to complete the material.

At SDIT Nurul Fikri, the learning process was more inclined toward conventional methods—reading the verse, listening to its translation, and memorizing. Although there were efforts to link it to the theme of "Cooperation," the teacher mostly explained the content of QS. Al-Maidah: 2 orally without involving students in exploratory activities. Interviews with students showed that most of them understood the general meaning of the verse but could not explain how it could be applied in group activities at school. This indicates that the implementation of learning is still dominated by textual approaches and has not fully led to the contextual internalization of values.

Teachers' skills in managing thematic learning also varied greatly, depending on their educational background and teaching experience. Most teachers at SDIT Al-Fityan are graduates of Tarbiyah programs and have attended integrative thematic training, making them more adaptive in modifying learning activities. Meanwhile, the Qur'an teacher at SDIT Nurul Fikri admitted never having attended training on thematic learning, and therefore still uses traditional teaching methods. This difference shows that ongoing professional training greatly determines the success of thematic approaches in Qur'an learning.

In general, the implementation of thematic-based Qur'an learning at the three schools shows progress in connecting sacred texts with students' daily lives. However, not all teachers are yet able to manage learning activities effectively to support thematic understanding. Structured professional training and the development of guidelines for implementing thematic learning based on Qur'anic values are needed. Collaboration among teachers through internal MGMP (subject teacher group) forums can also serve as a platform for sharing strategies and effective learning materials to achieve more contextual and meaningful implementation.

Figure 1 below presents a model of thematic interaction observed in one of the SDITs:



This figure shows that students' active engagement largely depends on the teacher's method of connecting the verses to their real-life contexts.

3. Evaluation of Learning Quality

Evaluation of teaching quality is a crucial aspect to ascertain the effectiveness of the learning process, especially in the context of thematic-based Qur'an learning. Essentially, evaluation is conducted via formative assessment, observation of students' religious attitudes, and the task products produced by students during the learning process. The formative assessments aim to measure students' understanding periodically, while attitude observations assess how Qur'anic values are implemented in students' everyday behavior. Task products serve as concrete indicators of students' ability to apply thematic learning through works or projects (Fatoni, 2024).

However, based on interviews with teachers at SDIT Al-Fityan, SDIT Ar-Royyan, and SDIT Nurul Fikri, it was found that the evaluation indicators used are still heavily focused on cognitive aspects, such as students' ability to read the Qur'an and memorize certain verses. This shows an imbalance in the execution of evaluation because the affective and psychomotor aspects, which ought to characterise thematic learning, receive little attention. Teachers admit they are more comfortable using

written tests and memorization as the primary benchmarks, while assessment of attitude and practical skills remains minimal (Zainuddin & Che Hat, 2025).

Observations in the three SDITs show that only a few teachers use affective and psychomotor assessment rubrics systematically. For example, in learning activities that raise Qur'anic values such as honesty and responsibility, student involvement in discussions, group work, and daily religious practice is rarely part of formal assessment. This creates a gap between the holistic goals of thematic learning and the still partial practice of evaluation (Sabri, 2020). As a result, the quality of learning cannot yet be considered optimal because evaluation does not touch on all domains of learning.

This phenomenon also indicates that teachers in these SDITs require more intensive training related to the design of evaluation instruments that are comprehensive, especially those that accommodate affective and psychomotor aspects in a balanced manner. The use of clear and measurable rubrics can help teachers give objective and consistent assessment of student attitudes and skills in the thematic context. In addition, student involvement in self-assessment and peer assessment can improve the quality of learning evaluation (Pahlevi & Hafidz, 2025).

Overall, thematic-based Qur'an learning evaluation in SDIT Pekanbaru has not been carried out in a complete manner; it is still dominated by cognitive assessment with minimal attention to affective and psychomotor assessment. A comprehensive and integrated evaluation is very important to create learning that does not only emphasise intellectual aspects but also builds character and the spiritual skills of students.

Therefore, a recommendation that can be given is the need for the development of holistic evaluation instruments and training for teachers in implementing thematic learning evaluation so that the ideal goals of Islamic education can be achieved (Rahim & Hayati, 2024). Meanwhile, interviews with principals show continuous professional development programs for teachers, but not specifically addressing the thematic integration of the Qur'an. This becomes a particular challenge in improving the quality of implementation (Sugiarto, 2025).

Research findings indicate that the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning at SDIT Al-Fityan, Ar-Royyan, and Nurul Fikri still faces challenges in integrating Qur'anic values into the structure of thematic learning in a holistic manner. In general, the learning process has attempted to link daily themes such as "Responsibility" or "Honesty" with relevant Qur'anic verses. However, this implementation tends to be symbolic and has not touched methodologically exhaustive aspects. This is evident from observation findings showing that teachers still dominate with lecture and memorization methods, while thematic discussion and value-based activities have not been carried out systematically.

This phenomenon indicates limitations in the application of integrative Islamic learning principles as developed in holistic education theory. Compared to previous research by Lestari, which studied integrative thematic models at MI Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, it was found that the integration of Islamic values is more effective if accompanied by programmatic teacher training and explicit curriculum support (Lestari, 2021). In contrast, in the three SDITs studied, there was no special planning directing teachers to use thematic-based Qur'an learning in depth. This is a significant difference and shows that although SDITs institutionally have a strong Islamic

orientation, their teaching practices are not yet fully supported by pedagogical designs that are value-oriented (Nurhayati et al., 2024)

Hence, the contribution of this study is to highlight the importance not only of integrating themes but also of integrating pedagogical tools and evaluation that are commensurate with the characteristics of Islamic thematic learning. A unique finding in this research is the sharp variation in learning quality among schools, especially in aspects of active participation of students in value-based thematic learning. In SDIT Nurul Fikri, for example, teachers have begun using performance assessment and thematic projects based on verses, such as a thematic charity project linked to QS. Al-Baqarah: 267. Meanwhile, in SDIT Ar-Royyan and Al-Fityan, such approaches have not become regular practice. These findings offer an original contribution that the effectiveness of thematic-based Qur'an learning depends heavily on teacher initiative and creativity, not merely on the institutional system of the school.

In recent literature, value-based thematic learning approaches strongly emphasize teacher participation in creating a personal connection between values and student experience. Using Biggs' constructive alignment framework, it was found that alignment does not occur between thematic learning objectives, teaching methods, and assessment systems. Learning is intended to form Islamic character, but methods and assessments are still predominantly cognitive. This reinforces that the primary contribution of this study is to present an empirical mapping of the misalignment in the implementation of thematic-based Qur'an learning at the SDIT level. Therefore, these results are important for the development of integrative Islamic education theory and practice because they can identify critical points that must be improved for learning to truly form a unity between values, knowledge, and student actions.

Discussion

Observations and interviews conducted at SDIT Al-Fityan, SDIT Ar-Royyan, and SDIT Nurul Fikri revealed that the implementation of thematic-based Qur'an learning has been carried out through various approaches. Teachers have attempted to link learning themes with Qur'anic values, such as connecting the theme of "Amanah" (trustworthiness) with QS. Al-Ahzab: 72. However, in practice, the teaching methods used are still conventional, dominated by lectures and rote memorization, and not supported by active and reflective learning strategies (Hidayani, Prayitno, & Handayani, 2025).

One significant finding is that SDIT Nurul Fikri appears more advanced in developing project-based learning activities in thematic Qur'an education. For example, in the theme "Responsibility," students are guided to create personal journals containing reflections on their practice of responsibility to their parents, aligned with relevant Qur'anic verses. This approach shows an awareness of learning that touches affective and psychomotor aspects, which aligns with Kolb's Experiential Learning theory emphasizing the importance of direct experience in meaningful learning (Kolb, 2020).

However, interviews with teachers at SDIT Al-Fityan and SDIT Ar-Royyan revealed that most teachers still face difficulties in designing assessments that include affective (attitudes) and psychomotor (skills) dimensions. They acknowledged that their assessments mainly focus on cognitive aspects such as students' ability to read

and memorize verses. This situation affects the achievement of thematic learning goals, which are supposed to be integrative and comprehensive. This phenomenon is supported by Ahmad Hilmi et al, who state that the main obstacle in value-based Islamic thematic learning is teachers' limited understanding of authentic assessment strategies (Ahmad Hilmi, Saleh, Mohamad, Wan Abdullah, & Nur, 2024).

The imbalance between the objectives and practices of learning can be explained through Biggs' Constructive Alignment theory, which states that alignment between objectives, methods, and assessment is the key to effective learning. In the observed SDITs, even though the learning objectives emphasize Qur'anic values, the teaching methods and assessments have not been optimally aligned with those objectives. Consequently, students are not gaining holistic and meaningful learning experiences, which are the ultimate aim of Islamic thematic curricula (N. N. Fitria, Mufidah, & Setiawati, 2024).

From the perspective of recent literature, thematic-based Qur'an learning should provide space for students to explore real-life contexts, including through dialogue, educational games, social activities, and project-based learning. A study by Khaerunnisa et al, showed that Qur'an learning integrated with contextual activities had a significant impact on students' emotional and spiritual engagement (Khaerunnisa, Takwim, & Rahmah, 2022). Unfortunately, such approaches are still rarely applied in practice because most teachers are unfamiliar with active and reflective learning models.

Therefore, the findings of this study provide an important contribution by showing that the success of thematic-based Qur'an learning depends not only on the teaching material but more importantly on the alignment between the vision, methods, and evaluation systems used. The practices at SDIT Nurul Fikri can serve as a model of good practice that can be replicated by other SDITs, especially in utilizing project-based and reflective assessments grounded in Qur'anic verses. This reinforces that innovation in thematic learning is not only possible but also highly necessary to meet the needs of contemporary Islamic education, which emphasizes the balance between faith, knowledge, and practice (Kurnianingsih et al., 2025).

To enrich the context, the findings from the three SDITs in Pekanbaru can be compared with practices at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri (MIN), which systematically integrates Islamic values into thematic learning through structured theme-verse planning and contextual activities. Recent studies indicate that the integration of Islamic character values embedded in daily thematic designs enhances learning relevance and students' affective engagement (e.g., MIN in Lima Puluh Kota) (Azizi, Amrani, & El Idrissi, 2025). At the international level, the strengthening of value-based education is also evident in studies of Islamic education teachers in the Middle East, emphasizing the cultivation of moderate personalities through structured cross-disciplinary instructional strategies (Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024). These comparisons reveal that the success of thematic Qur'anic approaches is largely supported by explicit curriculum planning, well-prepared thematic teaching tools, and continuous teacher training programs, rather than individual teacher preferences (Basri & Abdullah, 2024).

In terms of implementation challenges, the field findings are consistent with recent literature: (1) Teacher training skill gaps in designing thematic lesson plans (RPP/ATP) and authentic assessments often persist when training does not specifically

address Qur'anic integration (Ahmed, 2025); (2) Learning resources the use of digital media and thematic learning aids enhances achievement and engagement, yet resource distribution remains uneven (Asyari & Hamami, 2025); and (3) Institutional support limited school policy and academic supervision contribute to the dominance of cognitive evaluation, while affective and psychomotor dimensions are neglected, despite holistic assessment being a core element of thematic learning (Zainuddin & Hat, 2025). Consequently, evidence-based improvement strategies include structured professional development programs (e.g., workshops on theme verse design and affective rubrics), provision of ready-to-use thematic materials (theme verse banks and project scenarios), and curriculum governance alignment to achieve constructive coherence between objectives, methods, and assessment (Khan et al., 2025).

As an example of good practice, several schools have implemented verse-based projects (for instance, social care projects linked to QS. Al-Baqarah:267) to bridge cognitive understanding with value internalization (Ri, 2020). Such practices align with findings showing that Qur'anic themed learning involving contextual activities and projects enhances students' emotional and spiritual engagement (Sirin, Sari, Ramadhani, & Jamasir, 2021) and correspond with Project-Based Learning trends in the Indonesian context (F. Fitria & Abidin, 2023). Similar practices can be institutionalized across SDITs through structured teacher communities (MGMP) and academic supervision.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and theoretical reviews, it can be concluded that the quality of thematic-based Qur'an learning at SDIT Al-Fityan, SDIT Ar-Royyan, and SDIT Nurul Fikri in Pekanbaru has shown a commitment to integrating Qur'anic values into learning themes. However, its implementation has not yet been fully holistic. Learning is still dominated by cognitive approaches such as reading and memorizing verses, while the affective and psychomotor aspects have not received proportional attention in terms of assessment and reinforcement.

The three schools demonstrate variations in the application of methods and assessment practices. SDIT Nurul Fikri is more advanced in integrating learning projects that are relevant to Qur'anic values, while SDIT Al-Fityan and SDIT Ar-Royyan remain limited to traditional approaches. This shows that the quality of learning is strongly influenced by the initiative and competence of teachers in designing meaningful and contextual learning experiences.

An ideal evaluation of thematic learning requires alignment between objectives, learning strategies, and assessment systems. The misalignment among these three elements causes learning to fall short of achieving the integrative goals expected in Islamic education. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen teachers' competencies, particularly in developing value-based assessment instruments, applying active-reflective methods, and designing contextual learning based on projects and experiential activities.

Theoretically, the findings of this study reinforce the concepts of constructive alignment and experiential learning in the context of Islamic education, and

contribute to the development of thematic-based Qur'an learning practices in elementary schools. These findings also serve as important input for curriculum developers, school administrators, and teachers to direct learning not only toward cognitive aspects but also toward students' spiritual and social development in a balanced manner.

Thus, this study emphasizes that the success of thematic-based Qur'an learning in SDIT depends on the commitment of the institutions to support teachers through training, academic supervision, and the provision of learning tools that support value based thematic approaches. Ideal Qur'an learning should not only focus on memorization but also on internalizing values and shaping Qur'anic character in students. In addition to summarizing the main findings, this study highlights the practical implications of thematic-based Qur'an learning for educational policymakers and school administrators. Policymakers should design structured professional development programs that focus on thematic Qur'an pedagogy, integrating lesson planning, classroom implementation, and authentic assessment practices aligned with Qur'anic value. Moreover, schools are encouraged to establish academic supervision systems that monitor and support teachers' consistency in implementing integrative thematic methods.

From a managerial perspective, it is essential to strengthen collaborative teacher communities (MGMP) to facilitate peer learning, sharing of best practices, and the co creation of thematic Qur'an lesson plans that connect scriptural understanding with real life context. Additionally, government and school foundations should provide sufficient learning resources, including digital media and Qur'an-based thematic modules, to ensure uniformity and quality in teaching materials. At the global level, this study provides insights into how thematic Qur'an learning aligns with the international movement of holistic and value-based education, which emphasizes moral literacy, critical reflection, and character formation through spiritual integration.

This research therefore contributes to the global discourse on Islamic pedagogy by showing that effective Qur'anic education is not only about memorization but also about cultivating moral action and reflective understanding through contextual learning. In conclusion, strengthening teacher competence, institutional support, and policy frameworks are key strategies to ensure the sustainability of thematic Qur'an learning as a model that can bridge traditional Islamic instruction with contemporary educational demands worldwide.

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