

Pesantren Kilat as a Character-Building Medium Based on Multiple Intelligences at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram

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Abstract

This study is motivated by the limited research on the integration of Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory within short-term Islamic character education programs, despite its importance for holistic learning in faith-based elementary schools. It aims to examine the implementation of an MI-based *Pesantren Kilat* program, analyze the internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values (piety, wisdom, and social awareness), and evaluate its effectiveness as a medium for character building. Adopting a qualitative design, the research was conducted at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani*, Mataram, involving 30 purposively selected participants comprising 4 supervising teachers, 3 program administrators, and 23 students from Grades III, IV, and V. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and documentation analysis, and were examined using thematic analysis with methodological triangulation to ensure credibility. The findings indicate that structured experiential activities grounded in MI domains, particularly interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences—facilitated active student participation and observable behavioural transformation. The internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values occurred progressively through guided reflection, collaborative engagement, and habituated practice rather than normative instruction alone, demonstrating that character formation is strengthened when cognition, emotion, and action are integrated within meaningful religious experiences. The study concludes that MI-based experiential pedagogy provides an effective framework for holistic

character development in short-term Islamic programs and contributes theoretically by linking MI and experiential learning with moral internalization, while offering practical guidance for designing reflective, inclusive character education initiatives. It further recommends that future research examine long-term effects and employ mixed-method approaches across diverse institutional contexts to deepen understanding of MI-based Islamic character education.

Keywords: Multiple Intelligences; Experiential Learning; Moral Internalization; *Pesantren Kilat*; Character-Building.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, character education has become a central concern in both international and national educational discourse, particularly in response to moral degradation, declining social responsibility, and the imbalance between cognitive achievement and ethical development among students. Globally, holistic education frameworks emphasize the integration of intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social dimensions in order to prepare learners for sustainable futures (UNESCO, 2017; Zaradiva et al., 2025). Within this context, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) highlights the importance of empowering learners of all ages to act responsibly and wisely in shaping a sustainable society, which aligns closely with character education objectives.

At the instructional level, studies on Multiple Intelligences (MI) in general education contexts demonstrate that learning strategies accommodating diverse intelligences foster more holistic student participation and engagement (Edulan et al., 2025). Recent empirical evidence confirms that MI-based approaches significantly enhance students' motivation and learning outcomes across various educational settings. For instance, Al-abdallat et al., (2023) found that MI-based instruction effectively increased learning motivation among ninth-grade students in Jordan, while (Murtafi'ah et al., 2024) reported improved academic achievement through the application of Multiple Intelligences in diverse learning contexts. These findings indicate that MI theory offers a powerful pedagogical framework for addressing learners' cognitive diversity beyond traditional linguistic and logical-mathematical dominance (Walela, 2024).

However, despite its pedagogical potential, contemporary education—particularly with the integration of artificial intelligence—still tends to rely on rule-based and static

profiles that privilege limited cognitive dimensions, often neglecting naturalist, existential, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. Ahmadin et al., (2025) argue that while MI-based adaptive learning supported by artificial intelligence has proven effective in improving reading literacy and scientific creativity in Indonesia, its implementation remains constrained by infrastructure limitations and teacher capacity, raising pedagogical and ethical challenges. This condition reinforces the need for context-sensitive educational models that integrate MI theory with moral and spiritual dimensions.

In the Indonesian context, Islamic educational institutions, particularly pesantren, have long been recognized as strategic environments for character formation. Character education in pesantren is commonly implemented through multidisciplinary approaches emphasizing moral exemplification and the application of ethical values in students' daily lives (Fauzi & Syafe, 2022). The internalization of moderation values within pesantren curricula has also been identified as essential for strengthening students' character development (Sah & Fuad, 2024). Moreover, parenting patterns and nurturing practices in pesantren environments play a critical role in shaping students' character through consistent habituation of religious values (Maskuro et al., 2025).

Empirical studies further confirm that character development is closely associated with instructional activities integrating moral and spiritual dimensions into students' everyday practices (Firmansyah & Abidin, 2024). The implementation of character education through pesantren culture in Islamic elementary schools has proven effective in internalizing students' religious and moral attitudes (Shiddiq et al., 2024). Similarly, pesantren-based character education models grounded in religious values and local culture successfully integrate ethical and spiritual dimensions within the learning process (Saepurrohman et al., 2023), although external factors continue to influence educational outcomes (El-islamy et al., 2023). Routine activities, habituation, and value conditioning are therefore regarded as essential mechanisms in moral formation (Akbar et al., 2022).

From an Islamic philosophical perspective, the concept of *Ulil an-Nuha*—as mentioned in Qur'an Surah Taha (20:128)—refers to individuals who possess not only intellectual intelligence but also spiritual awareness and wisdom in action. This concept emphasizes reflective reasoning grounded in moral consciousness, offering a theological foundation for holistic character education that integrates intellect, spirituality, and ethical behavior. Such a framework resonates strongly with holistic education, which seeks to

develop learners comprehensively by nurturing intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social potentials (Sriyanta et al., 2025).

Previous research has explored Multiple Intelligences and character education from various perspectives. Hasan & Maemonah, (2024) demonstrated that experiential learning based on MI significantly increased learning interest among Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students. Rozhana, (2022) developed interactive teaching materials integrating MI and character values, which effectively enhanced students' cognitive abilities and attitudes. Earlier qualitative research also showed that habituation practices in madrasah environments successfully fostered students' religious and personal character through worship routines and moral exemplification (Haibah et al., 2020).

More recent studies indicate that MI-based reading instruction not only improves literacy skills but also strengthens empathy, collaboration, and critical thinking among students (Sholeh et al., 2025). Similarly, *Hasanuddin et al., (2025)* found that integrating Islamic and general education through an MI approach effectively enhanced students' religious character across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Research conducted in pesantren settings further confirms that MI-based character education supports holistic learning by combining cognitive and moral dimensions through religious habituation (Arifuddin & Burhani, 2021), while structured character education programs in Islamic boarding schools have been shown to foster student independence through disciplined daily routines (Malik, 2023).

Despite the richness of existing studies, most previous research has focused either on classroom-based MI instruction, formal pesantren environments, or general character education programs. Limited attention has been given to short-term, intensive religious programs such as *Pesantren Kilat* in Islamic elementary schools, particularly those integrating Multiple Intelligences with Islamic philosophical values such as *Ulil an-Nuha*. This gap indicates the need for in-depth qualitative exploration of how MI-based interactive activities within Pesantren Kilat programs function as a medium for character building in elementary-level Islamic education.

Preliminary observations conducted during the Pesantren Kilat Ramadan 1446 H program revealed that learning activities were designed to engage students through diverse modes of participation, including religious rituals, group discussions, creative tasks, and physical activities (Observation, March 21, 2025). These activities reflected the application

of Multiple Intelligences by accommodating students' linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, and spiritual capacities. The observation also indicated positive character-related behaviors among students, such as increased discipline, cooperation, empathy, and religious commitment, which were fostered through structured routines, habituation practices, and guided reflection led by teachers and program facilitators.

Grounded in theories of character education (Lickona, 2013), Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 2011), Islamic education (Nata, 2014), experiential learning (Kolb, 2015), and habituation theory (Aristotle, 2009), this study seeks to examine Pesantren Kilat as a character-building medium based on Multiple Intelligences at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram. Specifically, this study addresses three main research problems: how is the Multiple Intelligences-based Pesantren Kilat program implemented in fostering students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram?; how are the values of *Ulil an-Nuha* (piety, wisdom, and social awareness) internalized through experiential learning, reflection, and social interaction during the Pesantren Kilat program?; and how does the Pesantren Kilat program function as an effective medium for holistic character building through the integration of Multiple Intelligences theory and Islamic educational values?

METHODS

1. Research Type

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method. A qualitative approach was selected because it allows the researcher to explore and understand social and educational phenomena in depth, particularly those related to meaning, interaction, and lived experience within a specific context. Qualitative research is especially suitable for examining complex educational practices that are embedded in cultural and religious settings, such as pesantren-based programs.

Qualitative inquiry emphasizes holistic understanding, natural settings, and rich descriptions derived from participants' perspectives rather than numerical generalization (Creswell & Poth, 2023). Similarly, Merriam and Tisdell (2024) argue that qualitative research is appropriate when the goal is to interpret how participants construct meaning from their experiences and interactions within a particular social environment. Therefore, this approach

was deemed appropriate for exploring the synergy between interactive domains of Multiple Intelligences and the values of *Uli an-Nuha* as manifested in the Pesantren Kilat program.

2. Research Design

This research adopted a case study design, focusing on a single bounded system, namely the implementation of the Pesantren Kilat Ramadan program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram. A case study design enables an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident.

According to Yin (2023), case studies are particularly useful for examining educational programs that involve multiple actors, activities, and contextual influences. In addition, Stake (2020) emphasizes that case study research allows researchers to capture the complexity and uniqueness of educational practices, providing nuanced insights that cannot be obtained through experimental or survey designs. Compared to previous studies that often employ survey-based approaches to measure character education outcomes, this case study design offers a deeper understanding of the processes and interactions underpinning character formation through Multiple Intelligences-based activities.

3. Population and Sample

The study was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The research activities took place during the implementation of the Pesantren Kilat Ramadan 1446 H program on Friday–Saturday, March 21–22, 2025.

The population of this study comprised all individuals actively involved in the Pesantren Kilat Ramadan 1446 H program at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara. The research sample consisted of 30 participants, including 4 supervising teachers, 3 program administrators, and 23 students from Grades III, IV, and V.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their active involvement and direct experience in the program. Purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research when participants are chosen for their relevance to the research objectives rather than for statistical representation (Sugiyono, 2022). Furthermore, Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2021) note that purposive sampling enables researchers to obtain rich

and information-dense data from participants who possess firsthand knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation.

4. Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and documentation analysis. Interviews were conducted with teachers, program administrators, and selected students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and reflections regarding the Pesantren Kilat activities. Observations were carried out during key program activities, such as communal iftar preparation and Qur'anic puzzle games, to examine the manifestation of interactive intelligences and the internalization of *Uli an-Nuha* values. Documentation included photographs and program records to support and triangulate the primary data.

Using multiple data collection techniques is recommended in qualitative research to enhance data richness and credibility (Creswell & Guetterman, 2021). Similarly, Saldana (2021) asserts that combining interviews, observations, and documents allows researchers to capture both reported experiences and observable practices, thereby strengthening the interpretive depth of the findings.

5. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of qualitative data analysis, which involves data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This analytical process was carried out continuously throughout data collection to ensure iterative reflection and refinement of emerging themes.

Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2020) emphasize that interactive qualitative analysis enables researchers to move back and forth between data and interpretation, fostering analytical rigor and coherence. In addition, Guest, MacQueen, and Namey (2024) explain that thematic analysis is effective for identifying recurring patterns related to cognitive, interpersonal, and behavioral dimensions, making it suitable for analyzing themes such as verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and kinesthetic intelligences as well as the internalization of *Uli an-Nuha* values.

6. Trustworthiness of the Data

To ensure data trustworthiness, this study applied methodological and source triangulation. Triangulation was achieved by cross-checking data obtained from interviews,

observations, and documentation, as well as by comparing information across different participant groups.

According to Nowell et al. (2023), triangulation enhances credibility by minimizing interpretive bias and strengthening the consistency of qualitative findings. Likewise, Tracy (2020) highlights that triangulation allows researchers to validate interpretations by examining convergence across multiple data sources and methods, thereby increasing the overall trustworthiness of qualitative research.

RESULTS

1. Implementation of the Multiple Intelligences–Based Pesantren Kilat Program

The implementation of the Multiple Intelligences–based Pesantren Kilat program, conducted on March 21–22, 2025, at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Integral Buah Hati Insani, Mataram, reflects a systematically structured experiential learning model designed to activate diverse student capacities within a unified pedagogical framework. Triangulated data from 30 participants—four supervising teachers, three program administrators, and 23 students from Grades III, IV, and V—indicate that the program functioned as an integrated character-building intervention rather than a conventional short-term religious enrichment activity. Thematic condensation of interviews, field observations, and documentation analysis reveals two primary dimensions: (a) structured experiential design and (b) activation of multiple intelligence domains within an integrated learning system.

a. Program Design and Activity Structure

1) Experiential Learning–Based Activity Planning

Across interviews with supervising teachers and administrators, a consistent emphasis emerged on structured experiential sequencing. The program was intentionally organized into preparatory briefing sessions, field-based social engagement (takjil-sharing), collaborative reflection forums, and kinesthetic Qur’anic puzzle activities.

One supervising teacher explained:

“We designed the pesantren kilat so students would experience the values directly, not only receive explanations about them” (P01, Male, Supervising Teacher, Mataram, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Documentation of the official activity agenda confirms alignment between stated objectives and implemented activities (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). The program schedule demonstrates deliberate integration of worship, social action, and guided reflection within a continuous cycle, reflecting principles consistent with experiential learning theory.

Observation data further validate this structure. Students received clearly defined group roles, participated in outdoor distribution activities, and engaged in structured reflection immediately afterward (Observation, March 21, 2025). The coherence between design intention and practical enactment strengthens the internal credibility of the implementation model.

2) Integration of Collaborative, Reflective, and Kinesthetic Activities

Field observations indicate that collaborative interaction formed the backbone of program implementation. During the takjil-sharing activity, approximately 80% of students actively engaged in group coordination, role negotiation, and respectful communication with community members (Observation, March 21, 2025). Students demonstrated cooperative problem-solving and adaptive communication strategies in real-time social contexts.

A Grade IV student reflected:

“Working in a group made the activity meaningful because we depended on each other” (P14, Male, Grade IV Student, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

The reflective phase immediately followed the field engagement. Approximately 70% of students demonstrated increased verbal confidence during group presentations, articulating emotional responses and moral insights derived from the activity (Observation, March 21, 2025). Teachers reported that students who were typically reserved in formal classroom settings became more expressive during structured reflection.

The kinesthetic dimension became particularly salient during the Qur’anic verse puzzle activity on March 22, 2025. Students physically assembled textual fragments while collaboratively negotiating interpretive meaning (Observation, March 22, 2025). This activity integrated movement-based engagement with cognitive processing, allowing diverse learner strengths to surface simultaneously.

A program administrator noted:

“The puzzle allowed students to move, think, and cooperate at the same time. Different strengths appeared naturally” (P06, Male, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

The convergence of collaborative, reflective, and kinesthetic components indicates a multidimensional activity structure rather than isolated instructional episodes.

3) Alignment with Developmental Characteristics of Grades III–V Students

Interviews consistently highlight that the program design was developmentally responsive. Supervising teachers emphasized that students aged approximately 8–11 years require dynamic interaction, structured social engagement, and opportunities for physical movement.

One teacher stated:

“At this age, students learn best when they can move, interact, and discuss. Static lectures are less effective” (P03, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Student reflections corroborate this alignment. A Grade V participant remarked:

“The activities felt different from regular classes because we could move, share ideas, and work together” (P21, Male, Grade V Student, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Attendance records and task allocation sheets confirm proportional involvement of Grades III, IV, and V students across all program stages (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025), indicating inclusive and developmentally appropriate structuring.

b. Development of Multiple Intelligence Domains

1) Interpersonal Intelligence

Triangulated data demonstrate strong activation of interpersonal intelligence during group collaboration and takjil-sharing activities. Students practiced empathy, cooperative negotiation, and socially appropriate communication in authentic community contexts (Observation, March 21, 2025).

A supervising teacher observed:

“Students who were usually individualistic became more attentive to group needs during the sharing activity” (P02, Female, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

This suggests that structured social engagement served as a catalyst for interpersonal growth.

2) Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

The reflective presentation session functioned as a structured platform for verbal articulation. Approximately 70% of students demonstrated increased clarity, coherence, and confidence in expressing moral reflections compared to routine classroom interaction (Observation, March 21, 2025).

Documentation of presentation summaries confirms enhanced participation rates and structured narrative expression (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). Teachers identified this session as revealing communicative capacities that were less visible in conventional instructional settings.

3) Kinesthetic Intelligence

The Qur'anic verse puzzle activity activated kinesthetic intelligence through coordinated physical manipulation of textual fragments. Students engaged bodily movement alongside collaborative reasoning (Observation, March 22, 2025).

One supervising teacher reported:

“Students who are usually restless in class were more focused during the movement-based task” (P03, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

This indicates that embodied participation facilitated sustained cognitive engagement.

4) Integration of Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor Domains

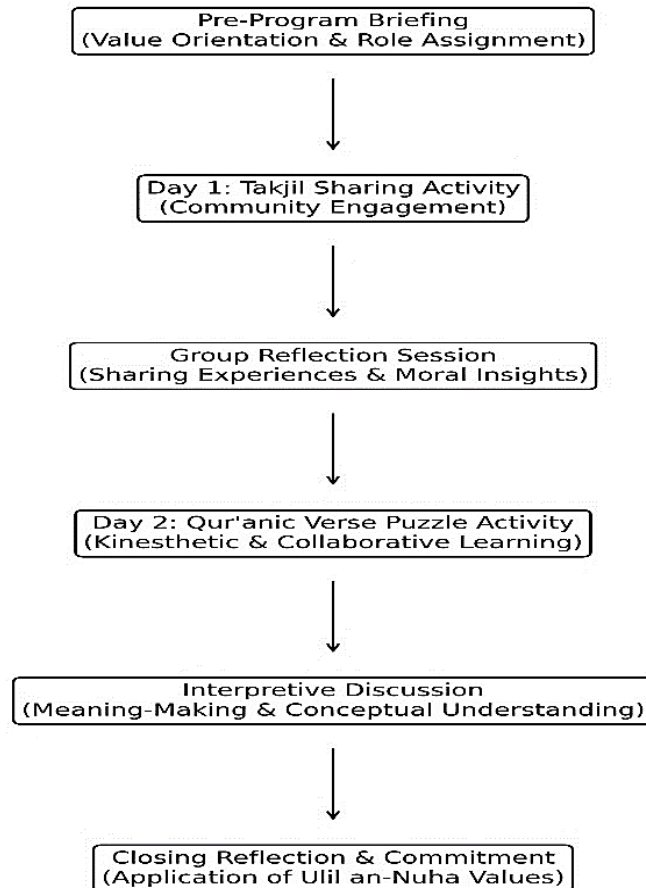
Across both implementation days, triangulated findings confirm simultaneous activation of cognitive reasoning, emotional engagement, and physical participation (Observation, March 21–22, 2025; Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). Rather than operating as discrete components, these domains functioned interactively within a unified experiential system.

A program administrator summarized:

“The strength of this program lies in combining thinking, feeling, and doing within one continuous experience” (P07, Female, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

The findings indicate that the Multiple Intelligences–based Pesantren Kilat program was implemented as a coherent experiential framework that systematically activated diverse

learner capacities while maintaining structural alignment with developmental needs. The consistency between design intention, observed practice, and participant testimony strengthens the methodological credibility and pedagogical robustness of the implementation model.



**Figure 1. Sequential Experiential Learning Framework
of the MI-Based Pesantren Kilat Program**

The figure 1 of flowchart presents the sequential structure of the MI-based Pesantren Kilat program over two days. It begins with a pre-program briefing to establish value orientation and role readiness. On Day 1, students participate in takjil sharing as a concrete community experience, followed by structured reflection to express moral insights. On Day 2, a kinesthetic Qur'anic puzzle activity promotes collaborative reasoning and interpretive discussion. The program concludes with value commitment, encouraging students to apply piety, wisdom, and social awareness in daily life. Overall, the flow reflects a coherent progression from action to reflection, interpretation, and moral application.

2. Internalization Process of *Ulil an-Nuha* Values

Beyond structural implementation, empirical findings indicate that the Pesantren Kilat program facilitated a progressive internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values among participating students. Triangulated data from interviews, observations, and documentation demonstrate that value acquisition occurred through lived experience, reflective articulation, and socially embedded practice. Thematic analysis reveals three principal dimensions of internalization: (a) piety (spiritual awareness), (b) wisdom (*hikmah* and humility), and (c) social awareness.

a. Internalization of Piety (Spiritual Awareness)

1) Understanding Sharing as a Form of Social Worship

Field observations during the takjil-sharing activity indicate that students gradually reframed the act of distribution from a logistical task into a form of meaningful worship. Approximately 80% of students demonstrated respectful verbal interaction, careful handling of distributed items, and deliberate expressions of courtesy toward community members (Observation, March 21, 2025).

Interview data reinforce this interpretation. One supervising teacher explained:

“We emphasized that sharing food was not only social charity but an act of worship connected to faith” (P01, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Several students echoed this perspective. A Grade IV student stated:

“I realized that giving food to others can be part of worship, not just helping” (P15, Female, Grade IV Student, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

This shift suggests that students began integrating theological meaning into observable action, moving beyond procedural participation toward faith-informed intentionality.

2) Religious Reflection Through Lived Experiences

The reflective forums conducted after field engagement functioned as a structured space for spiritual articulation. Observation data indicate that approximately 70% of students expressed personal insights connecting the activity to gratitude, divine reward, or moral accountability (Observation, March 21, 2025).

Teachers reported noticeable seriousness in tone and attentiveness during reflection sessions. One supervising teacher observed:

“During reflection, students spoke more thoughtfully than in regular classes. They connected the activity to their relationship with God” (P02, Female, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Documentation of reflection notes further confirms recurring references to sincerity (*ikhlas*), gratitude (*syukur*), and responsibility before God (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). These patterns indicate affective and cognitive integration of spiritual concepts.

3) Integration of Faith-Based Values into Daily Program Activities

Piety was not confined to isolated moments of worship but embedded across program routines. Congregational prayers, cooperative meal preparation, and respectful group interaction were consistently framed within faith-based discourse (Observation, March 21–22, 2025).

A program administrator emphasized:

“Every activity was connected back to faith, so students understood that religion guides daily behavior, not only formal rituals” (P06, Male, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

This consistent framing suggests that spiritual awareness was operationalized as an organizing principle across activities rather than treated as a discrete instructional segment.

b. Internalization of Wisdom (*Hikmah* and Humility)

1) Emotional Regulation within Group Dynamics

Observation data reveal progressive improvement in students’ emotional regulation during collaborative tasks. Initial minor disagreements over role distribution were increasingly resolved through dialogue rather than confrontation (Observation, March 21–22, 2025).

One supervising teacher noted:

“Students began managing small conflicts more calmly by the second day. They negotiated rather than argued” (P03, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

This suggests development of reflective restraint—an indicator of emerging *hikmah* in practical social interaction.

2) Development of Humility in Peer Interaction

Interview data indicate that humility emerged particularly during reflective presentations. Students acknowledged mistakes, recognized peer contributions, and expressed appreciation for collaborative support.

A Grade V student stated:

“I learned that I cannot do everything alone. My group helped me understand the activity better” (P19, Male, Grade V Student, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

Teachers reported increased willingness among students to listen attentively to peers during discussions (Observation, March 21, 2025). Such behavior reflects reduced self-centeredness and growing openness to collective insight.

3) Ability to Derive Meaning from Collective Experiences

The reflective stage facilitated meaning-making beyond immediate activity outcomes. Documentation analysis of student reflection summaries reveals recurring references to “lessons learned,” “shared responsibility,” and “thinking before acting” (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025).

A supervising teacher summarized:

“The important part was not only the activity, but how students interpreted it afterward. That is where wisdom appeared” (P01, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

These findings indicate that structured reflection supported cognitive abstraction from lived experience—an essential component of wisdom development.

c. Internalization of Social Awareness

1) Empathy Toward Community Members and Peers

Empathy emerged strongly during takjil distribution. Students were observed adjusting tone, maintaining polite greetings, and expressing concern for recipients (Observation, March 21, 2025).

One supervising teacher observed:

“Some students became more attentive to how they spoke with community members. They were careful and respectful” (P02, Female, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Student reflections frequently mentioned imagining themselves in others' situations, indicating perspective-taking capacity.

2) Behavioral Transformation from Individualistic to Collaborative Engagement

Triangulated findings indicate movement from individual task orientation toward shared responsibility. Teachers reported that students who typically preferred working independently became more cooperative during group-based activities.

A program administrator noted:

"We saw students who usually work alone start depending on their team and supporting each other" (P07, Female, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

Observation records corroborate increased peer reminders and collective problem-solving behaviors (Observation, March 22, 2025).

3) Development of Social Responsibility Through Sharing Activities

Students increasingly framed participation in takjil-sharing as a responsibility rather than an obligation. Reflection notes include commitments to continue charitable actions beyond the program (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025).

A Grade IV student explained:

"I want to share again with people outside school because it feels important, not just part of the program" (P14, Male, Grade IV Student, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

Such statements suggest early-stage internalization of social responsibility as a sustained moral commitment.

4) Integrated Moral Internalization

Across triangulated data sources, the internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values appears to operate through interaction among spiritual awareness, reflective wisdom, and social empathy. Students did not merely participate in structured religious activities; they progressively attached meaning, regulated emotion, and reoriented social behavior in alignment with articulated values.

The convergence of observational evidence (behavioral change), interview testimony (intentional reflection), and documentation records (written commitments) strengthens the credibility of internalization claims. While longitudinal validation would be required to assess long-term sustainability, short-term evidence indicates that experiential immersion combined

with guided reflection can catalyze movement from moral cognition to embodied ethical practice.

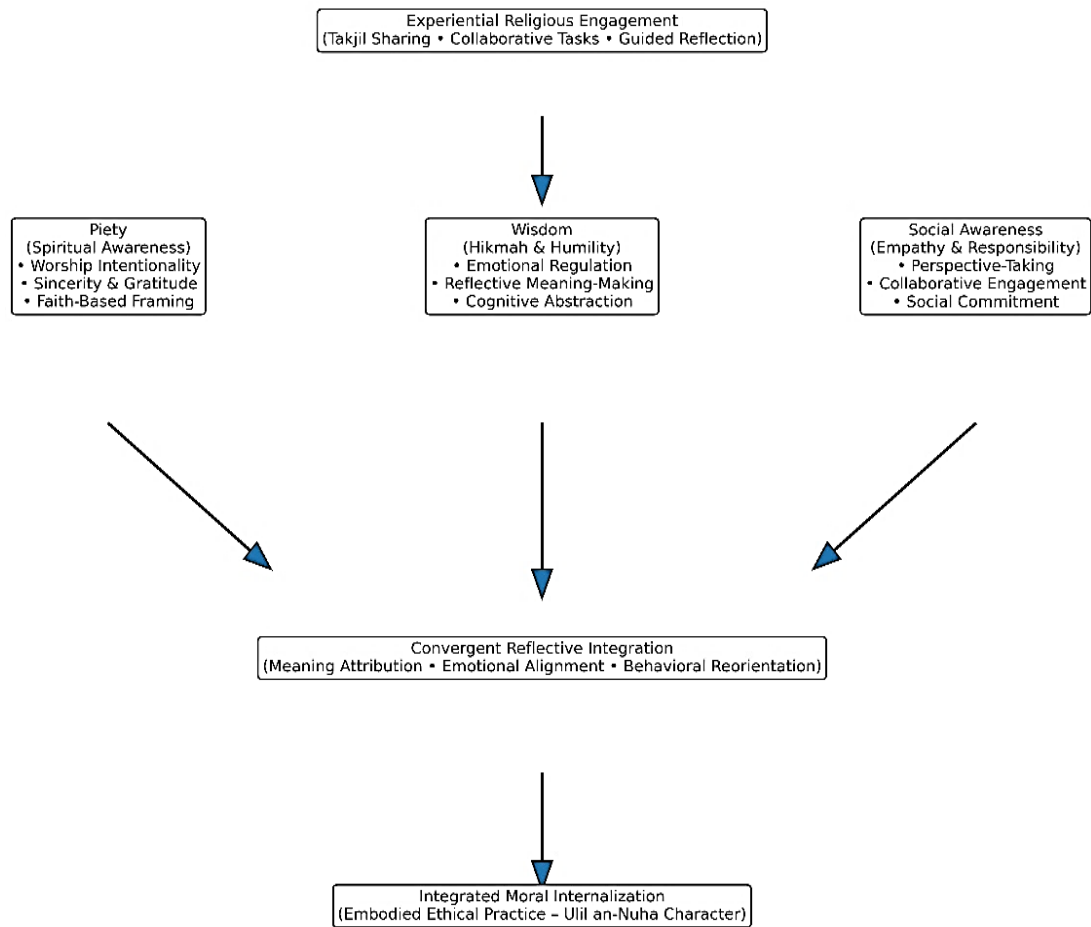


Figure 2. Internalization Process of *Ulil an-Nuha* Values

The figure 2 illustrates an integrated model of the internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values. It begins with experiential religious engagement—such as takjil sharing and guided reflection—as the foundation for value formation. These experiences develop three interconnected dimensions: piety (spiritual awareness), wisdom (hikmah and humility), and social awareness (empathy and responsibility). Through reflective integration, these dimensions converge, leading to integrated moral internalization and the embodiment of *Ulil an-Nuha* character in daily behavior.

3. Effectiveness of Pesantren Kilat as a Medium for Character Building

The empirical findings indicate that the Multiple Intelligences–based Pesantren Kilat program functioned effectively as a structured medium for character formation. Triangulated data from interviews, field observations, and documentation analysis demonstrate measurable behavioral shifts, multidimensional integration of spiritual and intellectual

development, and strong internal validation through methodological triangulation. Thematic synthesis reveals three central dimensions of effectiveness: (a) students' behavioral transformation, (b) integration of spiritual, social, and intellectual domains, and (c) validation through triangulated qualitative evidence.

a. Students' Behavioral Transformation

1) Increased Self-Confidence

Observation during reflective presentation sessions indicates that approximately 70% of students demonstrated increased verbal confidence compared to their usual classroom participation patterns (Observation, March 21, 2025). Students who were typically reserved volunteered to present group reflections, maintained eye contact, and articulated structured moral insights.

One supervising teacher noted:

"Several students who rarely speak during regular lessons were willing to present their reflections confidently" (P02, Female, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

Documentation of presentation summaries confirms broader participation across Grades III, IV, and V (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). These findings suggest that experiential engagement combined with collaborative preparation fostered psychological safety and expressive confidence.

2) Increased Social Engagement

During the takjil-sharing activity, approximately 80% of students actively participated in role coordination, respectful communication, and cooperative distribution (Observation, March 21, 2025). Teachers reported heightened enthusiasm and sustained engagement throughout the activity.

A program administrator observed:

"Students showed genuine excitement when interacting with the community. They were fully involved, not passive observers" (P06, Male, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 21, 2025).

This level of engagement reflects not only participation but meaningful involvement in socially purposeful action.

3) Transformation from Passive to Active Participation

Comparative teacher reflections indicate a noticeable shift from teacher-directed compliance toward student-initiated contribution. By the second day, students began

organizing tasks independently, reminding peers of responsibilities, and proposing improvements during reflection sessions (Observation, March 22, 2025).

One supervising teacher explained:

“On the second day, students were more proactive. They asked questions, offered ideas, and took responsibility without being instructed” (P03, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

This transition from passive reception to active engagement represents a key indicator of transformative learning rather than procedural adherence.

b. Integration of Spiritual, Social, and Intellectual Dimensions

1) Harmonization of Faith (*Iman*), Character (*Akhlak*), and Intellect (*Fikir*)

Triangulated findings indicate that the program facilitated simultaneous development of spiritual awareness, ethical conduct, and cognitive reflection. Worship routines, collaborative social engagement, and analytical reflection were structurally interconnected rather than treated as separate domains (Observation, March 21–22, 2025).

A supervising teacher summarized this integration:

“Students were not only praying or sharing; they were thinking about why they were doing it and how it relates to their character” (P01, Male, Supervising Teacher, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

Documentation analysis reveals consistent alignment between stated objectives (faith strengthening, character development, and reflective thinking) and implemented activities (Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025). This harmonization suggests that the program operationalized a holistic educational model rather than a segmented curriculum.

2) Application of Transformative Learning Principles

The experiential cycle—action, reflection, conceptualization, and re-application—was evident across program stages. Students engaged in concrete social action (takjil-sharing), reflected collectively, abstracted moral meaning, and articulated commitments for future practice.

Observation notes indicate increased depth of reflection on the second day, suggesting iterative learning (Observation, March 22, 2025). Teachers reported that students began connecting experiences to broader life contexts beyond the program setting.

A program administrator stated:

“The discussions showed that students were linking the activity to their daily behavior, not just describing what happened” (P07, Female, Program Administrator, Personal Interview, March 22, 2025).

Such patterns are consistent with transformative learning processes characterized by perspective adjustment and behavioral intention formation.

3) Development of a Collective Culture Reinforcing *Ulil an-Nuha* Values

Beyond individual change, data indicate emergence of a shared moral culture during the program. Peer reminders regarding punctual prayer, respectful speech, and equitable task distribution became increasingly common (Observation, March 22, 2025).

Teachers described this as a temporary “micro-community” structured around shared values. The presence of peer-based accountability suggests that character formation was socially reinforced rather than solely teacher-driven.

This collective dynamic strengthens the sustainability potential of value internalization, as norms were reinforced horizontally among students.

c. Validation of Findings through Methodological Triangulation

1) Cross-Verification Across Data Sources

The credibility of effectiveness claims is supported by consistent patterns across interviews, observations, and documentation. Behavioral engagement percentages (70% presentation confidence; 80% social participation) observed in the field were corroborated by teacher testimony and written documentation records (Observation, March 21–22, 2025; Documentation Analysis, March 22, 2025).

Statements from supervising teachers, administrators, and students converge in describing increased engagement, reflective depth, and social responsibility.

2) Consistency of Behavioral Changes

Observed behavioral shifts—improved cooperation, increased initiative, and emotional regulation—were reported independently by multiple respondent categories. This inter-source consistency strengthens confirmability and reduces single-source bias.

For example, increased peer accountability was: observed directly during group work, reported by supervising teachers in interviews, and reflected in student self-reports during reflection sessions.

3) Methodological Implications

The convergence of multiple qualitative data streams demonstrates the robustness of triangulated design in capturing character transformation processes. The integration of behavioral observation with reflective narratives provides a multidimensional understanding of program impact, extending beyond subjective perception alone.

Collectively, the findings indicate that the Pesantren Kilat program functioned effectively as a medium for character building by enhancing student confidence and social engagement, facilitating movement from passive compliance to active participation, integrating spiritual, social, and intellectual dimensions, generating a shared culture reinforcing *ulil an-nuha* values, and demonstrating consistency across triangulated data sources

While long-term sustainability requires longitudinal follow-up, short-term evidence strongly suggests that structured experiential immersion grounded in Multiple Intelligences theory can catalyze meaningful character development among elementary students.

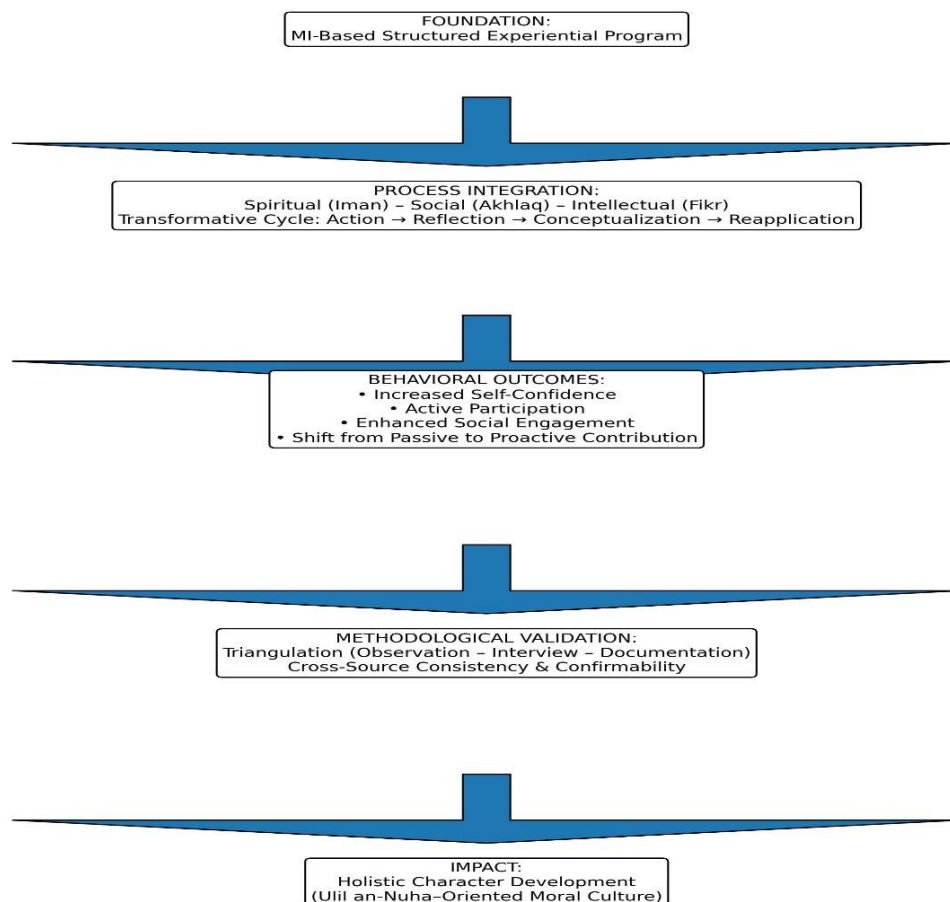


Figure 3. Layered Effectiveness Framework of MI-Based Pesantren Kilat

The figure 3 depicts a layered effectiveness framework of the MI-based Pesantren Kilat program. It starts with a structured experiential foundation grounded in Multiple Intelligences theory, followed by an integrated process combining spiritual (iman), social (akhlaq), and intellectual (fikir) dimensions through a transformative learning cycle. This process produces observable outcomes such as increased self-confidence, active participation, and stronger social engagement. Methodological triangulation ensures the credibility of these findings. All layers ultimately lead to holistic character development and the formation of an *Ulil an-Nuha*-oriented moral culture.

DISCUSSION

1. Results Analysis

a. Implementation of the Multiple Intelligences–Based Pesantren Kilat Program

The implementation quality of the Pesantren Kilat as shown in the findings reflects an educational design that deliberately operationalizes Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences theory, (MI) in ways that extend beyond conventional cognitive-centric instruction to include interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, and kinesthetic domains. According to Gardner’s conceptualization, individuals possess multiple distinct intelligences such as linguistic, interpersonal, and bodily-kinesthetic, which should be actively harnessed in learning environments (Gardner, 1983/1984). This theoretical lens helps explain why collaborative sharing activities, group presentations, and puzzle games were effective in engaging diverse student potentials (as observed among 70–80% of student participants). Guided, contextually situated activities enabled students to express and develop these different intelligences in authentic social learning environments. Such findings align with prior work indicating that MI-based approaches enhance social attitudes, collaboration, and confidence in primary education contexts when aligned with student strengths and learning styles (Fadhillah et al., 2025)

In addition, the experiential nature of program design aligns closely with David A. Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which posits that meaningful learning emerges through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). The sequential structuring of the Pesantren Kilat mirrors this cycle: students engage in concrete action (takjil sharing), reflect (group

presentations), conceptualize meanings (guided reflection), and synthesize understanding for future behavior. The integration of reflection immediately following active participation enabled learners to transform action into meaningful knowledge, deepening engagement and reinforcing value formation in ways consistent with ELT principles.

Beyond MI and ELT, the implementation outcomes also point toward inclusive pedagogical practice in line with educational research suggesting that diverse intelligences can be bridged with value internalization when learning strategies are intentionally designed (Assingkily et al., 2025). The observed developmental appropriateness and balanced activation of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor engagement corroborate the notion that learning environments should cater to multiple modalities for effective character development.

b. Internalization Process of *Ulil an-Nuha* Values

The internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values in the Pesantren Kilat environment is observed as a progressive, affective, and behavioral shift rather than a singular verbal instruction outcome. Empirical evidence demonstrates that students moved from externally guided adherence to increasingly self-regulated moral behavior—a hallmark of moral internalization theory. This progression is consistent with character education scholars who argue that true internalization is realized through repeated, meaningful, and reflective engagement with value-laden experiences rather than token instruction (Kamaluddin et al., 2024).

The findings reinforce the view that moral internalization within an Islamic educational context requires habituation, role modeling, and contextual engagement, rather than episodic moral discourse. Studies on internalizing Islamic values also emphasize the integration of value expression into daily routines with role modeling and example setting as key mechanisms of internalization. One such study concluded that external practice paired with reflection effectively strengthens moral commitments and ethical conduct in learners' everyday contexts (Mukti & Sarwadi, 2025).

The progression from compliance to empathetic and reflective conduct observed in students resonates with psychological models of moral internalization that emphasize cognitive understanding, affective resonance, and behavioral enactment as interconnected stages of value integration. In educational research on Islamic schooling, internalization is often shown to be mediated by role models and communal practices that embed values into

habitual actions (Anwar, 2023). This complements MI and ELT perspectives by situating value internalization within lived, socially mediated experiences.

Islamic educational strategies also reflect that internalizing values is most effective when spiritual meaning, ethical reflection, and social practice converge rather than when they are taught as discrete components of a curriculum. For example, integrative character education in pesantren environments has been shown to embed values such as responsibility, empathy, and cooperation through structured and habitual activities, confirming that internalization is not instantaneous but emerges through sustained engagement with ethical practice (Jauhari & Syihabuddin, 2025).

c. Effectiveness of Pesantren Kilat as a Medium for Character Building

The effectiveness of the Pesantren Kilat program in fostering character transformation is supported by outcomes demonstrating increased self-confidence, social engagement, and active participation—core dimensions of holistic character development. These findings are in line with contemporary educational character research showing that active participation and meaningful engagement are essential for moving beyond rote compliance toward authentic value enactment (Mahfud & Zahriyah, 2025).

The harmonization of spiritual, social, and intellectual dimensions in the program closely parallels holistic educational frameworks that emphasize the integration of faith (*iman*), character (*akhlak*), and thought (*fikir*). Islamic character education literature underlines that effective character formation arises through integrative strategies where values are lived, reflected upon, and reinforced through social practice and ritual. This aligns with the notion that character is more effectively built when learners experience values within their lived contexts rather than in isolated academic exercises. (Mahfud & Zahriyah, 2025)

Finally, methodological triangulation confirmed the robustness of these effectiveness claims. The consistency across interview testimony, observational data, and documentation confirms the reliability of the identified character changes. This approach is consistent with qualitative research best practices, which recommend triangulation to strengthen credibility and confirmability (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2018).

The results of this study substantively contribute to a deeper understanding of how experience-driven pedagogy, grounded in Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory and experiential learning cycles, facilitates value internalization and character development within faith-based educational settings. MI theory functioned as a structural lens for identifying and activating

diverse student potentials, ensuring that character formation was not treated as an abstract moral ideal but was manifested through observable performance, participation patterns, and social interaction. Through differentiated activities engaging linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and kinesthetic domains, character development became embedded in authentic learning experiences.

In parallel, Kolb's experiential learning cycle illuminated the pedagogical mechanism underlying this process, demonstrating that concrete experience must be followed by reflective observation, conceptual interpretation, and active application in order to transform activity into moral insight and sustained behavioral change. Moreover, moral internalization theory provided the normative framework for understanding how values are adopted and embodied.

The findings affirm that spiritual and ethical values are not effectively internalized through rote transmission alone; rather, they emerge through iterative practice, guided reflection, and meaningful social engagement. Collectively, these theoretical integrations explain how structured experiential learning can bridge cognition, emotion, and action in fostering holistic character development. Together, these theoretical frames elucidate why and how Pesantren Kilat served as an effective medium for character development: it combined active participation, reflective meaning-making, and socially embedded value practice within a supportive pedagogical ecosystem.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Multiple Intelligences (MI)-based Pesantren Kilat program effectively integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains through experiential and reflective religious activities. These results are consistent with previous research confirming the pedagogical strength of MI-based instruction in enhancing student engagement and learning motivation (Al-abdallat et al., 2023; Murtafi'ah et al., 2024). Similar to Hasan & Maemonah, (2024), who reported increased learning interest through MI-oriented experiential strategies, the present study found that diversified activities—such as group discussions, kinesthetic Qur'anic games, and reflective sharing—stimulated multidimensional student participation.

However, this study extends prior findings in several significant ways. First, unlike earlier research primarily conducted in formal classroom settings (Rozhana, 2022; Sholeh et al., 2025), the present study situates MI implementation within a short-term intensive

religious program (Pesantren Kilat). This context demonstrates that MI is not limited to academic subject instruction but can be operationalized within spiritual and character-oriented programs.

Second, while previous pesantren-based studies emphasized habituation and religious routine as central mechanisms of character formation (Akbar et al., 2022; Malik, 2023), this research reveals a more integrative process combining habituation, experiential learning (Kolb, 2015), and structured reflection. The internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values did not emerge solely from ritual repetition but from meaningful engagement, peer collaboration, and guided moral interpretation.

Third, although *Hasanuddin et al.*, (2025) confirmed that integrating Islamic and general education enhances religious character development, this study deepens the analysis by connecting such integration with the Islamic philosophical construct of *Ulil an-Nuha*. The findings demonstrate that piety, wisdom, and social awareness are not merely moral outcomes but interconnected dimensions shaped through cognitive reflection, emotional regulation, and social participation.

Thus, compared to previous literature, this study contributes a contextualized and philosophically grounded model of MI-based character education embedded within short-term Islamic educational programs.

3. Implications of Findings

a. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the advancement of holistic education theory by empirically demonstrating a coherent integration among Multiple Intelligences theory (Gardner, 2011), Experiential Learning theory (Kolb, 2015), moral internalization theory (Lickona, 2013), and Islamic philosophical foundations (Nata, 2014). Rather than treating these frameworks as parallel constructs, the findings reveal their functional convergence within a structured religious program.

The results indicate that moral internalization is significantly strengthened when learning environments simultaneously activate diverse intelligence domains while embedding reflective meaning-making processes. In this model, character formation emerges not from normative value transmission alone, but from structured experiential engagement that integrates cognition (understanding moral concepts), affect (emotional resonance and

spiritual awareness), and action (observable behavior). This integrative mechanism supports the view that moral development is most sustainable when values are experienced, interpreted, and enacted.

Furthermore, the study extends contemporary discourse on Multiple Intelligences by positioning spiritual awareness and moral reasoning as integrative dimensions rather than peripheral attributes. While many MI applications prioritize linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences, the present findings demonstrate that interpersonal, intrapersonal, and existential-spiritual dimensions play a central role in character formation. By empirically linking the Qur'anic concept of *Ulil an-Nuha* (piety, wisdom, and social awareness) with MI domains, this research proposes a culturally grounded expansion of holistic education theory that bridges Western pedagogical models with Islamic philosophical anthropology.

b. Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the findings offer a replicable pedagogical model for Islamic elementary schools seeking to strengthen character education through short-term intensive religious programs such as Pesantren Kilat.

First, the study demonstrates the importance of incorporating structured experiential learning cycles—experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application—into program design. Activities that merely involve ritual participation are insufficient for deep moral transformation; reflective facilitation is required to convert experience into internalized values.

Second, the diversification of activities based on Multiple Intelligences enhances inclusive participation. By engaging verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, kinesthetic, and intrapersonal capacities, the program accommodates heterogeneous learner profiles and reduces passive engagement.

Third, guided moral reflection emerges as a decisive factor in preventing superficial compliance. The findings suggest that structured dialogue, collective meaning-making, and teacher-mediated interpretation are essential for transforming religious practice into moral consciousness.

The program design identified in this study may therefore serve as a practical framework for integrating character education within Ramadan activities and other spiritually

oriented programs in Islamic educational institutions. Additionally, the findings underscore the critical role of teacher facilitation competencies. Professional development initiatives focusing on experiential pedagogy, reflective dialogue techniques, and MI-based instructional design are recommended to ensure program sustainability and pedagogical consistency.

4. Research Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. It was conducted in a single Islamic elementary school with a qualitative sample of 30 participants, limiting broader generalizability. The program was implemented over only two days, preventing assessment of the long-term sustainability of character development. In addition, reliance on interviews, observations, and documentation may have introduced social desirability bias, particularly within a religious context. External factors such as family background and prior religious socialization were also not systematically controlled.

Future research should employ longitudinal and mixed-method designs to examine the durability of character transformation and strengthen empirical validation. Comparative studies across diverse institutional contexts are also recommended, including exploration of digital or AI-supported tools within spiritually grounded MI-based frameworks.

CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that the structured integration of MI domains—particularly interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, and kinesthetic intelligences—within an experiential learning cycle enabled students to engage cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally in meaningful religious activities. The program did not merely transmit moral content; rather, it operationalized value formation through concrete experience (takjil sharing and collaborative tasks), guided reflection, conceptual meaning-making, and behavioral application. As a result, students exhibited observable transformations, including increased self-confidence, stronger social engagement, and a shift from passive participation toward active moral involvement. Furthermore, the internalization of *Ulil an-Nuha* values—piety, wisdom, and social awareness—emerged as a gradual process mediated by reflective dialogue, peer collaboration, and structured habituation. The study confirms that moral internalization in faith-based educational settings is strengthened when diverse intelligences are activated and embedded within experiential pedagogical design. The convergence of MI theory, experiential learning, and moral internalization frameworks provides a holistic

explanatory model for how character formation can be cultivated through short-term intensive religious programs.

Despite these contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. The study was conducted within a single Islamic elementary institution with a qualitative sample of 30 participants, limiting statistical generalizability. The short duration of the Pesantren Kilat program (two days) also restricts conclusions regarding the long-term sustainability of character transformation. Additionally, reliance on interviews, observations, and documentation introduces potential social desirability bias within a religious educational context. Future research is recommended to conduct longitudinal investigations to assess the durability of internalized values over time, employ mixed-method designs to strengthen empirical validation, and compare MI-based character programs across diverse institutional settings. Further studies may also explore the integration of digital or AI-supported tools within spiritually grounded experiential frameworks to expand the applicability of holistic character education models.

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