

## The contribution of Pesantren Kilat program to students' religious knowledge and behaviors at elementary school

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**ABSTRACT**

In the context of modernization and globalization, elementary school students face challenges in preserving their understanding and practice of religious values amid the influence of external cultures. The Pesantren Kilat program at Elementary School is designed as an effective solution to strengthen students' religious knowledge and cultivate Islamic behavior from an early age. The program aims to deepen students' understanding of Islamic teachings and assist them in applying moral values in their daily lives. This study examines how the Pesantren Kilat program enhances students' religious knowledge and shapes Islamic behavior at Elementary School. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research explores the role of the program in enriching students' religious understanding and developing their ethics and morality based on Islamic teachings. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the Pesantren Kilat program effectively increases religious knowledge and promotes Islamic behavior in students. The program helps students internalize and apply Islamic values in daily life by integrating theoretical and practical learning. Structured activities such as interactive lessons, worship, and behavior monitoring lead to noticeable improvements in students' religious adherence and social behavior, demonstrating the program's success in fostering spiritual growth and moral development. This study's contribution is to show that the Pesantren Kilat program is effective in improving students' religious knowledge and Islamic behavior through theoretical and practical learning activities. It has become an effective model for internalizing Islamic values and promoting spiritual growth and moral development.

**Keywords:** Pesanten  
Kilat, Behavior,  
Religious Education



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## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has dramatically transformed social dynamics, particularly among elementary school students, by increasing access to digital information and enabling rapid online communication (van Laar et al., 2020; Chaka, 2020). However, Stoian et al. (2022) caution that this convenience comes with risks, exposing young learners to inappropriate and potentially harmful content such as pornography, gambling, and online scams. These digital threats, as Tartari (2015) and Dwivedi et al. (2022) note, can severely affect children's moral development and weaken their grasp of religious values. Weir (2023) further warns that unfiltered information online may disrupt students' ethical judgment and spiritual grounding. Aggarwal et al. (2023) and Kimani (2024) add that such exposure challenges children's moral behavior, undermining their spiritual growth. Alarming data from the Child Protection Commission, supported by Sittichai & Smith (2015) and Handono et al. (2019), reveal that elementary students are highly vulnerable to violence and bullying in schools. These concerns highlight the urgency of embedding character education into the curriculum, as advocated by Kitching & Gholami (2023) and Farr (2024), who emphasize building religiosity, independence, and integrity. Adams (2019), Chi-Kin Lee (2020), and O'Farrell (2023) underscore that early religious education is essential in equipping students to face spiritual and ethical dilemmas. Within this framework, pesantren kilat programs offer structured religious instruction that, according to these scholars, effectively counteracts harmful external influences while reinforcing Islamic identity and moral resilience from a young age.

Religious education shapes students' moral and ethical character, particularly in faith-based schools. The pesantren kilat program has emerged as an innovative approach to fostering religious understanding and Islamic behavior. Conducted outside regular school hours, it provides an immersive experience in learning Islamic teachings, practicing religious rituals, and embracing moral values (Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024; Shahida, 2024). This intensive program aims to build a strong religious identity and ethics, forming a foundation for students' character development (Nuraini et al., 2021; Rusnilawati et al., 2023). The program emphasizes applying religious principles in daily life, guided by mentors who instill core Islamic values like compassion, humility, and integrity (Mercader et al., 2021). Studies highlight its effectiveness in enhancing religious awareness, increasing students' motivation to worship (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020; Nelson & Yang, 2022; Aseery, 2023), and revitalizing moral values (Akhlaiq) (Kavuri-Bauer, 2019; Amin, 2023). However, its long-term impact on students' behavior at school, home, and communities still needs to be explored. This study examines the role of the pesantren kilat program at elementary school in enhancing religious understanding and cultivating sustainable Islamic behavior. By addressing these gaps, it seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of pesantren kilat as a crucial alternative in religious education.

The objective of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the pesantren kilat program in strengthening students' religious understanding and shaping their Islamic character, particularly among elementary school. By exploring the role of this program, the study aims to provide a clearer understanding of how pesantren kilat can be effectively utilized to instill Islamic values in young students from an early age. The findings of this research are expected to offer several benefits. Theoretically, this study will enrich the literature on Islamic education, particularly regarding implementing pesantren kilat as an alternative method to enhance students' religious awareness and character development. The results can serve as a reference for educators and school administrators in optimizing the program to foster students' religious consciousness and daily practices. Socially, this research contributes to the broader effort of nurturing a generation grounded in solid Islamic values, enabling them to face modern challenges with integrity and a robust Islamic identity.

The findings of this study reveal that the pesantren kilat program at Elementary school plays a significant role in enhancing students' religious knowledge and behavior. The program is designed to deepen students' understanding of worship practices during the holy month of Ramadan. This research examines the program's effectiveness in fostering greater religious awareness among students while addressing immoral behaviors, such as a lack of respect toward peers, teachers, and their environment.

The discussion centers on evaluating the extent to which the pesantren kilat program improves students' religious consciousness and promotes moral behavior aligned with Islamic values. By exploring these connections, the study offers valuable insights into the program's effectiveness as a tool for Islamic religious education. Furthermore, the findings provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance the quality of religious education in elementary schools and suggest ways to expand the implementation of this program in similar educational settings.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to explore the Pesantren Kita program at the Elementary School, Leuwinanggung District, Depok City, West Java. This approach was chosen to examine various aspects of the program's implementation in depth. The research aims to explore the implementation and impact of the pesantren kilat program in fostering students' religious understanding and moral behavior, as highlighted by previous studies on religious education in enhancing character development ([Abdillah et al., 2023](#); [Rasmitadila et al., 2023](#)). The data sources for this study include the principal, homeroom teachers, Islamic Education teachers, program committee members, parents, and students, providing a comprehensive perspective on the program's effectiveness.

Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation, aligning with Creswell's (2014) recommendation for triangulating data in qualitative research to ensure validity. Observations are conducted to gain direct insights into implementing the pesantren kilat program, focusing mainly on activities held on Wednesdays during the program's peak. Structured interviews, guided by a pre-designed interview sheet, are conducted with the principal, homeroom teachers, PAI teachers, program committee members, parents, and selected students to gather their views on the program's contribution to strengthening religious values, echoing the approach used by Lisa et al. (2023) in their study on similar programs. The documentation collected includes the activity rundown, photos of the pesantren kilat implementation, and supporting materials such as student reflections and evaluation reports. This method reflects the practices recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) for effective qualitative data collection. The triangulation of data sources observation, interviews, and documentation aims to enhance the study's validity and reliability, offering a holistic understanding of the pesantren kilat program's role in religious education at elementary school. These findings are expected to contribute to the broader literature on religious education and inform recommendations for improving and expanding similar programs in other educational contexts ([Kavuri-Bauer, 2019](#); [Amin, 2023](#)).

Data analysis uses the theoretical model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, involving three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing ([Mezmir, 2020](#)). Data reduction is done by filtering and simplifying data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation related to the contribution of the pesantren kilat program to students' religious awareness and Islamic behavior. Data display involves systematically organizing findings on students' understanding of Islamic teachings, the Islamic behaviors formed, and the impact of the pesantren kilat program in the learning context at elementary school. Conclusion drawing is done by reviewing field notes and findings. Data validity is ensured through source and technique triangulation ([Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021](#)). Source triangulation is conducted by verifying data from various sources, while technique triangulation involves data from interviews, activity observations, and documentation related to the pesantren kilat program.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### **Pesantren Kilat activities to strengthen students' religious knowledge**

Based on the results of interviews with the principal, Islamic Religious Education teacher, chairman of the Pesantren Kilat program committee, class coordinator, and several students of elementary school, as well as through observation and documentation, it is known that the Pesantren

Kilat program at Elementary school is a well-structured and inseparable part of the school's efforts to improve religious understanding and character development of students. This program is carefully planned and implemented to give students a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings, spiritual practices, and moral values. Through a series of organized activities, this program aims to foster a sense of religious awareness, strengthen their relationship with Islamic principles, and foster behavior that reflects strong ethical and social responsibility. The results of observations show a collaborative effort from the school community to create exciting and meaningful experiences for students so that the program's objectives can be achieved effectively. Here are some of the activities, namely:

**Table 1***Strengthening Student Religious Knowledge Material*

No	Pesantren Kilat Activities	Expected Outcomes
1	MABIT Activities (Faith and Piety Development Night) for Students.	MABIT activities deepen students' faith and holiness through worship, including congregational prayers, dhikr, and collective prayers, while reinforcing their understanding of Islamic aqidah as a foundation for daily life.
2	Understanding of Worship (Shalat, Fasting, Zakat) for Students.	Understanding worship aims to teach students proper salat, fasting, and zakat practices while fostering discipline, patience, gratitude, empathy, and social responsibility, enabling them to internalize Islamic values in daily life.
3	Formation of noble morals in students.	The cultivation of noble character in students involves instilling Islamic moral values, such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy, enabling them to apply these values in their daily lives in accordance with Islamic teachings.
4	Delivering Social Material such as Tolerance and Harmony, Cooperation in Daily Life, and Social Responsibility.	Instilling the values of tolerance, cooperation, and social responsibility, so that students are able to respect diversity, work harmoniously, and care for the environment and society.
5	Activities of Breaking the Fast Together, Tarawih Prayer, and Night Islamic Study.	Strengthening togetherness, increasing religious understanding, and getting used to consistent worship. The benefits for students are building solidarity and closeness to Allah SWT.

Note: Data was taken from the results of interviews with the principal, teachers and curriculum deputy

Based on the activities outlined, the Pesantren Kilat program at the elementary school is strategically designed to foster students' Islamic character through structured religious and moral practices. A core activity, MABIT (Faith and Piety Development Night), seeks to deepen spiritual awareness by providing students with meaningful experiences that strengthen faith and piety. The effectiveness of this activity largely depends on students' active engagement and the facilitators' ability to create a supportive and reflective atmosphere. Learning about worship practices such as proper procedures for salat (prayer), fasting, and zakat (almsgiving) offers not only a strong foundation for religious observance but also cultivates values like discipline, empathy, and responsibility. Nevertheless, the success of these activities is not solely theoretical; they require consistent practice, experiential learning, and sustained mentoring to ensure that students internalize Islamic teachings and translate them into daily behavior both inside and outside the school environment.

Activities aimed at developing noble character, such as lessons on tolerance and social responsibility, play a crucial role in shaping students who both respect diversity and uphold Islamic values. Their success depends not only on interactive teaching methods such as discussions and simulations but also on the consistent support of schools and families. Communal practices like breaking the fast, Tarawih prayers, and evening Islamic studies further strengthen students' religious understanding and sense of solidarity. Yet, these collective experiences must be balanced with opportunities for personal reflection to ensure deeper spiritual growth. The Pesantren Kilat program at elementary schools illustrates strong potential in fostering Islamic character, providing both cognitive and affective learning experiences. However, sustaining these values requires systematic

evaluation and a structured framework, ensuring that the character-building efforts extend beyond short-term enthusiasm into long-term behavioral transformation.

### Student behavior development

Based on interviews with the Islamic Education teacher at the elementary school, the Pesantren Kilat program is designed to develop students' potential, particularly in terms of morality (akhlaq) and its application in daily life. This program has made a significant contribution to shaping and strengthening students' religious behavior. One method used is the pra-mabit activity, which instills values of responsibility and honesty. Afterward, students complete a questionnaire to assess their understanding and implementation of these values. Positive behavioral changes serve as indicators of the program's success. In addition, religious activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation (tilawah), communal iftar, and Tarawih prayers are held. Reflection sessions help evaluate and improve students' behavior. Inspirational Islamic stories, such as the Night of Decree (Lailatul Qadar), further enrich their spiritual understanding. Teachers or ustadz serve as role models, allowing students to learn from real-life examples. This approach holistically shapes students' Islamic character.

**Table 2**  
*Student Religious Behavior Development*

No	Behavioral Aspect	Specific Indicators	Observation / Evaluation Methods
1	Changes in attitude toward others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses polite language</li> <li>- Is orderly in activities</li> <li>- Shows good manners toward teachers and peers</li> </ul>	Direct observation by teachers / ustadz
2	Independence in worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performs obligatory prayers without being told</li> <li>- Observes Sunnah fasting independently</li> </ul>	Personal journal / reports from parents
3	Habit of congregational prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regularly performs Zuhur prayer in congregation at school</li> <li>- Continues the habit at home</li> </ul>	Congregational prayer attendance / parent reports
4	Routine Quran recitation and study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Routinely recites the Quran using the Ummi/Iqra method</li> <li>- Studies Islamic materials on a schedule</li> </ul>	Daily <i>mutaba'ah</i> sheet & parental assessment
5	Interest in continuing at pesantren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expresses interest in enrolling at a pesantren</li> <li>- Actively engages in discussions about pesantren life</li> </ul>	Interview results / student interest questionnaires
6	Understanding honesty and responsibility values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Answers honesty questionnaire sincerely</li> <li>- Practices honesty in daily life</li> </ul>	Honesty questionnaire analysis & teacher observation
7	Self-reflection and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively participates in reflection sessions</li> <li>- Shows positive behavior change afterward</li> </ul>	Student & teacher reflection notes
8	Emulating teachers/ustadz as role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Imitates ustadz in worship and manners</li> <li>- Views ustadz as a role model</li> </ul>	Observation & student testimonials

Note: The data was obtained by researchers from the results of interviews with the principal and teachers at the school

The program supports students' moral and religious growth through well-structured activities and consistent school and parental supervision. The school utilizes a rutabaga sheet to track students' religious behavior at home, which records daily religious activities such as performing obligatory prayers, reading the Quran, and studying Ummi or Iqra books. Parents play a critical role in evaluating the development of positive behaviors in their children following their participation in the pesantren kilat program. This evaluation helps ensure that behavioral changes are evident within the school environment and at home. Furthermore, this study provides new insights into the effectiveness of the pesantren kilat program in instilling religious values, enabling students to independently perform worship activities like prayers and Sunnah fasting without external prompts. Observations confirm

that the program has significantly enhanced students' moral character and encouraged independent religious practices at school and in their home environment.

### Measurable changes in daily habits

The findings reveal that the Pesantren Ramadhan program at the elementary school emphasizes structured supervision and evaluation to measure its effectiveness. This includes comparing students' performance before and after the program. An initial assessment gauges their knowledge of related topics, followed by post-program written tests covering key materials such as fasting and Idul Fitri. Students are also evaluated through practical tests, such as correctly performing the Idul Fitri prayer, assessed by Qur'an or Islamic education teachers. Beyond academic assessments, daily monitoring focuses on observing behavioral changes, particularly improvements in students' interactions with peers, teachers, and parents reflecting the values taught during the program. Assessment results show a notable increase in scores, demonstrating a significant improvement in religious understanding. Additionally, qualitative observations report enhanced student attitudes and greater engagement in religious activities. Most notably, students have shown better manners toward teachers, highlighting the program's success in promoting both moral values and personal character development.

**Table 3**

*Measurable Changes in Students' Daily Habits*

No	Student Behavior	Indicator	Data Collection Method	Success Criteria
1	Improvement in evaluation scores	- Pre-test vs post-test score difference	Written tests (before & after program)	≥ 20% average increase in score
2	Attitude changes toward teachers	- Frequency of respectful behavior (e.g., greeting, salams, kissing hand)	Teacher observation checklist	≥ 80% students consistently show manners
3	More consistent worship habits	- Subuh prayer frequency per week - Tahajjud prayer participation	Parent & teacher video-call logs	≥ 75% students consistent in Subuh, ≥ 40% in Tahajjud
4	Behavioral changes in daily interactions	- Incidents of positive traits (honesty, responsibility, empathy) in daily activities	Teacher/parent observation & journal notes	≥ 80% students show positive behavioral traits

Note: The data obtained by researchers are the results of teacher assessments of students

The school gathers feedback from students, teachers, and parents to continuously enhance the program's quality by involving parents in monitoring students' worship activities at home. Video calls are conducted at dawn for students in grades 1–3 to ensure they properly perform their prayers. Meanwhile, students in grades 4–6 must make video calls during tahajjud as part of their spiritual development following the pesantren kilat program. A parent shared that they observed significant improvements in their child's religious knowledge and behavior after participating in the program, highlighting its value in broadening their child's understanding and experience of Islam. Parental involvement plays a crucial role in the program's success, as family reinforcement helps amplify the positive impact of the pesantren kilat activities. The program's structured design and strong emphasis on character development effectively foster spiritual awareness and ethical responsibility in students. This holistic approach ensures that the values and practices instilled during the program continue to guide students as they grow.

## Discussion

### Improving students' religious knowledge through Pesantren Kilat activities

The four-day Pesantren Kilat program is designed to integrate theoretical instruction with practical and experiential learning, aiming to strengthen students' understanding of Ramadan worship while fostering Islamic values. Siri et al. (2020) argue that such programs are effective because they provide a holistic framework for connecting religious knowledge with practice. Similarly, Torney-Purta (2021) highlights that experiential learning not only deepens comprehension but also enhances empathy and social responsibility, enabling students to apply spiritual teachings to real-life contexts.



Rohmah et al. (2018) add that translating Islamic principles into everyday situations helps students embody faith in active and meaningful ways. Within this program, pre-MABIT sessions are particularly effective in reinforcing key practices such as zakat fitrah, zakat maal, and the Eid prayer through interactive, applied learning. The involvement of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, especially in upper grades, ensures that critical concepts are communicated effectively, while innovative methods like ice-breaking games and critical thinking tasks sustain engagement and long-term internalization.

A key strength of the Pesantren Kilat program lies in its reliance on interactive and participatory learning methods that encourage active student engagement. Könings et al. (2020) and Al Shloul et al. (2024) argue that participatory approaches shift students from passive listeners to active learners who internalize values more deeply. This is consistent with Avellan et al. (2024), who show that activities such as discussions, Q&A sessions, and practical exercises like simulating zakat fitrah help students connect abstract religious teachings to real-life situations. Yadav et al. (2018) and James et al. (2024) further emphasize that problem-solving around moral themes, such as honesty, prepares students to address everyday challenges with integrity. Beyond moral application, Aiken et al. (2005) stress that such interactive practices enhance communication, respect for diverse perspectives, and moral reasoning, essential for holistic development. Supporting this, Adela and Ritonga (2023) note that critical engagement fosters students' deeper understanding of the spiritual essence of fasting, zakat, and Eid prayer.

The findings suggest that the Pesantren Kilat program strengthens students' Islamic identity by engaging them in rituals that foster both knowledge and spiritual depth. Kriger and Seng (2005) argue that exposure to the spiritual meaning of Ramadan rituals cultivates empathy and social responsibility, positioning religious practice as a foundation for moral development. Similarly, Mulawarman et al. (2023) note that students with stronger religious knowledge are more consistent in worship and more aware of its underlying values, highlighting the program's role in transforming ritual into reflective practice. However, Jomezai et al. (2021) caution that religious education must go beyond rote learning, emphasizing interactive methods that enable students to internalize principles within daily life. Bardoe et al. (2023) reinforce this by showing that experiential and participatory approaches make faith-based values more sustainable. Collectively, these perspectives indicate that the Pesantren Kilat program, through theoretical and practical learning, effectively enhances religious understanding while promoting identity formation and spiritual maturity.

The Pesantren Kilat program at the elementary school demonstrates significant potential in enhancing students' religious knowledge and shaping Islamic character. Cipriano et al. (2024) and Elsayed (2024) emphasize that combining theory with practice through activities like congregational prayers, tilawah, and zakat practice strengthens both ritual competence and moral awareness. Yet, focusing solely on ritual performance risks neglecting students' conceptual grasp of the values underpinning these practices. Pawlewicz and Senetra (2024) argue that reflection sessions are valuable in guiding behavioral growth, but note that sustained internalization of religious values requires longer-term engagement. Moreover, while short-term improvements in discipline and empathy may be observable, lasting changes in students' attitudes demand systematic monitoring both in school and at home. Comparative studies suggest that without continuous reinforcement, the program's impact may remain episodic rather than transformative, highlighting the importance of longitudinal evaluation for ensuring sustainability.

Parental involvement is a crucial dimension of students' religious development, yet scholars argue that its scope should extend beyond supervising ritual practices. Heath and Waymer (2021) emphasize that parents must also internalize and reinforce the moral values taught in schools, ensuring a stronger synergy between family and school environments. While initial outcomes of the Pesantren Kilat program appear positive, Ahmed (2023) highlights the necessity of examining long-term effects, as short-term gains may not reflect sustained character transformation. Comparative findings suggest that religious character should be evaluated not only during structured programs but also through longitudinal monitoring of students' behavior at home and in daily life. Moreover, balancing spiritual

and academic domains remains critical; overemphasis on ritual may inadvertently affect academic progress. Thus, scholars stress integrating religious and academic education carefully to achieve holistic student development without creating imbalance.

This educational model integrates intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions, aiming to cultivate holistic development. Chen and Ghorbani (2024) contend that strengthening religious understanding is central, as it reinforces Islamic identity while nurturing cultural and spiritual connections. However, scholars caution that identity-building alone is insufficient without fostering analytical skills. Lakhani et al. (2024) and Yang et al. (2024) highlight critical thinking as an indispensable competency, enabling learners to address complex issues while grounding decisions in ethical and religious principles. Comparative studies suggest that while spiritual depth provides moral direction, critical thinking ensures adaptability in navigating contemporary challenges. Furthermore, social responsibility, emphasized in character education research, directs learners to act with integrity and serve their communities. Thus, the model is most effective when these three elements religious identity, critical thinking, and social responsibility are integrated, producing individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also morally conscious and socially engaged.

Furthermore, the model places a significant emphasis on long-term evaluation, recognizing the need for continuous monitoring to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of its outcomes. This element ensures that the educational approach remains dynamic and adaptable to changing needs over time. By prioritizing this evaluation, the framework ensures that the development of intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects continues to evolve in a balanced manner. This holistic approach creates individuals who are not only skilled and knowledgeable but also socially conscious and spiritually grounded. As they engage with contemporary issues, they do so with a strong ethical foundation, making meaningful contributions to society while upholding their core beliefs. This balanced growth ensures the sustainability of the framework and its impact on future generations.

### **Positive student behavior development through Pesantren Kilat**

The pesantren kilat program at the elementary level plays a crucial role in reinforcing religious teachings while shaping students' character. Jenuri et al. (2024) view it as a structured framework for internalizing Islamic values in daily life. However, scholars differ on how this process best occurs. Metcalfe and Moulin-Stožek (2020) and Metcalfe et al. (2023) argue that religiously grounded character education is vital for cultivating ethically sound individuals, yet they warn that moral formation requires more than ritual compliance; it must connect values to lived experiences. Similarly, Jonsson et al. (2024) highlight the importance of the pre-orbit phase, where early exposure to honesty, respect, and responsibility sets the foundation for behavioral development. Comparative findings suggest that while habit formation through routine is effective, its sustainability depends on critical reflection and contextual reinforcement. Thus, the program's strength lies in balancing structured religious instruction with reflective practice to foster enduring akhlaq.

A central culmination of the pesantren kilat program is the mabit (overnight religious immersion), which intensifies students' spiritual experiences through qiyamul lail, Qur'an recitation, and study sessions. Kallia et al. (2021) and Nhiry et al. (2023) emphasize that such practices provide not only a sacred space for self-reflection but also opportunities for cultivating spiritual resilience. Nilsson (2024), Cui (2024), and Açıl et al. (2024) further argue that mabit fosters enduring worship habits and deepens one's relationship with Allah SWT, though they caution that without consistent reinforcement outside the program, its impact may fade. Comparative studies suggest that while individual spirituality is strengthened, the communal dimension of mabit is equally critical. Stevens and Van Houtte (2011) and Honey and Carrasco (2023) highlight its role in promoting solidarity, cooperation, and mutual respect values essential for holistic Islamic character. Thus, mabit is effective not merely as ritual practice but as an integrative approach linking personal devotion with social harmony.

Programs like pesantren kilat reinforce the practical application of Islamic values during Ramadan and throughout the year, fostering spiritual growth and moral resilience in students (Gamage et al., 2021;



Espinosa & Gonzalez, 2023). Evidence from this study indicates improvements in students' attitudes, including politeness, orderliness, and ethical conduct. Importantly, students demonstrate greater religious independence, engaging in obligatory prayers and Sunnah fasting without constant guidance, suggesting long-term behavioral internalization (Rolando et al., 2024). Echelmeyer et al. (2024) note that teachers' conduct serves as a behavioral model, while Bensaid (2021) highlights the significant influence of peers and family on students' religious practice. Compared to prior studies emphasizing school-only interventions, this study underscores the synergy between school programs and the home environment in sustaining religious behaviors. Tools such as mutaba'ah sheets and parental assessments provide structured monitoring, ensuring that values learned at school are reinforced at home (Lim, 2024). Consequently, pesantren kilat effectively integrates spiritual, social, and behavioral development.

The integration of technology into the pesantren kilat program has proven to be a strategic move in enhancing students' worship routines and promoting discipline beyond the school setting. Shaya and Khait (2017), along with Khan (2022), emphasize that technological tools can serve as effective mechanisms for tracking students' spiritual practices, thus encouraging a heightened sense of self-accountability. This method helps students to not only engage more consistently in worship but also to internalize Islamic teachings as part of their daily lives. Through such regular religious engagement, students begin to form lifelong spiritual habits, viewing acts of worship not as obligations but as essential components of their identity. Interestingly, the program's influence extends even further evident in the growing interest among some students to continue their education at pesantren. This demonstrates the program's success in deepening religious understanding and inspiring long-term spiritual aspirations.

Beyond establishing routine religious practices, the pesantren kilat program contributes to developing students who balance intellectual achievement with spiritual depth. Wagio (2023) emphasizes that fostering Islamic behavior is foundational for cultivating individuals who are not only academically competent but also morally grounded and spiritually aware. Alirahman et al. (2023) further argue that students with strong ethical foundations and consistent worship habits navigate life's challenges with greater integrity and discernment. The program also strengthens students' religious knowledge and character by providing structured experiences that integrate theory, practice, and reflection (Alkouatli et al., 2023; Hassanpour et al., 2023). Compared to conventional religious instruction focused primarily on ritual memorization, the pesantren kilat approach promotes internalization of values and application in daily life. Importantly, its effects extend beyond the classroom, reinforcing consistent moral and spiritual behaviors at home. Thus, the program demonstrates a holistic approach to Islamic education that integrates ethical, cognitive, and practical dimensions effectively.

### **Measurable changes in daily habits after Pesantren Kilat**

The pesantren kilat program has shown substantial impact on both students' academic and behavioral development. Pre-and post-program assessments indicate significant gains in understanding religious concepts such as fasting and Eid practices, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in cognitive reinforcement (Mohebi et al., 2023; Lim, 2024). Masry-Herzallah and Stavisky (2023) and Robson and Ezzamel (2023) argue that religious education not only conveys knowledge but also fosters spiritual and moral development, suggesting that the pesantren kilat integrates these dimensions effectively. Beyond academic outcomes, the program promotes positive character formation. Observed behaviors such as respectful greetings, hand-kissing, and offering salams highlight students' enhanced social and emotional skills (Rachmadtullah et al., 2020; Pribadi, 2022). Compared with conventional religious instruction that often emphasizes rote learning, this program combines experiential learning, reflection, and social interaction, creating a holistic approach. The findings indicate that when academic and moral education are intertwined, students achieve both intellectual understanding and ethical growth, strengthening teacher-student relationships.

The pesantren kilat program has had a profound effect on students' worship habits, with many showing increased consistency in performing daily prayers, including Subuh and Tahajjud. According

to Muhdi et al. (2023) and Rohimah et al. (2023), the use of video calls between teachers, students, and parents to monitor worship practices effectively reinforces religious discipline beyond the school environment. This consistent engagement in prayer highlights how the program has helped students internalize the habit of regular worship, fostering a sense of spiritual discipline and self-accountability. In addition to improvements in worship, students have also demonstrated more positive attitudes toward their peers, teachers, and families. Wang et al. (2021) and Mohammed et al. (2024) suggest that this shift in behavior reflects the core values taught during the program, such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. The program's success in instilling these values has contributed significantly to students' moral development, equipping them with the foundation to apply these principles in their everyday lives, thus enhancing their personal and social growth.

Parental feedback highlights the significant role of the pesantren kilat program in enhancing students' religious knowledge and daily behavior. Observations indicate that students demonstrate greater understanding of Islamic principles and consistent practice of rituals at home (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019). This aligns with Mutevere et al. (2024) and Mingo & Wolf (2024), who argue that active family involvement through monitoring tools like video calls strengthens the home-school connection, ensuring sustained engagement with religious values. While conventional religious programs often struggle to translate learning into daily practice, the pesantren kilat achieves this by combining structured instruction with experiential and reflective activities. Cohen et al. (2020) emphasize that integrating character-building with academic content promotes long-term ethical habits, while Widodo (2021) stresses the importance of systematic evaluation to reinforce behavior change. Compared with less interactive approaches, the program demonstrates that collaboration between teachers, parents, and students fosters spiritual, moral, and social development, creating sustainable habits of devotion, empathy, and responsibility.

The process-oriented framework for assessing program outcomes emphasizes that structured and intentional implementation is essential for achieving meaningful and sustainable results. Bailey et al. (2020) and Prebanić & Vukomanović (2023) argue that carefully planned execution lays the foundation for observable academic improvements, yet these initial gains should be interpreted as part of a broader developmental trajectory. McGhee (2019) extends this perspective by highlighting that effective educational programs must move beyond cognitive advancement to cultivate enduring moral, ethical, and spiritual habits. In practice, the emergence of disciplined worship routines and spiritually anchored behaviors among students reflects the successful integration of theoretical instruction with experiential learning. Compared with conventional programs that focus narrowly on academic performance, process-oriented frameworks foster holistic development by combining intellectual growth with character formation and ethical awareness. Collectively, these insights underscore that well-designed programs achieve sustained outcomes by harmonizing cognitive, moral, and spiritual dimensions, producing well-rounded learners prepared for both academic and life challenges.

Furthermore, the transformation taking place is not confined to the individual level but is strengthened by the involvement of external parties, such as parents. Feedback from families becomes a crucial component in evaluating the program's effectiveness, as it provides a broader and more authentic perspective on the changes occurring beyond the school environment. From an evaluative standpoint, this reflects a holistic approach to assessing success not only through internal institutional outcomes but also through the acknowledgment and support of other stakeholders. The positive attitudes formed in students indicate the program's success in internalizing new values and mindsets, aligning with the broader goals of character education. The combination of academic achievement, spiritual habits, and external validation collectively creates a cumulative effect that demonstrates the overall success of the program, while also reinforcing its sustainability and potential for replication in other contexts.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study underscores the pivotal role of the Pesantren Kilat program at Elementary school in strengthening students' religious knowledge and shaping their Islamic character. By integrating theoretical instruction with practical applications, the program allows students to internalize Islamic

values and apply them consistently in daily life. Structured activities including interactive lessons, congregational worship, reflection sessions, and behavioral monitoring promote both spiritual growth and moral development. Observed improvements in students' religious practices, social behavior, and ethical awareness indicate that the program effectively nurtures disciplined worship, empathy, and responsibility. Overall, the findings demonstrate that combining experiential learning with guided practice fosters holistic development, enabling students to embody Islamic teachings meaningfully while enhancing their cognitive, social, and ethical competencies.

These findings contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic education by highlighting the importance of immersive and holistic approaches in fostering students' moral and spiritual character. The study emphasizes that integrating family involvement, ongoing guidance, and systematic assessments significantly strengthens program outcomes, ensuring that students internalize and consistently practice Islamic values. Theoretically, the research underscores the effectiveness of contextual and experiential learning in shaping ethical, socially responsible, and spiritually aware individuals. Practically, it offers a replicable framework for schools aiming to cultivate students' moral and spiritual development, demonstrating that well-structured, interactive, and reflective activities can promote meaningful personal growth, strengthen adherence to Islamic principles, and enhance social and ethical competencies. This approach illustrates how theory-informed practice can create sustainable educational impact in Islamic schooling contexts.

Future research should prioritize longitudinal studies to examine the sustained impact of Pesantren Kilat programs on students' religious knowledge, moral behavior, and spiritual development. Comparative studies across diverse regions, cultural settings, and school types would provide insights into contextual factors influencing program effectiveness. Expanding evaluation metrics to include emotional, psychological, and social outcomes could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the programs' influence on students' holistic development. Additionally, exploring adaptations of these programs for interfaith or multicultural educational contexts may reveal their potential to foster ethical reasoning, empathy, and socially responsible behavior beyond a single religious framework. Such research would strengthen the evidence base for inclusive, character-focused Islamic education.

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