



Moral and social development analysis of sixth-grade students: Insights from an Indonesian Islamic primary school

Indri Khairunnisa Erwinsyah¹, Muhammad Ikhlas²,

Selvi Simanjuntak³, Trisna Natalia Br Parapat⁴, Rendi Prilandi⁵, Asiah Ramadhani⁶

^{1,3,4,5}Undergraduate student of Primary School Teacher Education Program, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

^{2,6}Lecturer at Primary School Teacher Education Program, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

Corresponding email: mikhl@unimed.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the moral and social development of 6th-grade students at Al-Quba Islamic Primary School using a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data. The purpose of this research is to examine how students internalize and apply moral values in their daily interactions within an Islamic educational setting. The qualitative data were derived from semi-structured interviews with a Grade 6 teacher, while the quantitative data were gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to 28 students. The questionnaire was designed to assess students' adherence to values such as honesty, responsibility, altruism, discipline, humility, tolerance, inclusion, friendship, empathy and mediation. The results indicate that empathy ($M = 2.96$) and friendship ($M = 2.89$) were the most strongly upheld values, whereas humility received the lowest mean score ($M = 2.43$). This suggests that students exhibit strong social connections and compassion but may struggle with self-reflection and conflict resolution. The qualitative findings further reveal that teachers primarily assess students' moral and social behavior through classroom activities, emphasizing honesty and empathy, while values such as respect for differing opinions and cooperation were less emphasized. Feedback mechanisms, including classroom discussions and parent-teacher meetings, were instrumental in guiding students' moral development. However, challenges such as inconsistent adherence to school rules and varying levels of environmental awareness were noted. These insights contribute to the growing body of research on character education and its critical role in fostering students' overall development.

ARTICLE INFO

Received : Dec. 25, 2024

Revised : Mar. 4, 2025

Accepted : Mar. 31, 2025

KEYWORDS

*Character educations,
Mixed-methods, Moral
development, Primary
education, Social
development*

Suggested Citation (APA Style 7th Edition):

Erwinsyah, I. K., Ikhlas, M., Simanjuntak, S., Parapat, T.N.B., Prilandi, R., & Ramadhani, A. (2025). Moral and social development analysis of sixth-grade students: Insights from an Indonesian Islamic primary school. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, and Management*, 5(1), 100-112. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15193024>

INTRODUCTION

Morality is not an innate trait that individuals are born with; rather, it is a characteristic that evolves gradually over time and can be shaped through experiences, education, and social interactions (Dahl & Killen, 2018; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2013). Moral development refers to the way individuals gradually adopt and integrate the values, norms, and ethical principles upheld by society in line with their level of maturity and ability to navigate and adapt to social rules and expectations (Cowell et al., 2017; Rong & Kleiman-Weiner, 2024). This process is not automatic but rather requires an active engagement with the moral and ethical frameworks present in one's environment. It reflects the dynamic interaction between personal growth and societal influence, illustrating how individuals progress from basic understanding to more sophisticated and principled reasoning about right and wrong.

Moral education plays a vital role in determining young learners into responsible members of society. In the context of Indonesia, where Islamic schools (madrasahs) serve as key institutions in character formation, moral education is deeply intertwined with religious teachings (Rahayu et al., 2023). Islamic schools not only aim to provide academic knowledge but also focus on instilling ethical values that align with Islamic principles (Ilhami et al., 2022; Kuswanto et al., 2024). Despite the emphasis on moral education in these institutions, there remains a gap in understanding how students internalize these values and how effectively they are integrated into their daily interactions.

Moral development is multifaceted and encompasses two crucial dimensions: the cognitive and affective aspects (Gherman & Zander, 2024; Peplak et al., 2023). The cognitive dimension focuses on the intellectual process of distinguishing between good and bad or right and wrong, which involves acquiring knowledge and understanding ethical principles (Fernandez Gonzalez & Akrivou, 2024). On the other hand, the affective aspect pertains to the attitudinal and emotional components of morality, highlighting how individuals translate their understanding of ethical principles into concrete moral behaviors and decisions (Popoveniuc, 2021). Furthermore, the affective aspect involves the cultivation of empathy, responsibility, and an internal commitment to act in accordance with moral values (Decety & Cowell, 2014; Suazo et al., 2020). The integration of these cognitive and affective elements is essential for fostering comprehensive moral growth, as it ensures not only intellectual awareness of ethical principles but also their meaningful application in real-world situations. This holistic approach to moral development underlines its importance in shaping individuals who can contribute positively to their communities and society at large.

However, previous studies on moral education have often focused on broad theoretical perspectives without critically assessing their applicability to different educational contexts. A key distinction in moral education models lies in the contrast between secular and Islamic approaches. Secular models, such as Kohlberg's theory of moral development, emphasize rational moral reasoning and justice-based decision-making (Kohlberg, 1981). In contrast, Islamic moral education integrates divine guidance with ethical reasoning, where moral behavior is shaped by religious values, communal responsibility, and accountability to God (Istiyani et al., 2024; Mikani et al., 2022). Unlike secular models, which prioritize individual autonomy in moral decision-making, Islamic education stresses moral obligation as a collective and spiritual duty. By comparing these frameworks, this study seeks to highlight the distinctive contributions of Islamic moral education and address the lack of comparative analysis in existing literature.

Furthermore, Maharani (2014) offers several insights into the factors that influence moral development in children. These factors include: (1) the role of conscience, or the capability to distinguish among right and wrong, especially when a child faces a situation that demands a decision regarding the appropriate action to take; (2) the role of guilt and shame, which arise when children act in ways that deviate from expected behavior and violate societal rules; and (3) the role of social interaction, which allows children to engage in agreements and learn behavioral standards that are established by their community, family, and school, and apply these norms in their interactions with others.

Schools play a fundamental role in this process by providing structured environments where students internalize ethical values and develop social competencies (Cowell et al., 2017; Rong & Kleiman-Weiner, 2024). Research highlights that educational strategies designed to foster student engagement, such as interactive read-alouds, can effectively support moral development by helping young learners comprehend social norms and ethical dilemmas through storytelling (Rubin & Traverro, 2022). The integration of such approaches in primary education has been shown to enhance not only literacy skills but also students' ability to empathize and reflect on moral issues. Moreover, innovative teaching methods such as the flipped classroom strategy encourage active student participation and deeper critical thinking, which are crucial components of moral growth (Olanrewaju et al., 2023). By shifting the focus from passive reception of knowledge to interactive learning, students gain a better understanding of responsibility, cooperation, and ethical reasoning.

Morality and moral education can be viewed from two perspectives: external and internal. Externally, morality governs social interactions with others, while internally, it regulates self-relations. In other words, moral education serves as both a control over social conditions and a means for self-actualization (Lind & Nowak, 2015; Zigler, 1998). Both philosophers and educators, including parents, generally agree that these two roles of morality are interconnected—what benefits society also benefits the individual, and vice versa (Wren, 2008). Thus, moral development in children is considered a fundamental goal of formal education. Additionally, society increasingly recognizes the crucial role of the environment in shaping children's understanding of moral and social norms. Proficiency in assessing stages of moral reasoning can only be achieved by fully understanding these stages and applying them to children's responses (Coskun & Kara, 2019).

Moral education for children encompasses more than just teaching the difference between right and wrong; it also involves guiding children in making sound moral decisions in a variety of real-life situations. This process includes the development of essential values such as kindness, honesty, compassion, respect for others, responsibility, and empathy (Annam et al., 2024; Ardi et al., 2018). These values are fundamental in helping children navigate social interactions, resolve conflicts, and build strong interpersonal relationships. By fostering these principles, moral education equips children with the tools necessary to face challenges with integrity and empathy.

Moral education is a cornerstone in the formation of children's personality and character. From an early age, children begin to internalize ethical principles, which influence their behavior and decision-making processes. It offers a robust foundation for their moral, social, and emotional development, which is critical for shaping responsible, empathetic, and socially engaged individuals (Hafizi & Wiyono, 2023; McDaniel, 1998). This education not only helps children develop a sense of right and wrong but also enables them to understand the broader societal impact of their actions. As children mature, the lessons learned through moral education support their ability to contribute positively to society, creating a more harmonious and compassionate community.

Social Development

Social attitude refers to an individual's awareness of their impact on the social environment. It is not an innate trait but rather a characteristic that develops throughout life, influenced by social and cultural stimuli such as family, school, community norms, and religious or cultural practices (Aguayo et al., 2021; Listyaningrum, 2018). Children, in particular, develop social attitudes through interactions with those around them, especially within the family environment, which plays a crucial role in shaping their social learning. Social learning allows children to acquire new behaviors and attitudes by observing and engaging with others.

Khoiruddin (2018) identifies several factors that influence children's social development: (1) Family environment – the family is the first and most important educational setting, where children receive their initial education and emotional guidance. Parents' behaviors and attitudes profoundly impact children's social and emotional growth. (2) School environment – schools provide a secondary environment for social interaction, where relationships with educators and peers can influence children's development. For instance, educators' behavior,

such as the use of violence, can adversely affect children by modeling aggressive problem-solving strategies. (3) Peer interactions – peers perform a crucial role in children's social development by providing opportunities for comparison, learning from each other's behaviors, and enhancing maturity through group activities.

Nurmalitasari (2015) defines social development as the process by which children learn to adapt to societal rules and norms, beginning with their interactions within the family. As children expand their social circle, they begin interacting with neighbors and, eventually, schoolmates. Social development involves socialization, which is the process of adapting to one's environment according to societal expectations (Jasmi et al., 2012). Social development refers to the maturation of an individual's social relationships, starting from close family ties to broader community connections (Saleh et al., 2017).

Adler (2015) outlines four key social skills that are interrelated in social development: basic skills (recognizing others, making eye contact, sharing information), communication skills (listening, speaking clearly, convincing others), team-building skills (cooperation, respecting opinions, helping others), and problem-solving skills (self-control, empathy, discussion, and respect for differing viewpoints). Santrock (2007) highlights that elementary school children experience significant social development between the ages of 6 to 11, particularly in their ability to establish social relationships. Children's interpersonal skills can be seen in behaviors such as greeting others, engaging in discussions, and following social rules. Intrapersonal skills, such as expressing affection, resolving conflicts, and influencing others positively, are also critical aspects of their social growth.

Problem of the Study

Based on the researchers' initial observations, several issues were identified at SD MIS Al-Quba, illustrating challenges in students' moral and social behaviors. One notable case involved a student who displayed a lack of respect towards teachers and failed to adhere to school regulations. For instance, the school enforces rules requiring male students to maintain neat appearances, including short hair. However, a male student refused to comply with this rule despite being reminded by a teacher to shape his hair. Instead of following the advice, the student reported the matter to his parents, who responded by confronting and threatening the teacher rather than addressing their child's behavior. This case highlights a moral deficit in the student's attitude, negatively influencing their social interactions within the school community. It underscores the need for stronger moral guidance and parental cooperation in fostering respectful behavior.

Another challenge observed during the study was the students' lack of focus and respect during classroom activities. While delivering lessons, the researchers noted that some students were disengaged, talking among themselves, and disrupting the learning environment. Others appeared absorbed in their own world, showing little interest in the materials being taught. This lack of attentiveness not only hindered the overall classroom dynamics but also reflected gaps in the development of essential values such as respect and cooperation. These observations emphasize the need for targeted interventions to cultivate better moral awareness and social conduct among students, ultimately enhancing their academic and interpersonal growth.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the moral and social development of 6th-grade students of an Islamic Primary School. This includes examining how students internalize moral values and apply them in their interactions with teachers, peers, and the broader school environment. Additionally, the study aims to identify specific challenges in their moral reasoning and social behaviors, such as adherence to rules, respect for authority, and interpersonal communication. By exploring these aspects, the research seeks to provide insights into the factors influencing their development and propose strategies to foster a more holistic approach to character education.

This study aims to fill the gap by examining the moral and social development of students in an Islamic primary school setting. By focusing on how students perceive and apply moral values in their everyday interactions,

this research provides insights into the effectiveness of moral education programs in Islamic schools. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on character education and offer practical recommendations for enhancing moral instruction in faith-based educational institutions.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Mixed-methods research permits for the combination of numerical data with in-depth insights, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In this study, quantitative data is gathered through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to Grade 6 students at the Al-Quba College Foundation Islamic Primary School, located in Medan Denai, Indonesia. This survey aims to assess the students' moral and social attitudes based on predefined indicators. Subsequently, qualitative data is collected through interviews with Grade 6 teachers to gain deeper insights into the factors influencing students' moral and social development. By combining these two approaches, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that shape students' character formation in this educational context. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of effective strategies for enhancing moral and social education in Islamic primary schools.

Participants

The data in this study consists of the results of interviews conducted with a Grade 6 teacher and questionnaires distributed to 28 Grade 6 students. The data sources in this study are informants from selected primary schools. The selection of schools and informants was based on a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a deliberate, non-random technique in which participants are chosen due to particular traits or qualifications that are relevant to the goals of the study (Campbell et al., 2020; Palinkas et al., 2015).

The sample size of 28 students and one teacher was determined based on the total student population in the Grade 6 cohort at Al-Quba Islamic Primary School. This number is considered representative as it accounts for the full class enrollment, ensuring comprehensive insights into the moral and social development of students within this educational setting. Additionally, the inclusion of a single teacher, who has been instructing these students for an extended period, provides a well-informed perspective on their behavioral and moral progress. Previous studies in primary schools context have also employed similar sample sizes for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method research, validating the representativeness of this approach (Ikhlas et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2021; Zakiyyah et al., 2023)

According to the classification of moral and social attitudes, this primary school is recognized for its strong emphasis on Islamic religious education. This classification is derived from the students' average achievements in subjects such as tahfidz (Quran memorization), Arabic, and other religious studies. The selection criteria for the study are as follows: 1) the school is located in the Medan Denai area; 2) it has a reputation for fostering good moral and social attitudes; and 3) sixth-grade teachers and students are willing to participate as informants.

In conducting this study, the authors adhere to the following ethical principles: 1) obtaining informed consent from all informants; 2) ensuring the confidentiality of informants' identities and information; 3) providing informants the opportunity to express their opinions freely; 4) respecting the right of informants to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Instruments

The instruments used in this study consist of a questionnaire and an interview guide. The interviews conducted were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility while ensuring that key topics were covered. A draft of the interview questions was prepared prior to the interviews. The interviews were conducted with one Grade 6 teacher from the selected school to gather insights on the implementation of moral and social development attitude assessments. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. The following are the questions from the interview:

- What is meant by individual social and moral development?
- What are the stages of social and moral development in children?
- What are the factors that can affect the social and moral development of children?
- How do teachers and parents try to develop children's social and moral skills?
- What are the implications of social and moral development on education?

In addition to the interviews, a questionnaire was administered to Grade 6 students to collect quantitative data on their social and moral attitudes. The questionnaire items were inspired by previous studies, including those by Collet et al. (2023), Karnia & Nurhasan (2023), and Magdalena et al. (2021). The questionnaire was designed to assess the students' attitudes regarding social and moral behavior. The students were asked to respond to the following statements (sample):

- If you make a mistake, would you admit it?
- If you find someone else's belongings, would you return the item?
- When you help someone, do you expect a reward?

The questionnaire took approximately 45 minutes to complete, and it was administered to all Grade 6 students at the selected school. The combination of semi-structured interviews and the student questionnaire allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the students' social and moral attitudes, as well as insights from the teacher regarding their development.

Data analysis

The qualitative data, derivative from the semi-structured interviews with the Grade 6 teacher, were analyzed manually using Microsoft Word (Isangula et al., 2024). The transcription of the interviews was the first step in the process, followed by the identification and categorization of key themes related to the social and moral development of the students. The transcriptions were thoroughly read and re-read to ensure accurate interpretation of the informant's responses. Key phrases, concepts, and insights regarding the factors influencing moral and social development were highlighted. Subsequently, these responses were mapped into thematic categories for further analysis. This process enabled the identification of common patterns and provided an in-depth understanding of the perspectives of the teacher on the students' development in the areas of morality and social behavior.

Furthermore, the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire administered to the Grade 6 students were analyzed using Microsoft Excel (Abbott, 2014). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and describe the data. The primary statistical measures used include frequencies to determine how often certain responses were given and mean scores to gauge the overall trend of students' social and moral attitudes. These statistical measures allowed for an objective understanding of the students' behavior patterns and attitudes, enabling a comparison of their responses across various items in the questionnaire. The data analysis process was conducted with an emphasis on simplicity and clarity, ensuring that the findings were easily interpretable and relevant to the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Results and Discussion section offers a comprehensive analysis of the study's findings. It begins with a presentation of the quantitative data collected via the questionnaire, providing an overview of the students' moral and social development levels. This is followed by qualitative data from in-depth teacher interviews, which serve to complement and deepen the understanding of the quantitative findings. By integrating both data sources, this

section aims to present a holistic perspective on the research topic.

The following table presents the results derived from the quantitative instrument - a questionnaire designed to assess the moral and social development of sixth-grade students at Al Quba Islamic Primary School. This table serves as an initial overview of the quantitative data, which is later enriched by qualitative insights gathered through teacher interviews.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Students' Responses on Moral and Social Development

No	Statement	Value Embedded	Frequency			Mean
			1. Disagree	2. Neutral	3. Agree	
1	If you make a mistake, would you admit it?	Honesty	0	3	25	2.89
2	If you find someone else's belongings, would you return the item?	Responsibility	1	1	26	2.89
3	When you help someone, do you expect a reward? (Negative Statement)	Altruism	23	4	1	2.79
4	Do you always strive to be responsible for your tasks at home and at school?	Discipline	0	3	25	2.89
5	If you are in conflict with a desk mate, would you apologize first or wait for your friend to apologize?	Humility	6	4	18	2.43
6	Are you able to respect others' opinions, even if they differ from your own?	Tolerance	1	3	24	2.82
7	Do you invite friends from different ethnic or religious backgrounds to be friends without discrimination?	Inclusion	1	3	24	2.82
8	Do you always strive to maintain good relationships with your school friends?	Friendship	0	2	26	2.93
9	If a friend has no one to play with, would you invite them to join you in playing?	Empathy	0	1	27	2.96
10	When you see a friend fighting, would you intervene to separate them?	Mediation	0	3	25	2.89
Overall = 2.83						

The result presented in Table 1 illustrates the responses of 28 sixth-grade students from Al-Quba Islamic Primary School to a questionnaire designed to assess their moral and social development. The questionnaire covered ten statements, each aligned with specific moral or social values, including honesty, responsibility, altruism, discipline, humility, tolerance, inclusion, friendship, empathy, and mediation. The analysis highlights both the frequency of responses (1 = disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = agree) and the overall mean score for each statement, providing insights into the students' attitudes and behaviors.

The highest mean score (2.96) was observed for the statement related to empathy, “If a friend has no one to play with, would you invite them to join you?” with the majority of students agreeing with this statement. This finding suggests that students display a strong inclination toward empathy, as they are generally willing to support their peers in social situations. Similarly, statements related to friendship, honesty, responsibility, and mediation also received high mean scores of 2.89 or above, indicating that these values are well-developed among the students. The consistency in these scores reflects a positive trend in their moral and social development.

The strong emphasis on empathy and friendship in the findings can be linked to Indonesian cultural values, where collectivism and community harmony are deeply ingrained. Islamic teachings also reinforce these values by

emphasizing compassion, brotherhood, and mutual care among individuals. A study by Tsani (2013) highlights that religious moral education plays a critical role in shaping students' ethical perspectives and social interactions. Similarly, research from Budiman (2018) demonstrated that integrating Islamic education with daily character-building activities significantly enhances moral discipline and accountability among students.

Conversely, the statement associated with humility, “If you are in conflict with a desk mate, would you apologize first or wait for your friend to apologize?”, had the lowest mean score (2.43). This suggests that while students generally display moral competence, humility in conflict resolution may be less developed compared to other values. A notable percentage of students remained neutral or disagreed with the statement, indicating an area where further guidance and encouragement may be necessary to foster growth.

A comparison with previous studies highlights similar trends. Research from Budiman (2018) and Tsani (2013) suggests that while students in Islamic schools exhibit strong empathy and social responsibility, they tend to struggle with self-accountability and humility in peer conflicts. This aligns with the current study's findings, suggesting that structured interventions, such as role-playing exercises and reflective storytelling, may be effective in strengthening humility and self-awareness.

The statement related to altruism “When you help someone, do you expect a reward?” also revealed an interesting pattern, as it was a negatively framed question. While the mean score for this item was 2.79, a significant number of students (23) disagreed with expecting a reward, highlighting their understanding of altruistic behavior. Overall, the mean score across all ten statements was 2.83, indicating that the students exhibit generally positive moral and social attitudes, with some variation across specific values. This data provides valuable insights for educators and parents in identifying strengths and areas for improvement in the students' moral and social development.

Gender differences in moral development are also worth noting. A study by Hasanah (2020) confirms that gender-related differences in moral reasoning persist, with girls typically displaying greater emotional awareness and ethical consideration. Meanwhile, research from Ampera (2012) highlights that boys tend to exhibit greater independence in decision-making, while girls demonstrate stronger interpersonal sensitivity and cooperation. While this study did not conduct a detailed gender analysis, future research could explore how male and female students differ in moral reasoning, particularly in humility and conflict resolution. Additionally, the role of religious instruction in shaping students' moral outlook should be further examined, as Islamic teachings emphasize ethical behavior through both personal reflection and community engagement.

Furthermore, the following section presents qualitative findings derived from an interview conducted with one 6th-grade teacher at Al-Quba Islamic Primary School. The interview aimed to explore the teacher's perspective and practices in assessing the moral and social development of students. The questions focused on key aspects, including observation methods, assessment approaches, focus areas of evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and challenges faced in students' development. The insights gathered were systematically organized and summarized in the table below, providing a detailed overview of the responses and highlighting the teacher's role in shaping students' moral and social skills.

Table 2: Summary of 6th-Grade Students' Moral and Social Development (Teacher Interview)

Themes	Findings	Key Implications
Teacher Observation of Moral and Social Behavior	- Teachers primarily observe students' moral and social behavior during classroom activities. - Limited observations occur outside the classroom environment.	A more holistic and comprehensive behavioral assessment is needed, including non-classroom settings.
Assessment Approaches	- Both structured and unstructured methods are employed: 1) Structured: formal evaluations and	Combining both methods ensures a balanced understanding of students'

Themes	Findings	Key Implications
	questionnaires. 2) Unstructured: informal observations and interactions.	moral and social development.
Focus of Moral Development Assessment	- Greater focus on moral indicators like honesty and empathy. - Social behaviors such as cooperation and respect receive less emphasis.	Highlights the need for a more comprehensive evaluation of both moral and social skills.
Feedback Mechanisms	- Feedback is delivered through: 1) Classroom discussions. 2) Sharing moral stories. 3) Practical advice. - Periodic evaluations are conducted during parent-teacher meetings.	Suggests a multi-channel feedback approach for reinforcing moral and social development.
Identified Developmental Challenges	- Varying levels of: 1) Respect towards teachers and school rules. 2) Classroom focus and engagement. 3) Empathy and social interaction skills. 4) Environmental consciousness.	Indicates the need for targeted interventions to address these developmental gaps.

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive view of how teachers at Al-Quba Islamic Primary School approach the assessment of moral and social development among 6th-grade students. Observations reveal that while moral and social behaviors are primarily assessed during classroom activities, limited attention is given to behavior outside the classroom. This narrow scope may result in an incomplete understanding of students' overall development, emphasizing the need for a more holistic approach that includes both formal and informal observations in various contexts.

The assessment methods utilized by teachers combine structured and unstructured approaches, which allow for both formal evaluations and informal insights gained through daily interactions. Structured assessments, such as questionnaires, are effective for measuring specific moral indicators like honesty and empathy, whereas unstructured methods provide a broader understanding of students' behavior in natural settings. However, the findings indicate a stronger emphasis on moral development, with less attention paid to social skills such as cooperation and respect. This imbalance suggests a gap in the comprehensive evaluation of social competencies, which are equally crucial for students' holistic development.

Teachers employ a variety of feedback mechanisms, including classroom discussions, moral storytelling, and practical advice, complemented by periodic evaluations during parent-teacher meetings. While these multi-channel approaches are valuable for reinforcing moral lessons, challenges persist in areas such as respect for authority, empathy, and engagement. These developmental gaps highlight the need for targeted interventions, such as collaborative group activities and environmental education programs, to enhance both moral and social competencies. By addressing these areas, teachers can foster a more balanced and effective development of their students' character and interpersonal skills.

Recent research highlights the importance of fostering students' moral and social development through targeted educational practices. Studies have shown that implementing structured interventions, such as character education programs, can significantly improve students' moral reasoning and social behavior. For instance, Bier et al. (2021) found that character education programs focusing on values like respect, responsibility, and empathy resulted in higher levels of prosocial behavior and decreased incidences of aggression among primary students.

Another study explored the impact of community-based social activities on the moral attitudes of primary school students. The findings indicate that students experienced positive changes in moral attitudes both at school and at home, suggesting that engagement in community social activities can effectively enhance moral development (Mauilyda et al., 2024). Furthermore, research on SEL programs incorporating mindfulness and caring for others has demonstrated benefits in cognitive control, stress reduction, well-being, and prosocial behavior among primary school students. In a randomized study, students who participated in such programs showed significant

improvements in these areas compared to those who received regular social responsibility education (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015). These studies collectively highlight the effectiveness of structured SEL programs and community engagement in fostering moral and social competencies among primary students. The findings from Al-Quba Islamic Primary School align with this body of research, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive approaches to moral and social education in primary education settings.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that students demonstrate a strong inclination toward moral values such as empathy, responsibility, and friendship, as reflected in their high mean scores. However, humility was observed to be comparatively weaker areas. This suggests that while students understand core ethical values, practical applications of self-reflection and personal accountability require further reinforcement.

One of the key observations from this study is how Islamic moral education influences the development of these values differently from secular approaches. Islamic schools embed moral instruction within daily religious practices, reinforcing ethical behavior through Quranic teachings and prophetic traditions (Hadith). Unlike secular models that often rely on ethical debates and case-based reasoning, Islamic education emphasizes experiential learning through direct application of religious principles in daily life. This holistic integration fosters an internalized moral compass, aligning students' ethical decisions with religious teachings (Brown et al., 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2024; Pamuji & Mulyadi, 2024).

In comparison with prior studies, research in secular educational settings has shown that moral education is often structured through classroom discussions and formal ethics curricula, focusing on logical reasoning rather than spiritual accountability (Brown et al., 2023; Yilmaz & Bahçekapili, 2015). While this approach fosters critical thinking, it may lack the deeply ingrained moral motivation that religious frameworks provide. In contrast, Islamic education leverages a sense of divine accountability, which strengthens long-term moral commitment and social responsibility (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Istiyani et al., 2024; Mikani et al., 2022). These differences highlight how Islamic and secular moral education offer distinct yet complementary strategies for character development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study highlights that the moral and social development of 6th-grade students at Al-Quba Islamic Primary School is a multifaceted and dynamic process that necessitates comprehensive and targeted strategies. Moral development, rather than being an innate trait, is a learned and evolving process encompassing both cognitive dimensions, such as understanding the distinction between right and wrong, and affective components, including the translation of ethical principles into moral behaviors and decisions. This development is profoundly shaped by interactions within the family, school, and peer groups. However, several significant challenges were identified, including inconsistent adherence to school rules, limited empathy and social interaction skills, varying levels of environmental awareness, and unequal opportunities for meaningful social engagement. Effectively addressing these issues requires a holistic and collaborative approach that involves families, educators, and the broader community to foster well-rounded moral and social growth in students.

The study provides several recommendations aimed at enhancing the moral and social development of students. First, it advocates for the incorporation of moral education into daily school activities through structured character-building programs, storytelling sessions focused on ethical dilemmas, and role-playing exercises that allow students to experience moral decision-making in practical contexts. Additionally, classroom discussions on moral issues and values should be embedded into the curriculum, enabling students to reflect critically on their behavior and the consequences of their actions. Teachers should also implement peer mentoring programs, where students can model and reinforce positive moral behaviors among their classmates.

Furthermore, strengthening teacher training programs is essential to ensure educators are equipped with effective strategies for assessing and nurturing students' moral and social competencies. Schools should establish collaborative efforts with parents and the community, such as parental workshops and community service projects,

to extend moral education beyond the classroom setting. These initiatives will create a consistent moral framework that students encounter in both their academic and home environments.

In addition to school-based interventions, further research should explore moral education beyond the school environment, particularly in family and community settings. Future studies should investigate how parental guidance, cultural influences, and extracurricular activities shape moral development in children. Comparative studies across different educational settings, such as secular and faith-based schools, could provide deeper insights into the most effective approaches for fostering moral and social growth. By implementing these strategies and expanding research into broader social contexts, educators and policymakers can develop more effective frameworks for character education, ensuring that students are well-equipped with the moral and social skills necessary to contribute positively in the community.

One potential limitation of this study is the subjectivity inherent in the teacher's assessment of student behavior. Since only one teacher provided qualitative insights, their perspective may reflect personal interpretations rather than an objective measurement of students' moral development. To mitigate this, the study primarily focuses on student self-reported responses, reducing the weight of teacher subjectivity in the findings. Future studies could incorporate multiple teacher assessments or peer evaluations to enhance data reliability.

REFERENCES

- Abbott, M. L. (2014). *Understanding educational statistics using Microsoft Excel and SPSS*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Adler, A. (2015). *The education of children*. Routledge.
- Aguayo, L., Hernandez, I. G., Yasui, M., Estabrook, R., Anderson, E. L., Davis, M. M., Briggs-Gowan, M. J., Wakschlag, L. S., & Heard-Garris, N. (2021). Cultural socialization in childhood: Analysis of parent-child conversations with a direct observation measure. *Journal of Family Psychology, 35*(2), 138. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000663>
- Ampera, D. (2012). Kajian Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Pendidikan Di Sekolah Dasar Mitra PPL PGSD. *Jurnal Tabularasa, 9*(2), 229–246. <https://digilib.unimed.ac.id/id/eprint/689/>
- Annam, R., Manneeswari, Chellapandian, G., Vijaakumar, M., & Sasikalaa, R. (2024). The Necessity to Inculcate Moral Values to the Students. *International Research Journal on Advanced Engineering and Management (IRJAEM), 2*(8). <https://doi.org/10.47392/IRJAEM.2024.0375>
- Ardi, Z., Viola, K., & Sukmawati, I. (2018). An Analysis of Internet Abuses Impact on Children's Moral Development. *JPPPI (Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Indonesia), 4*(1), 44–50.
- Brown, J. E., van Mulukom, V., Charles, S. J., & Farias, M. (2023). Do you need religion to enjoy the benefits of Church services? Social bonding, morality and quality of life among religious and secular congregations. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 15*(2), 308–318. <https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000447>
- Budiman, S. A. (2018). Pengaruh Budaya Sekolah Dan Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Terhadap Karakter Siswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan, 5*(1), 47. <https://openjournal.unpam.ac.id/index.php/PKn/article/download/1169/937>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing, 25*(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Collet, O. A., Orri, M., Tremblay, R. E., Boivin, M., & Côté, S. M. (2023). Psychometric properties of the Social Behavior Questionnaire (SBQ) in a longitudinal population-based sample. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 47*(2), 180–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01650254221113472>
- Coskun, K., & Kara, C. (2019). Moral identity test (MIT) for children: reliability and validity. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica, 32*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41155-019-0120-9>
- Cowell, J. M., Lee, K., Malcolm-Smith, S., Selcuk, B., Zhou, X., & Decety, J. (2017). The development of generosity and moral cognition across five cultures. *Developmental Science, 20*(4), e12403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.12403>
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.
- Dahl, A., & Killen, M. (2018). A developmental perspective on the origins of morality in infancy and early childhood. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1736. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01736>

- Decety, J., & Cowell, J. M. (2014). Friends or foes: Is empathy necessary for moral behavior? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9(5), 525–537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691614545130>
- Fernandez Gonzalez, M. J., & Akrivou, K. (2024). The ‘person of moral growth’: a model of moral development based on personalist virtue ethics. *Cogent Education*, 11(1), 2418785. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2418785>
- Gherman, D. E., & Zander, T. O. (2024). Decoding moral judgement from text: a pilot study. *ArXiv Preprint ArXiv:2407.00039*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2407.00039>
- Hafizi, M. Z., & Wiyono, H. (2023). The importance of moral education in the formation of children’s character. *IJGIE (International Journal of Graduate of Islamic Education)*, 4(2), 345–350.
- Hasanah, A. (2020). Perbedaan perkembangan moral anak laki-laki dan anak perempuan pada usia Sekolah Dasar: Analisis psikologi perkembangan. *Yinyang: Jurnal Studi Islam Gender Dan Anak*, 15(1), 41–58. <https://doi.org/10.24090/yinyang.v15i1.3442>
- Ibrahim, M., Islam, S., Zohriah, O., & Azid, M. (2024). Addressing contemporary ethical and moral issues through islamic education. *Journal on Islamic Studies*, 1(1), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.35335/kbbzar83>
- Ikhlās, M., Kuswanto, K., Ramdayeni Sakunti, S., Rivanda Debi, M., & M. Collantes, L. (2021). A Sequential Explanatory Investigation in using ICTs on Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education: Teacher-Students Perspective. *Indonesian Journal on Learning and Advanced Education (IJOLAE)*, 3(3), 153–167. <https://doi.org/10.23917/ijolae.v3i3.13872>
- Ilhami, R., Wargadinata, W., Hasan, N., Ikhlās, M., & Najar, S. A. (2022). Quizizz As an Arabic Vocabulary Media Learning in Digitalization Era: Process, Weakness and Strengths. *Al-Ta’rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya*, 10(1), 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v10i1.3787>
- Isangula, K. G., Kelly, S., & Wamoyi, J. (2024). Manual Qualitative Data Coding Using MS Word for Students and Early Career Researchers in Resource-Constrained Settings. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23, 16094069241299224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241299224>
- Istiyani, D., Wibowo, A. ., Taruna, M. M., Rahmawati, T., & Atmanto, N. E. (2024). Challenges and Opportunities in Early Childhood Religious and Moral Education: A Perspective from the Evaluation of Logical Models. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 233–249. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4843>
- Jasmi, K. A., Hong, F. C., & Shamsuddin, S. D. (2012). Perkembangan Sosial Anak dan Hubungannya dengan Rakan Sebaya. *Seminar Pertama Sains, Teknologi, Dan Manusia, Marbawy Hall, Faculty of Islamic Civilization, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia*. <https://eprints.utm.my/40095/>
- Karnia, N., & Nurhasan, N. (2023). Instrumen Penilaian Sikap Sosial untuk Siswa SMK. *Wahana Karya Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 7(01), 55–69. <https://doi.org/10.35706/wkip.v7i01.9366>
- Khoiruddin, M. A. (2018). Perkembangan Anak Ditinjau dari Kemampuan Sosial Emosional. *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman*, 29(2), 425–438. <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v29i2.624>
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development vol. 1* (Vol. 1). Harper & Row.
- Kuswanto, K., Abidin, Z., Pestano, R. D., & Ikhlās, M. (2024). Critical Thinking, Literacy, and Numeracy as Factors in STEM: Madrasah Student Learning. *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, 19(1), 99. <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v19i1.19884>
- Lind, G., & Nowak, E. (2015). Kohlberg’s Unnoticed Dilemma—The External Assessment of Internal Moral Competence? In *Kohlberg revisited* (pp. 139–153). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-079-6_8
- Listyaningrum, D. (2018). Pengaruh permainan tradisional gobak sodor terhadap sikap sosial siswa kelas III SDN 01 Manguharjo Kota Madiun. *Gulawentah: Jurnal Studi Sosial*, 3(2), 108. <https://doi.org/10.25273/gulawentah.v3i2.3463>
- Magdalena, I., Valentina, F. R., Devita, N., & Astuty, H. W. (2021). Pengembangan Instrumen Sikap Sosial Siswa Kelas V SDN Bencongan Vi Kabupaten Tangerang. *NUSANTARA*, 3(2), 107–120. <https://ejournal.stitpn.ac.id/index.php/nusantara/article/view/1244>
- Maharani, L. (2014). Moral development in children. *COUNSEL: Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 1 (2), 1(2), 93–98. <https://doi.org/10.24042/kons.v1i2.1483>
- McDaniel, A. K. (1998). Character education: Developing effective programs. *Journal of Extension*, 36(2), 1–11.
- Mikani, M., Tabatabaei, K. R., & Azadfallah, P. (2022). Who would Iranian Muslims help? Religious dimensions and moral foundations as predictors. *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 44(1), 23–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00846724211062944>
- Narvaez, D., & Lapsley, D. (2013). Becoming a moral person—Moral development and moral character education as a result of social interactions. In *Empirically informed ethics: Morality between facts and norms* (pp. 227–238).

- Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-01369-5_13
- Nurmalitasari, F. (2015). Perkembangan Sosial Emosi pada Anak Usia Prasekolah. *Buletin Psikologi*, 23(2), 103–111. <https://doi.org/https://jurnal.ugm.ac.id/buletinpsikologi/article/view/10567/7946>
- Olanrewaju, M. K., Solomon, O. D., Omolara, O., & Oduola, O. Z. (2023). Effects of flipped classroom teaching strategy on pupils' motivation and achievement in numeracy in nursery schools in Abuja, Nigeria. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, & Management (IRJSTEM)*, 3(3).
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42, 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Pamuji, S., & Mulyadi, Y. (2024). Formation Of Students' Character Through Islamic Education. *International Journal of Islamic Thought and Humanities*, 3(1), 26–35. <https://doi.org/10.54298/ijith.v3i1.183>
- Peplak, J., Bobba, B., Hasegawa, M., Caravita, S., & Malti, T. (2023). The warm glow of kindness: Developmental insight into children's moral pride across cultures and its associations with prosocial behavior. *Developmental Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001613>
- Popoveniuc, B. (2021). Moral competence and foundations of moral judgment. an empirical exploration of concepts and new possibilities for understanding. *Ethics in Progress*, 12(1), 39–58. <https://doi.org/10.14746/eip.2021.1.4>
- Putri, R. D., Herpratiwi, H., & Rosidin, U. (2021). Pengembangan Instrumen Asesmen Kinerja Berbasis Literasi Sains pada Pembelajaran Tematik Terpadu Peserta Didik Kelas V Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(6), 5946–5952. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i6.1688>
- Rahayu, W., Zukri, A., Maimunah, A., Mayang Sari, D., Jannah, R., & Ikhlās, M. (2023). Character Education in Islamic Education: Strengthening and Implementing in the Digital Age. *At-Tarbawi: Jurnal Kajian Kependidikan Islam*, 8(2), 125–138. <https://doi.org/10.22515/attarbawi.v8i2.7498>
- Rong, F., & Kleiman-Weiner, M. (2024). Value Internalization: Learning and Generalizing from Social Reward. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, 46. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2407.14681>
- Rubin, N. T., & Traverro, A. S. (2022). Fostering reading level and story comprehension through MARITES (Marungko Approach Reading Intervention to Elementary Schoolers) With mentor-mentee arrangement. *International Research Journal of Science, Technology, Education, and Management*, 2(3), 18–25.
- Saleh, Y. T., Nugraha, M. F., & Nurfitriani, M. (2017). Model Permainan Tradisional “Boy-Boyan” untuk Meningkatkan Perkembangan Sosial Anak SD. *ELSE (Elementary School Education Journal): Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar*, 1(2b). <https://doi.org/10.30651/else.v1i2b.1062>
- Santrock, J. W. (2007). Child development. *New York: McGraw*.
- Suazo, I., Pérez-Fuentes, M. del C., Molero Jurado, M. del M., Martos Martínez, Á., Simón Márquez, M. del M., Barragán Martín, A. B., Sisto, M., & Gázquez Linares, J. J. (2020). Moral sensitivity, empathy and prosocial behavior: Implications for humanization of nursing care. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(23), 8914. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17238914>
- Tsani, I. (2013). Pendidikan Agama Islam Sebagai Sarana Pembentukan Moral Dan Karakter Siswa. *Didaktika Religia*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.30762/didaktika.v1i1.112>
- Wren, T. (2008). Philosophical moorings. *Handbook of Moral and Character Education*, 11–29. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203931431-9>
- Yilmaz, O., & Bahçekapili, H. G. (2015). When Science Replaces Religion: Science as a Secular Authority Bolsters Moral Sensitivity. *PLOS ONE*, 10(9), e0137499. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0137499>
- Zakiyyah, E. F., Mulyani, S., & Fajrussalam, H. (2023). Pengaruh Metode Reading Aloud Berbantuan Flashcard Terhadap Keterampilan Membaca Permulaan Siswa Kelas I Sekolah Dasar. *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 8(1), 210–218.
- Zigler, R. L. (1998). The four domains of moral education: The contributions of Dewey, Alexander and Goleman to a comprehensive taxonomy. *Journal of Moral Education*, 27(1), 19–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305724980270102>