

Analysis of students Interpretation of Quranic Values in Islamic Religious Education Learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: September 27, 2025 Revised: October 16, 2025 Accepted: December 13, 2025 Available Online: January 3, 2026</p> <p>Keywords: Students' Interpretation; Quranic Values; Islamic Religious Education; IRE Learning; Religious Character.</p>	<p>This study aims to analyze students' interpretations of Quranic values in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan. The focus of the research is on students' understanding of Quranic values such as faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and social interaction (muamalah), as well as how these values are internalized in their daily attitudes and behaviors. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews with IRE teachers and students, and documentation. The findings reveal that most students are able to understand Quranic values conceptually; however, there are variations in the level of interpretation and practical application of these values in daily life. Factors influencing students' interpretations include teaching methods, teacher role modeling, school environment, and family background. The study concludes that contextual Islamic Religious Education learning based on Quranic values plays a significant role in shaping students' understanding and religious character.</p>
<p>Please cite this article: Purba, R. (2026). <i>Analysis of students' interpretation of Quranic values in Islamic religious education learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan</i>. Integrasi: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Humaniora, 4(1).1-10</p>	<p>ABSTRAK</p> <p>Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis interpretasi siswa terhadap nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada pemahaman siswa terhadap nilai-nilai Qur'ani seperti akidah, ibadah, akhlak, dan muamalah serta bagaimana nilai-nilai tersebut diinternalisasikan dalam sikap dan perilaku sehari-hari. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan guru PAI dan siswa, serta dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa telah mampu memahami nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an secara konseptual, namun masih terdapat perbedaan dalam tingkat interpretasi dan pengamalan nilai tersebut dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Faktor yang memengaruhi interpretasi siswa antara lain metode pembelajaran, keteladanan guru, lingkungan sekolah, dan latar belakang keluarga. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pembelajaran PAI yang kontekstual dan berbasis nilai Qur'ani memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk pemahaman dan karakter religius siswa.</p>
Page: 1-10	<p>This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).</p>

A. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in shaping students' personality and character based on Quranic values. The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, functions not only as a guide for worship but also as a reference for moral, social, and spiritual values that are relevant throughout human life (Al-Qaradawi, 2010). Therefore, IRE learning in schools is expected to instill a deep and applicable understanding of Quranic values.

In the context of formal education, IRE learning is not solely oriented toward cognitive knowledge acquisition but also toward the formation of students' religious attitudes and behaviors. This is in line with the national education goals, which emphasize the development of learners to become individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character (Kemendikbud, 2020). Thus, Quranic values need to be systematically internalized through effective learning processes.

Students' interpretation of Quranic values is a crucial aspect of the success of IRE learning. Interpretation is not only related to the ability to understand the meaning of Quranic texts but also to the ability to connect Quranic messages with the realities of daily life (Rahman, 2009). Differences in students' educational backgrounds, religious experiences, and social environments lead to variations in their interpretative processes.

Quranic values encompass various dimensions of life, including faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and social interaction (muamalah). The value of faith relates to belief in Allah, worship emphasizes obedience in practicing religious obligations, morals govern interpersonal conduct, and muamalah regulates social and economic interactions (Zuhaili, 2011). These four dimensions serve as the fundamental foundation of IRE learning.

However, realities in educational practice indicate that not all students are able to internalize Quranic values optimally. Several studies have revealed a gap between students' conceptual understanding and their actual practice of these values in daily life (Azra, 2012). This condition presents a particular challenge for IRE teachers in designing meaningful learning experiences.

IRE teachers play a central role as facilitators, motivators, and role models in instilling Quranic values. Teachers' exemplary attitudes and daily behaviors greatly influence how

students interpret and internalize Quranic teachings (Muhaimin, 2015). Therefore, teachers' professionalism and pedagogical competence are critical factors in the success of IRE learning.

In addition to teacher-related factors, the learning methods employed also influence students' interpretations. Contextual and participatory learning approaches are considered more effective in helping students understand the meaning of Quranic values compared to monotonous learning that emphasizes rote memorization (Sanjaya, 2016). Methods such as discussions, case studies, and value reflection can encourage students to think critically and reflectively.

The school environment also contributes significantly to shaping students' interpretations of Quranic values. A religious, disciplined, and value-oriented school culture can strengthen the internalization of Islamic values among students (Tilaar, 2014). Conversely, an uncondusive environment may hinder this process.

Furthermore, students' family backgrounds also influence their understanding and practice of Quranic values. As the first educational institution, the family plays a vital role in instilling fundamental religious beliefs and moral values from an early age (Hasbullah, 2018). Differences in parenting styles and family environments result in varying ways students interpret religious teachings.

Vocational high schools (SMKs) possess distinctive characteristics compared to other educational levels. Their emphasis on vocational skills often poses challenges for IRE learning in attracting students' interest and engagement (Sukmadinata, 2017). Therefore, learning approaches that are relevant to students' real-life experiences and future careers are required.

SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan, as an Islamic educational institution, has a vision of producing graduates who are academically competent and religiously grounded. IRE learning at this school is directed toward developing students who are not only skilled but also possess Islamic character in accordance with Quranic values and Muhammadiyah principles (Muhammadiyah, 2019).

Nevertheless, there is still limited research that specifically examines how vocational school students interpret Quranic values within IRE learning. Most existing studies focus on

curriculum and instructional methods, while students' interpretations have not received sufficient scholarly attention (Hidayat, 2021).

Analyzing students' interpretations is essential to assess the extent to which IRE learning objectives are achieved. By understanding how students perceive and interpret Quranic values, teachers and schools can continuously evaluate and improve instructional practices (Creswell, 2014).

A qualitative approach is considered appropriate for exploring students' interpretations in depth. This approach enables researchers to gain a holistic understanding of students' perspectives based on their experiences, comprehension, and social contexts (Moleong, 2018).

Based on the above considerations, this study aims to analyze students' interpretations of Quranic values in Islamic Religious Education learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan. This research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of more contextual and value-oriented IRE learning that fosters students' religious character.

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to analyze students' interpretations of Quranic values in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of students' perspectives, meanings, and experiences related to the internalization of Quranic values within the learning process. This approach is particularly suitable for understanding social and religious phenomena that cannot be adequately measured using quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014).

The research was conducted at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan, an Islamic vocational high school that integrates general education with religious values. The research participants consisted of IRE teachers and students selected using purposive sampling. Students were chosen based on their active participation in IRE learning and their willingness to share experiences related to their understanding and application of Quranic values. This sampling technique enabled the researcher to obtain rich and relevant data aligned with the research objectives (Moleong, 2018).

Data collection techniques included classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine learning activities, teacher–student interactions, and the integration of Quranic values during the IRE learning process. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with IRE teachers and students to explore their interpretations of Quranic values and the factors influencing these interpretations. Documentation, such as lesson plans, learning materials, and school policy documents, was used to support and triangulate the collected data (Sugiyono, 2019).

The interview instruments were developed based on key indicators of Quranic values, including faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and social interaction (muamalah). The instruments were designed to be flexible, allowing participants to express their views freely while ensuring consistency with the research focus. This flexibility enabled the researcher to capture diverse perspectives and nuanced interpretations of Quranic values in the learning context (Rahman, 2009).

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The researcher systematically organized and coded the data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation to identify patterns and themes related to students' interpretations of Quranic values. The analysis process was carried out continuously throughout the research to ensure depth and accuracy of interpretation (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

To ensure data validity and reliability, this study applied triangulation of data sources and techniques. Cross-checking information from different participants and methods helped enhance the credibility of the findings. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming the research findings with participants to ensure that the interpretations accurately reflected their perspectives. These strategies were employed to strengthen the trustworthiness of the qualitative research results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

C. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that students at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan generally possess a basic conceptual understanding of Quranic values taught in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) classes. Most students were able to explain fundamental concepts related to faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and social interaction

(muamalah) as presented by their teachers. This confirms that IRE learning has functioned effectively at the cognitive level, particularly in transmitting religious knowledge (Muhaimin, 2015).

However, deeper analysis revealed variations in how students interpret these Quranic values. Some students interpreted the values textually, focusing mainly on memorization of verses and definitions, while others demonstrated contextual interpretations by relating Quranic teachings to their daily experiences at school, home, and in the community. This finding supports Rahman's (2009) view that interpretation is influenced by learners' ability to contextualize religious texts.

In terms of faith (aqidah), most students understood belief in Allah as the foundation of Islamic life. They associated faith with obedience to religious obligations and avoidance of prohibited actions. Nevertheless, several students perceived aqidah as a theoretical concept rather than a guiding principle for daily decision-making. This indicates a gap between theological understanding and personal internalization, as also noted by Azra (2012).

Regarding worship (ibadah), students generally showed a positive interpretation of Quranic commands related to prayer, fasting, and recitation of the Qur'an. Many students acknowledged that IRE learning encouraged them to be more disciplined in performing religious practices. This finding aligns with Zuhaili (2011), who emphasizes that worship serves as a medium for strengthening spiritual awareness and moral discipline.

Despite this positive trend, some students admitted that their worship practices were motivated more by external factors, such as school rules or teacher supervision, rather than internal religious awareness. This suggests that the internalization of Quranic values has not yet fully reached the affective dimension for all students. Similar challenges have been highlighted by Tilaar (2014) in studies on value-based education.

In the dimension of morals (akhlaq), students demonstrated a relatively strong understanding of Quranic teachings related to honesty, respect, responsibility, and discipline. Observational data showed that many students practiced polite communication and respectful behavior toward teachers and peers. This supports the argument that moral values are more easily internalized when reinforced through daily interactions and school culture (Hasbullah, 2018).

However, inconsistencies were observed between students' moral understanding and behavior in certain situations, such as peer conflicts and classroom discipline. Some students struggled to apply Quranic moral values when faced with social pressure. This finding indicates that moral interpretation is highly situational and influenced by social context, as suggested by Creswell (2014).

In the aspect of social interaction (*muamalah*), students' interpretations varied significantly. While students understood the importance of cooperation, fairness, and mutual respect, not all were able to consistently practice these values in group work and social relationships. This finding highlights the complexity of translating Quranic social values into practical behavior (Zuhaili, 2011).

The role of teachers emerged as a critical factor influencing students' interpretations of Quranic values. Students who perceived their teachers as role models demonstrated a deeper and more meaningful understanding of Quranic teachings. This supports Muhaimin's (2015) assertion that teacher exemplarity plays a central role in value-based education.

Teaching methods also significantly influenced students' interpretations. Contextual learning strategies, such as discussions, real-life examples, and reflective activities, were found to enhance students' ability to interpret Quranic values meaningfully. In contrast, teacher-centered approaches tended to limit students' interpretive engagement. This finding is consistent with Sanjaya's (2016) emphasis on student-centered learning.

The school environment at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan was found to contribute positively to the internalization of Quranic values. Religious activities, school rules, and institutional culture reinforced the messages delivered in IRE classrooms. This aligns with Tilaar's (2014) view that school culture plays a vital role in shaping students' values.

Family background also influenced students' interpretations. Students from religiously supportive families demonstrated stronger internalization and application of Quranic values. Conversely, students with limited religious guidance at home relied more heavily on school-based learning. This finding reinforces Hasbullah's (2018) argument regarding the family's role as the primary educational institution.

Furthermore, the vocational orientation of the school influenced students' perceptions of IRE learning. Some students initially viewed Quranic values as less relevant to their future careers. However, when teachers linked Quranic teachings to workplace ethics and

professional responsibility, students showed increased engagement and understanding. This supports Sukmadinata's (2017) assertion that relevance enhances learning motivation.

Overall, the findings suggest that students' interpretations of Quranic values operate at multiple levels, including cognitive understanding, affective appreciation, and behavioral application. While cognitive understanding was relatively strong, affective and behavioral internalization varied among students. This multidimensional interpretation process reflects the complexity of religious education (Rahman, 2009).

In summary, the results indicate that IRE learning at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan has succeeded in introducing Quranic values but still faces challenges in fostering deep internalization and consistent practice. Strengthening contextual learning, teacher role modeling, and collaboration with families may enhance students' interpretations and application of Quranic values. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on improving the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education in shaping students' religious character (Muhaimin, 2015; Creswell, 2014).

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that students at SMK Muhammadiyah 8 Medan generally possess a fundamental understanding of Quranic values conveyed through Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning. Students are able to recognize and explain key dimensions of Quranic values, including faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), morals (akhlaq), and social interaction (muamalah). This indicates that IRE learning has been effective in achieving its cognitive objectives, particularly in transmitting essential religious knowledge.

However, the depth of students' interpretations varies, especially in terms of internalization and practical application. While some students demonstrate contextual and reflective interpretations of Quranic values, others tend to perceive these values in a more theoretical manner. Factors such as teaching methods, teacher role modeling, school culture, and family background significantly influence how students interpret and apply Quranic teachings in their daily lives.

Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of strengthening contextual and value-based IRE learning that integrates real-life experiences and vocational relevance. Enhancing teacher exemplarity, fostering a supportive school environment, and encouraging

collaboration between schools and families are essential strategies for improving the internalization of Quranic values. Future research is recommended to explore quantitative or mixed-method approaches to further examine the impact of Quranic value interpretation on students' character development and behavior.

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