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INTEGRATING QUR'ANIC VALUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAY: A LIVING QUR'AN APPROACH

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Kata Kunci:

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ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Pembiasaan hidup bersama Al-Qur'an sejak dini diharapkan dapat membantu anak memahami, menempatkan, dan menerima nilai-nilai Qur'ani sebagai bagian dari pengalaman personalnya. **Tujuan:** Tulisan ini membahas penerapan konsep Living Qur'an dalam dunia bermain anak usia dini sebagai upaya mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an secara kontekstual tanpa menghilangkan substansi ajarannya. **Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan studi kepustakaan yang dipadukan dengan analisis konseptual terhadap teori *Living Qur'an*, psikologi perkembangan anak usia dini, dan pendidikan Islam berbasis bermain. **Hasil:** Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa bermain merupakan metode yang efektif untuk menginternalisasikan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an kepada anak usia dini. Aktivitas seperti lagu religius, permainan edukatif, dan cerita interaktif berperan sebagai media yang mampu menghadirkan pengalaman belajar yang menyenangkan sekaligus bermakna. **Kesimpulan:** Konsep *Living Qur'an* dalam konteks ini menekankan pengembangan kemampuan anak untuk menikmati dan menghayati pengalaman religius secara alami sesuai tahap perkembangannya. Dengan demikian, pendidikan Islam berbasis bermain yang berlandaskan *Living Qur'an* dapat menjadi model pendidikan holistik yang mengintegrasikan dimensi kognitif, afektif, dan spiritual dalam proses pembelajaran anak usia dini.

Keywords:	ABSTRACTS
Living Qur'an; early childhood; play-based learning; Qur'anic values; Islamic education	<p>Background Living life with the Quran from an early age is expected to help children understand, integrate, and accept Quranic values as part of their personal experience. Purpose: This paper discusses the application of the concept Living Qur'an in the world of early childhood play as an effort to integrate Quranic values contextually without losing the substance of its teachings. Method: This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study combined with conceptual analysis of theory. Living Qur'an, early childhood developmental psychology, and play-based Islamic education. Result: The study found that play is an effective method for internalizing Quranic values in young children. Activities such as religious songs, educational games, and interactive stories serve as media that can provide both enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences. Conclusion: Draft Living Qur'an In this context, it emphasizes the development of children's abilities to enjoy and experience religious experiences naturally according to their developmental stage. Thus, play-based Islamic education is based on Living Qur'an can be a holistic education model that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions in the early childhood learning process.</p>

A. INTRODUCTION

The Quran is the primary source of Islamic teachings that functions not only as a sacred text to be read, but also as a guide to life that must be internalized and practiced in everyday behavior, traditions, and social norms (Briliansyah and Iskandar 2024), as reflected in the living Quran approach. In the modern context, this approach emphasizes that the Quran should be lived, not merely studied textually. Integrating Quranic values into early childhood education is increasingly important, especially amid moral degradation influenced by secular mass media, because the early childhood period is a golden age in which spiritual, social, and moral values are formed and will strongly shape future personality (Bonita et al. 2022). Therefore, child-appropriate activities such as play become an effective medium to internalize Quranic values within families and schools and to ensure their continuity across generations (Ridwan and Maryati 2024).

The integration of Quranic values in early childhood education is currently more necessary because of the challenges of morality and secularization that have discarded the noble values of Islam. The golden age phase is a crucial time in the formation of a child's character. Therefore, teaching Quranic values must begin in a way that is enjoyable for children. There is a tendency towards the cognitive aspect in children in early Islamic education, while the meaning within is internalized first (Khoiriah et al. 2023). Education must emphasize human experience above the meaning of the elements of human survival on earth, as the Word of Allah QS. Al-Alaq 96:1-2:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ

“Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot of blood”(Agama RI 2010).

This verse emphasizes that anything related to recognizing the meaning of human existence and its relationship with God from the beginning of life.

Existing studies on the living Quran are largely concentrated on adult communities, focusing on reading traditions, social interpretations, and religious practices (Yusron and Suryadilaga 2019), while research that integrates the living Quran into early childhood education remains limited, fragmented, and unsystematic. At the same time, most studies on early childhood Islamic education emphasize cognitive and affective approaches—such as moral instruction through prophetic stories—without formally positioning the living Quran as a comprehensive concept and methodological framework within early childhood Islamic education.

This article aims to describe the integration of the living Quran into early childhood play through creative educational methods, identify play activities as a medium for internalizing Quranic values (Idhayani et al. 2023), and formulate learning plans that emphasize the urgency of Islamic character formation. Using a participatory pedagogical approach, the study positions the Quran not as a text to be translated, but as a lived experience that children encounter in concrete ways through creative, locally contextualized play (Dinata et al. 2025). The study hypothesizes that integrating the living Quran into play can produce a more meaningful model of Islamic education and represents a continuation of spiritually oriented research in Islamic studies.

This article conceptually integrates the living Quran, early childhood Islamic education, and child development theory (Dardum and Sa’adah 2021) through a multidisciplinary approach that connects Piaget’s theory of symbolic play and Vygotsky’s sociocultural learning perspective within Islamic education. Employing a qualitative literature-based conceptual analysis, the study examines the phenomenon of the living Quran in early childhood by drawing on diverse disciplines, including Quranic studies, Islamic education, developmental psychology, and early childhood learning methods. This interdisciplinary framework enables the living Quran to be understood not only normatively and theologically (Wahyuni et al. 2023), but also pedagogically, psychologically, and sociologically, with the aim of contributing to the formation of a spiritually aware Muslim generation.

This method consists of three steps, namely identifying primary and secondary literature. Primary literature in this study includes the holy book of the Qur'an along with classical and contemporary interpretations, as well as the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW which relate to early childhood education, for example the hadith about the nature of children:

“Every child is born in a state of fitrah”. (HR al-Bukhari and Muslim).

This article integrates the concept of the living Quran with early childhood Islamic education and child development theory through a multidisciplinary, qualitative literature-based analysis, drawing on Piaget’s symbolic play and Vygotsky’s sociocultural learning perspectives. By examining the living Quran in early childhood from Quranic, pedagogical, psychological, and sociological dimensions, the study aims to contribute to the development of an Islamic education framework that fosters spiritual awareness in future generations (Ahmad 2024).

In Piaget’s preoperational stage, children understand the world through symbolic play and imagination, so the integration of the Living Qur’an should be presented in non-patronizing, enjoyable play activities such as role-playing, interactive stories, simple experiments, and aesthetic exploration. This approach views early childhood Quranic education not merely as knowledge transfer but as attitude transformation and spiritual sensitivity formation, aligning with Vygotsky’s concept of the zone of proximal development, where educators act as social mediators through scaffolding, dialogue, and modeling. As a result, Quranic values like honesty, compassion, responsibility, and care for others are not only taught verbally but are directly experienced by children within the dynamics of play.

This multidisciplinary approach is expected to gradually and organically foster children's spiritual awareness. Through pedagogically and theologically designed games, children not only gain enjoyable learning experiences but also build a foundation of Qur'anic values that will form the basis of their character and behavior in later stages of development. Thus, the concept of "Living the Qur'an in the world of play" not only offers methodological innovation but also opens up new opportunities for a more relevant and humanistic renewal of early childhood Islamic education in the context of modern society.

B. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative, library-based conceptual-analytical approach (Wahyuni et al. 2023) that focuses on critically reviewing existing ideas (Ichsan and Ali 2020), concepts, and scientific findings from academic sources to examine the phenomenon of the Living Qur’an in early childhood. By integrating disciplines such as Qur’anic studies, Islamic education, child developmental psychology, and early childhood learning methodologies, this interdisciplinary approach enables the Living Qur’an to be understood not only from a normative-theological perspective but also from pedagogical, psychological, and sociological dimensions (Mulasi et al. 2023).

The methodological stages of this research include: Identification of Primary and Secondary Literature. The primary literature in this study includes the holy book, the Qur'an, along with classical and contemporary interpretations, as well as the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) relating to child education. For example, the hadith on the natural disposition of children:

“Every child is born in a state of purity (fitrah).”
“Every child is born in a state of fitrah.”(Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim)
(Abdullah, 2018)

Secondary literature includes contemporary academic works on the Living Qur'an, Islamic pedagogy, child developmental psychology, and creative learning methods (Briliansyah and Iskandar 2024). Theme categorization The collected literature was then grouped based on the following themes: (a) the concept of the Living Qur'an; (b) early childhood education in Islam; (c) child developmental psychology; (d) play-based learning methods; and (e) models of integrating Qur'anic values into the world of children.

This study adopts a qualitative, library-based conceptual analysis that critically examines the Living Qur'an in early childhood through interdisciplinary perspectives, including Qur'anic studies, Islamic education, developmental psychology, and early childhood pedagogy, allowing the phenomenon to be understood beyond normative-theological views and within pedagogical, psychological, and sociological contexts (Azizah 2024).

Emphasizes theoretical exploration rather than empirical verification, aiming to develop a conceptual framework that can serve as the foundation for future implementable models, rather than providing quantitative field data (Danisma et al. 2025). Using content analysis as its main operational technique, the research systematically examines relevant literature to identify conceptual patterns, methodological trends, and theoretical constructs in studies of the Living Qur'an and early childhood education by coding key findings into interconnected categories such as Qur'anic values, pedagogical strategies, child development dynamics, and play-based value internalization.

The next stage is interpretation, namely the process of drawing meaning and theoretical implications from the literature findings. In this study, interpretation is directed at connecting the thoughts of experts with the context of the implementation of Islamic early childhood education. This procedure not only strengthens the conceptual validity of the research but also ensures that the developed Living Qur'an integration model has a scientific basis that can be accounted for. Thus, the content analysis technique becomes an important methodological instrument that enriches the depth and coherence of the resulting synthesis.

C. RESULT

1. Main Characteristics of the Living Quran Paradigm for Early Childhood

The first characteristic is contextualization, which ensures that Quranic values are not delivered raw, but rather carefully adapted to the cognitive, emotional, and social developmental stages of children (Aprida and Suyadi 2022). Early childhood is in the pre-operational stage, where their thinking is still symbolic, concrete, and not yet logical (Azizah 2024). Therefore, teaching the values of gratitude, patience, or honesty must be repackaged into experiences that can be felt, observed and played (Munte and Rahman 2025). Contextualization rejects teaching methods that overemphasize memorization without understanding, and instead, encourages the use of media stories, songs and role-playing as a bridge to understanding the essential meaning of the Quranic teachings (Notosrijoedono 2013). For example, the abstract concept of monotheism is transformed into a concrete experience of praying only to Allah when asking for simple help in playing (Damanik et al. 2025).

The second characteristic is habituation. This concept is in line with Al-Ghazali's view regarding the importance of habituation in the formation of children's morals. In the context of living the Quran, habituation means that children are accustomed to repeatedly carrying out behaviors that reflect Quranic values in their daily play activities and social interactions (Normilah et al. 2023). Values such as saying hello, sharing toys, telling the truth, or saying alhamdulillah after receiving something, must be integrated consistently and become a routine part of the child's environment. The goal is to form good habits from an early age (Sari 2019), so that these Quranic behaviors are firmly embedded and carried out spontaneously, not because of coercion or instructions alone. This habituation is a bridge between knowledge (cognitive) and practice (psychomotor) (Bakari et al. 2022).

The third characteristic is internalization, where living Quran education tries to shape the child's personality, namely that the values can become part of the child's self (Soetari 2014). Internalization is achieved because the child feels joy, for example when he shares a toy ball, it comes from love, not fear (Mayunda and Zulkarnaen 2024). These three things (contextualization, habituation, internalization) work synergistically, ensuring that Quranic education truly lives within the child.

2. The Principle of the Relevance of Developmental Psychology to the Internalization of Quranic Values

The concrete-experiential principle recognizes that young children understand abstract concepts through concrete experiences (Wardhani 2017). If we want to teach the value of gratitude, it is not enough to teach it through lectures; it must be practiced. For example, through experiential learning activities such as planting seeds and watching them grow, children are then encouraged to express gratitude to God for water, soil, and sunlight. This principle shifts the learning of

values from mere memorization to experiencing and interacting directly with the objects of value (Ramli et al. 2024).

The socio-cultural principle refers to Vygotsky's theory, this principle illustrates to us that a child learns through social communication with his parents, teachers and friends (Erik Wijaya and Farah Nuraini 2023). A socio-cultural environment that is full of Quranic values (school or home that is full of greetings, prayers and polite interactions) becomes a "zone of proximal development" (ZPD) that helps children absorb values (Darmawati 2024). Internalization of Quranic values occurs optimally in a community that practices them.

The principle of role modeling is in line with Albert Bandura's social learning theory, where the role models of teachers and parents who display Quranic morals are far more effective than mere verbal instruction (Handayani 2024). Children are excellent imitators; they do not learn honesty from what adults say, but from whether adults tell the truth in real situations. Role modeling is the most powerful and direct non-verbal learning method for early childhood (Al Mubarak 2020).

The principle of emotional effectiveness states that moral concepts must be enriched with positive feelings (Syamsul Hadi 2013). From an implementation perspective, a positive response to Quranic values should gradually be instilled in children. Consistency in applying values, such as making it a habit to pray before meals, is an example of a very important part of the habituation and internalization process (Azizah 2024).

3. Principles of Quranic Education in the World of Play

The world of play is the right thing to apply the living Quran to children (Hidayah, n.d.). There are four principles that must be achieved. The first is the integration of Quranic values into daily activities. The natural place to instill Quranic values in children is through play. The second is suitability to the child's developmental stage. Values must be packaged in symbols, stories, songs, and simple games that are interesting for the pre-operational phase. The third is a positive emotional experience, playing must be fun, because joy increases the absorption of internalization of values. Fourth is the example of adults. Parents and teachers must participate in play to teach ethics that are in accordance with Islamic religious and cultural norms (Dariah 2018).

This discussion presents the theoretical basis of Islamic arguments and in-depth elaboration regarding the relevance and practical implementation of the living Quran paradigm in early childhood education, as well as its integration with psychology and the world of children's play.

D. DISCUSSION

a. Definition and Urgency of Living Qur'an

The Living Quran rejects the separation between sacred text and life practices (Hidayat 2025). The direction of the Quran's correction is not only normative text, but also life values that must be practiced (Ningsih et al. 2025). In early childhood education, the main target is to instill Quranic values from an early age such as monotheism, gratitude, honesty, patience, and compassion. QS. At-Atahrim 66:6:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

“Protect yourself and your family from the fire of hell”

This verse shows the moral responsibility of parents and teachers as early education in moral values before puberty (Faris Maulana Akbar 2022).

b. Relevance to Classical Islamic Education

This paradigm is not entirely new, but rather has its roots in Islamic education. Al Ghazali, in his work *Ihya Ulumuddin*, emphasized that a child's heart is like a pure gem ready to be shaped. He emphasized habituation as the primary method. In the context of the living Quran, this habituation is expanded not only to accustom to memorization, but also to accustom values in the world of play, imagination, and concrete experience (Rahmawati and Sumedi 2020). In addition, the hadith of the Prophet SAW;

وَمُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سِنِينَ وَاصِرُوا بُرُومًا مُعَلِّمِيهَا وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ، وَفَرَّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ

“Command your children to pray when they are seven years old, and beat them (if they refuse) when they are ten years old, and separate their beds” (Narrated by Abu Dawud, no. 495).

This hadith demonstrates that internalization of worship values begins at an early age, before tamyiz (Islamic teachings). The "living Quran" paradigm aligns with the Prophet's Sunnah, which instills worship values from an early age. "Living Quran" is part of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Athas's concept of ta'dib (religious teaching), which focuses on instilling morals and spiritual awareness based on the Quran.

c. Modern Psychological Perspectives

Child development psychology also shows that stimulation must be provided when children are 0-6 years old (Uce 2017). Jean Piaget emphasized that children learn through play and imitation (Marinda 2020). Therefore, Quranic values must be presented concretely. Lev Vygotsky reminded how important community interaction is in cognitive maturation and the living Quran reflects the values obtained through daily relationships. Erik Erikson emphasized the child's initiative engineering phase (Christiana et al. 2014), namely when the living Quran method encourages children to conduct positive experiments in expressing values (Adibah 2017).

d. Islamic Perspective (Concept of Nature)

Islamic psychology aligns with modern findings through the concept of fitrah (Hasmiansyah et al. 2021). In the hadith, "every child is born in a state of fitrah," therefore children possess beautiful and good instincts. Education is tasked with preserving and developing this fitrah. The spirit of a child's potential is clearly reflected in Qs. an-Nahl 16:78.

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

Allah gave you hearing, sight, and heart so that you may be grateful). This is an affirmation that the potential of the senses and conscience (*al-afidah*) is the basic capital that must be developed through Quranic values education from the beginning (Mujiono and Sutrisno 2022).

e. The World of Play as a Medium for Quranic Education

Play is a natural language and the most effective learning method for children (Ramadhanti and Mawarda 2025). In the Islamic perspective, play is legitimated, and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) even exemplified loving and playful interactions with children. QS. Al-Kahf 18:46 refers to children (*al-banun*) as “the adornment of the life of this world” who must be cared for and educated in a fun way.

f. Types of Quranic Games (Methodological Integration)

Qur'anic role-playing with children imitating Qur'anic characters, or they play the role of characters in the present. In practice, this activity gives rise to a direct appreciation of values in everyday life (Putra 2015).

Interactive Islamic songs and music: In every person, music helps memory (Dharmawan 2015). Simple songs with Quranic lyrics (e.g., cheerful rhythms for QS. Al-Ikhlâs or daily prayers) make memorization and understanding fun (*affective learning*)

Quranic stories and tales (*storytelling*): packaging the story of the prophet in an interactive format, where children are invited to ask questions and empathize. This instills the values of patience, faith, and courage in a persuasive, not patronizing, way (Siregar et al. 2025).

Collaborative Games (*cooperative games*): Games that require cooperation (for example, stacking blocks together) are a means of instilling the value of *ta'awun* (helping each other) (Agustin and Rahwana 2023), according to QS. al-Maidah 5:2 children learn that collaboration is a teaching of the Quran.

g. Integration of Quranic Values in Play Activities.

Focus on internalizing values, four core values: (1) The Value of Gratitude (*al-Shukr*), the foundation of QS. Ibrahim verse 7 “If you are grateful, I will increase your favors). This application uses the game “Guess the favors of Allah” (showing pictures of food, nature toys or the song “*alhamdulillah*” in a happy atmosphere, so that children learn to appreciate small favors spontaneously. (2) The Value of Honesty (*as-Sidiq*), the basis of QS. Al-Ahzab verse 70 “...*fear Allah and speak the truth*” and hadith about honesty leading to heaven. Application in “Playing the market for sale and purchase” or the game of hiding objects, the teacher gives examples and praises the child who chooses and speaks honestly about his results and actions. (3) The value of love (*Mercy*), the foundation of QS. Al-Anbiya verse 107 (*Prophet Muhammad was sent as a mercy to the worlds.*). The application is through role playing “help your friend” or sharing activities, children learn empathy and concern for others, emulating the Prophet's love for his children and grandchildren. (4) The value of helping each other (*hatred*), the foundation of QS. Al-Maidah verse 2 (*Please help you in righteousness and piety.*). Application through group games such as stacking

blocks or tidying up toys together will strengthen the understanding that helping each other is an act of worship.

Overall, the living Quran demands value education that is inseparable from the child's real life (Sastra Atmaja 2024). The Quran must be lived out in behavior, not just memorized in the head, enabling young children to grow with a strong moral foundation and in line with their natural potential.

Analysis/Discussion

The Living Qur'an paradigm in early childhood education presents a new approach that emphasizes the connection between the sacred text, children's psychological development, and the world of play as the primary medium of learning. This discussion expands the theoretical meaning of the study's findings by examining how the characteristics of the Living Qur'an (contextualization, habituation, and internalization) are functionally integrated with the principles of developmental psychology and the concept of play-based learning. Thus, this study highlights not merely Islamic values as objects of memorization but as everyday life experiences that comprehensively shape children's character, behavior, and affection.

1. Living Qur'an as a Paradigmatic Framework for Islamic Early Childhood Education

Epistemologically, the Living Qur'an paradigm emerged as a response to the disconnect between the Qur'anic text and the realities of social life (Hidayat and Masyhur 2025). This concept emphasizes that the Qur'an is not merely read (reading the text), but also experienced and realized in action (living the text). When this paradigm is applied to Early Childhood Education (PAUD), it forms a pedagogical framework that places Qur'anic values at the core of all learning activities, not merely additional content.

The urgency of this paradigm can be traced through its sharia foundations, including QS. al-Tahrim [66]: 6, which emphasizes family education as the primary bulwark of morality. In the context of early childhood, this verse legitimizes that values education must begin from the earliest foundations. The Living Qur'an paradigm then becomes a medium for integrating basic values such as monotheism, gratitude, patience, honesty, and compassion into children's daily lives in a form appropriate to their world.

This concept is also closely related to the classical tradition of Islamic education, especially Al-Ghazali's ideas about moral habituation, as well as the concept of *correction*. According to Al-Attas, who emphasized the internalization of revelation-based adab (ethics). Thus, the Living Qur'an is not an innovation divorced from tradition, but rather a contemporary reformulation that reconciles Islamic scholarly tradition with modern scientific findings in the fields of pedagogy and developmental psychology.

2. Analysis of the Characteristics of the Living Qur'an Paradigm in Early Childhood

a. Contextualization as Adaptation of Values to Children's Developmental Stages

Contextualization is the most fundamental characteristic of the Living Qur'an paradigm, as it emphasizes that Qur'anic values cannot be imparted to children raw. At the preoperational stage (Piaget's perspective), children are not yet capable of understanding theological abstractions. Therefore, teaching values must be packaged into concrete experiences—through stories, games, visual symbols, and emotional activities—that allow children to experience the values before they cognitively understand them.

Through contextualization, concepts like gratitude are translated into planting and observing growth; patience is understood through a game of waiting for one's turn; and the concept of monotheism is realized through simple prayers, such as asking for help from God alone when facing minor difficulties while playing. This demonstrates that contextualization is a pedagogical mechanism that aligns with children's biological and psychosocial development.

b. Habituation as the Formation of Qur'anic Behavior Patterns

Habituation is the next stage of contextualization. Values introduced through concrete experiences need to be instilled through consistent repetition in daily activities. This aligns with Al-Ghazali's view that character is formed through repeated habits over time.

In the context of early childhood education (PAUD), habituation is achieved through instilling habits such as greeting children, sharing toys, maintaining cleanliness, telling the truth, and reciting prayers at the beginning of activities. These behaviors are not forced, but rather fostered in a pleasant atmosphere. This habituation also creates a bridge between the cognitive and psychomotor domains: children practice values not because they are told to, but because they are accustomed to doing so.

c. Internalization as the Peak of Learning Qur'anic Values

Internalization is the highest stage, where Quranic values are not only known or practiced but also become part of the child's conscience and personality. Children who sincerely share without being asked, or who tell the truth despite the risk of punishment, demonstrate that these values have become ingrained in their affective structure.

The Living Qur'an approach understands that internalization only occurs when values are linked to positive emotions. Therefore, every value education activity must provide a sense of security, happiness, and appreciation. Internalization emphasizes that Qur'anic education should not be coercive, but rather persuasive-affective and centered on meaningful experiences.

3. The Relevance of Developmental Psychology in Internalizing Qur'anic Values

Analysis of the relationship between the characteristics of the Living Qur'an paradigm and developmental psychology theory shows a fundamental harmony.

a. Concrete-Experiential Principle

Children learn through experience, not lectures. Therefore, Quranic values must be presented through physical, visual, and emotional activities. This principle bridges children's cognitive limitations in understanding theological abstractions.

3.2 Socio-Cultural Principles (Vygotsky)

Values are not learned individually, but through interactions within a Qur'anic environment formed by teachers, parents, and peers. The ZPD becomes an effective space for internalization.

b. The Principle of Exemplary Behavior (Bandura)

Role modelling is the most effective method of values education. Children learn more through observation than through instruction. Disciplined, patient, and honest teachers will produce children with similar character traits.

c. Emotional-Affective Principles

Internalization occurs when values are associated with positive feelings. Joyful sharing or joyful prayer together creates strong affective associations.

d. Gradual and Consistent Principle

Early childhood has a short attention span and gradual understanding. Therefore, Quranic values must be taught gradually and consistently throughout the daily routine. This principle ensures a steady process of habituation and internalization.

4. The World of Play as a Medium for Implementing the Living Qur'an

Play is the learning method most suited to a child's natural disposition and developmental stage. In Islam, play is not only permitted but also encouraged when it serves as a medium for affection, interaction, and moral education.

a. Games as a Living Space for Qur'anic Values

The Living Qur'an paradigm understands that values cannot be taught verbally; they must be lived out in action. The world of play allows values to be present in real-life situations experienced by children, not merely in narratives remote from their experiences.

b. Types of Quranic Games

Four main types of games can be used to integrate values: Quranic Role Playing Game
Introducing the character of the prophet or moral values through fun role playing.

1. Interactive Islamic Songs and Music
Helps strengthen memorization and creates positive emotions.
2. Interactive Quranic Stories and Tales
Developing empathy and understanding of values through two-way dialogue.
3. Collaborative Games
Practice ta'awun, patience, and tolerance.

c. Four Main Principles of Qur'anic Education in Play

1. Values are integrated into daily activities.
2. According to the stage of development.
3. Delivering positive emotional experiences.
4. Adults serve as direct models in play. These principles make play a natural vehicle for internalizing values.

5. Integration of Qur'anic Values in Play Activities: Conceptual Analysis

Quranic values such as gratitude, honesty, compassion, and mutual assistance have a strong theological foundation and are applicable. Integrating them into games not only strengthens children's understanding but also connects the values to real-life experiences.

a. The Value of Gratitude

Apps like the "Guess Allah's Blessings" game or gardening together create concrete experiences that foster an awareness that everything is a gift from God. Gratitude becomes an affective experience, not just a simple "thank God."

b. Honesty Value

Islamic market games or reality puzzle games provide opportunities for children to practice telling the truth in fun situations. Positive reinforcement accelerates the internalization of honesty.

c. The Value of Love

Sharing games and helping each other help develop empathy. Children understand mercy through actions, not verbal definitions.

d. The Value of Helping Others

Playing block building games or cleaning up play equipment together emphasizes that collaboration is part of the obligatory Qur'anic morals.

6. Synthesis: Contribution of the Living Qur'an Paradigm to Early Childhood Education

The above analysis shows that the Living Qur'an paradigm provides a comprehensive conceptual framework for early childhood education. It integrates:

1. Sharia evidence as an ideological foundation.
2. Developmental psychology as a scientific basis.
3. Playing method as a pedagogical strategy.
4. Quranic values as an orientation for character formation.

This synthesis is important because it answers criticisms of Islamic PAUD practices that only focus on memorization without understanding, and corrects the tendency of values education to be too cognitive and instructive.

The Living Qur'an paradigm offers a more functional, humanistic, and natural learning alternative. Children not only learn about the Qur'an, but also live with it in their daily lives-through laughter, play, social interactions, and positive emotional experiences.

CONCLUSION

The integration of Quranic values in play activities confirms that *living quran* is not an abstract concept, but can be brought to life in the child's world through direct experience. The values of gratitude, honesty, love, and helping each other become a moral foundation that can be instilled through role-playing, songs, stories, and collaborative games. Thus, children learn the Quran not by memorization, but by meaningful actions.

The Living Quran paradigm in early childhood education is a holistic framework that emphasizes the internalization of Quranic values through the principles of contextualization, habituation, and internalization. This integration is supported by the developmental psychology of Piaget and Vygotsky and the concept of *fitrah*, with play as the primary medium. Values such as gratitude, honesty, compassion, and mutual assistance are instilled in a concrete and enjoyable way, ensuring the Quran lives in children's daily behavior.

Recommendations for the future include conducting action research to test the effectiveness of games in broadly instilling Quranic values, in the hope of producing a generation with good morals. This study is conceptual-theoretical, based on a literature review and a comparative analysis of developmental psychology and theology. However, there has been no field testing of the effectiveness of the game model. *living quran* The proposed conclusion regarding the success of this method is conceptually predictive.

Further research recommendations (1) Experimental research to compare the level of internalization of Quranic values between groups of children using the curriculum *living quran* and control group. (2) Qualitative case study to identify challenges and best practices in institutions that apply the method. *living quran* (3)

Development of instruments to assess the level of internalization of Quranic values in early childhood.

The Quran is the source of Islamic teachings that must be internalized and practiced. The Quran in Life emphasizes that the Quran must be lived out in everyday life (Briliansyah and Iskandar 2024). This approach seeks to emphasize that the Quran is not merely an object of textual study, but rather a "living" reality brought to life through the behavior, traditions, and social practices of Muslims (Ningsih et al. 2025).

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