Childhood Education and Popular Islam: Islamic Psychology as a Pattern of Early Childhood Education in the Authoritative Affinity of Popular Islam

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Abstract

Purpose – This study examines how Islamic psychology contributes to early childhood education by integrating spirituality, emotional well-being, and intellectual development, while addressing the impact of globalization and popular Islam on the authenticity of Islamic teachings.

Design/methods/approach – The study employs a qualitative methodology centered on conceptual analysis, utilizing systematic reviews of scholarly articles, books, and relevant media. This approach critically examines key concepts such as fitrah (innate nature), nafs (soul dynamics), and their applications in early childhood education, particularly in the context of media and cultural globalization.

Findings – The findings reveal that Islamic psychology provides a robust foundation for addressing contemporary challenges in early childhood education. Key principles such as fitrah and tawhid support the development of children's spiritual, cognitive, and emotional capacities. However, the increasing commercialization of Islamic values through popular media risks diluting these teachings into superficial symbols. The study emphasizes the need for parental and educator involvement to ensure the alignment of popular Islamic content with authentic religious values, providing a balanced approach to moral and spiritual education. Additionally, the research highlights the potential of Islamic psychological principles to offer innovative solutions to counteract identity crises in children, promoting resilience against the influences of globalization and consumer culture.

Research implications/limitations – The study is limited to theoretical and conceptual analyses of Islamic psychology in early childhood education and does not include empirical data. Future research should focus on field-based studies to evaluate the practical application of these concepts in diverse cultural and educational settings. Additionally, the findings underscore the necessity for policy reforms to integrate Islamic psychological principles into early childhood education curricula.

Practical implications – This research provides actionable insights for integrating Islamic psychology into early childhood education by combining spiritual, cognitive, and emotional development, leveraging media responsibly, and creating Islamic value-oriented environments to help children navigate sociocultural challenges while maintaining their religious identity.

Originality/value – This study highlights the integration of Islamic psychological principles to address challenges in early childhood education amid popular Islam and globalization, offering a holistic paradigm that balances intellectual, spiritual, and emotional development to create resilient, morally grounded individuals.

Keywords Early childhood education, Popular islam, Islamic psychology, Holistic education

Paper type Conceptual paper

Dimas Ahnan 'Azzam, Muhammad Novan Leany
DOI: http://dx.doi.org./10.14421/al-athfal.2024.102-07

1. Introduction

The integration of Islamic psychology into early childhood education emerges as a critical focus in contemporary Islamic studies. This interdisciplinary approach addresses growing societal and educational challenges exacerbated by globalization and cultural shifts (Burde et al., 2015; Nudin, 2020). Early childhood is a vital developmental stage where religious identity and moral character are most effectively cultivated, aligning with the holistic goals of Islamic education (Mustakim et al., 2022; Saada, 2018). The increasing prominence of popular Islam through media and digital platforms reshapes Islamic educational practices, raising both opportunities and concerns (Alhosani, 2022; Hoesterey & Clark, 2012). As such, a deeper exploration of Islamic psychology offers potential solutions to harmonize modern pedagogical needs with traditional Islamic values (Kaplick & Skinner, 2017; Mohamed, 1998). Integrating religious frameworks into early childhood education is critical for fostering spiritual, cognitive, and emotional growth in children. Historically, Islamic psychology has been central to Islamic civilization, emphasizing the balance between soul, mind, and body (Arshad, 2019). Scholars such as Al-Razi and Al-Farabi introduced frameworks that addressed mental well-being alongside physical health, offering pioneering contributions to holistic education (Haque, 2004; Nasrulloh, 2009). Modern reinterpretations of these classical approaches underscore their relevance in addressing contemporary challenges, including the commodification of religious values (Kailani, 2018; Rudnyckyj, 2009). This study builds upon these works by situating Islamic psychology within the context of early childhood education to counterbalance the impact of secularized global influences (Muhammad & Desari, 2023; Rassool, 2023).

Islamic psychology's application in child education extends beyond theoretical constructs to practical methods that emphasize moral and spiritual dimensions. For example, concepts such as fitrah (innate nature) and nafs (soul dynamics) provide foundational principles for nurturing children's spiritual identity (Ganjvar, 2019). Zakiah Dradjat's work on psycho-educative and socio-cultural education has been instrumental in linking Islamic psychological concepts with practical parenting models (Oweis et al., 2012; Perry, 2021). Similarly, the use of media, including Islamic animations and songs, offers innovative yet sometimes superficial approaches to instilling religious values in children (Mustakim et al., 2022). These studies emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of how Islamic psychology can enhance educational practices while maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings (Gumiandari et al., 2019). Despite extensive research, the methodological application of Islamic psychology within early childhood education remains underexplored and requires further development. Current studies often focus on general Islamic education, neglecting specific strategies for early childhood contexts (Browning & Bunge, 2009; van Oers, 2017). Additionally, the over-reliance on secular psychological models in Muslim-majority countries has limited the integration of Islamic spiritual values into mainstream education systems (Kusuma, 2022; Scourfield & Nasiruddin, 2015). These limitations underscore the need for frameworks that address both individual and societal dimensions of child development, integrating Islamic principles with contemporary pedagogical practices (Nosratabadi et al., 2021; Zimet & Gilat, 2017).

The study of Islamic psychology in early childhood education has been further complicated by controversies surrounding popular Islamic practices. The commodification of religious symbols through digital media and consumer products risks reducing Islamic values to superficial representations, particularly in urban settings (Hefner, 1997; Rudnyckyj, 2009). Popular Islam, often presented through animations, songs, and toys, must be critically examined to ensure that it aligns with authentic Islamic teachings and contributes meaningfully to children's moral and spiritual development (Kailani, 2018; Mustakim et al., 2022). Without a critical framework, these practices risk perpetuating identity crises and moral disorientation among children exposed to competing cultural influences (Hoesterey & Clark, 2012; Jati, 2015).

This article aims to address these gaps by exploring the relevance and contributions of Islamic psychology in early childhood education. Specifically, it examines how Islamic psychology can foster character and moral development while responding to challenges posed by globalization and the influence of popular Islamic practices. By situating Islamic psychology

within the broader context of child education, this study seeks to provide actionable insights for educators, parents, and policymakers (Madyawati et al., 2023). It further highlights the potential of Islamic psychology to offer a holistic educational model that balances intellectual, spiritual, and emotional dimensions, ensuring the cultivation of well-rounded individuals equipped to navigate complex sociocultural landscapes (Darling & Steinberg, 2017; Rassool, 2023). By grounding its analysis in both classical and contemporary perspectives, this study contributes to the broader discourse on Islamic education. It proposes integrative methodologies that emphasize the spiritual, cognitive, and social aspects of child development, offering practical strategies for educators and policymakers. Through its focus on Islamic psychology, this article seeks to bridge traditional Islamic principles with modern pedagogical needs, providing a sustainable framework for nurturing well-rounded, morally grounded individuals (Ganjvar, 2019; Perry, 2021).

2. Methods

This article uses qualitative methods, emphasizing conceptual analysis to examine various relevant literature (Creswell, 2014). The research process involved identifying literature using keywords such as 'Islamic psychology,' 'Islamic education,' 'early childhood education,' and 'popular Islam' from databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, and JSTOR. Strict inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied, prioritizing peer-reviewed sources published in the last 10 years (2013-2023) in English and Bahasa Indonesia. The PRISMA framework guided the systematic identification, screening, and selection process, resulting in 62 studies for conceptual analysis. These studies were analyzed to identify, categorize, and synthesize key concepts, allowing for the development of an integrative theoretical framework addressing challenges in early childhood Islamic education. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were clearly defined to ensure the relevance and quality of selected studies. Inclusion criteria involved literature focusing on Islamic psychology and its role in early childhood education, sources addressing challenges in early childhood education within Islamic contexts, and studies emphasizing conceptual contributions or frameworks for Islamic education published in peer-reviewed and reputable sources within the specified timeframe. Exclusion criteria included irrelevant sources, duplicate studies, literature without significant theoretical contributions, and publications before 2013 or lacking academic rigor. Following PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, the systematic selection process identified 457 records through database searches and 38 additional sources. After removing duplicates, 412 records were screened based on titles and abstracts, excluding 273 as irrelevant. A total of 139 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, of which 77 were excluded for being unrelated to Islamic psychology (43) or early childhood education (34). Ultimately, 62 studies were included in the conceptual analysis. These studies were analyzed to clarify key concepts, categorize themes, and develop a synthesized theoretical framework, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of Islamic psychology's role in addressing challenges in early childhood education (Moher et al., 2010).

3. Result

This article demonstrates that Islamic psychology significantly contributes to early childhood education by emphasizing the holistic development of spiritual, moral, and intellectual values. Rooted in the concept of fitrah, which asserts that every child has pure innate potential, Islamic psychology advocates for an educational approach that balances cognitive, spiritual, and emotional dimensions. By applying principles of nafs to understand emotions and self-control, Islamic education provides a strong foundation for moral development. The study highlights the role of popular media, such as Islamic animations and nursery rhymes, in instilling religious values, while cautioning against the risk of reducing these values to mere symbols. The findings emphasize the importance of parental and educator involvement in filtering Islamic content to ensure it reflects authentic teachings rather than following superficial trends. Addressing challenges in the globalization era, including the influence of commercialized popular culture, the research integrates Islamic psychology to offer a robust framework for meaningful learning. It also

critiques Western educational theories that neglect spiritual dimensions, presenting a contextualized alternative for Muslim societies. The study contributes to the discourse on Islamic education by expanding the theoretical and practical understanding of holistic child development, balancing intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth, and providing practical solutions to improve early childhood education in multicultural and digital contexts.

3. 1. Psychology and Islamic Education: Its Urgency and History

The discourse of Islamic Psychology has flourished since the early 9th century, coinciding with the intellectual advancements in Islamic civilization. This field emerged from the integration of philosophical, biological, and medical perspectives, emphasizing the interconnectedness of cognition, body, and soul (Ilm al-Nafs). Early Muslim scholars, such as Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina, significantly contributed to its development, providing a foundation for modern understandings of mental health and human nature. Al-Razi's monumental Al-Hawi and Al-Farabi's Model City exemplify their innovative approaches to understanding the human psyche and societal structures (Arshad, 2019; Haque, 2004). Ibn Sina, widely regarded as the father of modern medicine, rejected demonic explanations for mental illness, linking it instead to physiological factors, thus pioneering psychosomatic medicine and psychotherapy (Arshad, 2019).

Islamic psychology is defined as an interdisciplinary field that explores human nature through Islamic sources, aiming to enhance physical, spiritual, cognitive, and emotional well-being. This approach emphasizes balance, as seen in the works of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Sina. However, terminological clarity is necessary to distinguish between "Islamic Psychology" and "Islam and Psychology." The former is rooted in Islamic sources, while the latter integrates broader Islamic principles with contemporary psychological frameworks (Kaplick & Skinner, 2017). Yasien Mohamed conceptualized Islamic Psychology by addressing metaphysical questions like the dynamics of the soul (nafs) and the spiritual component of human nature, providing insights into holistic care that counters the reductionist biomedical paradigm (Mohamed, 1998).

Despite its rich historical foundation, Islamic Psychology faces challenges in its application to contemporary education. In Indonesia, for instance, the commodification of Islamic psychology often reduces it to ethics and management frameworks, aligning it with commercialization and popular psychology. This trend risks undermining its essence, as exemplified by the blending of "work as worship" with Western management theories.

To overcome these challenges, this section explores how principles of Islamic psychology can be meaningfully applied to early childhood education. Concepts such as fitrah and nafs are pivotal for fostering holistic growth in spiritual, cognitive, and emotional dimensions. These concepts can be operationalized through educational media, such as Islamic animations or songs, to instill values in children. However, without a deeper understanding, such approaches risk superficiality. Aligning historical principles of Islamic psychology with modern educational contexts can provide practical solutions that promote integrative and meaningful learning, balancing spiritual, social, and emotional development.

3.2. Basic Concepts of Islamic Psychology as a Differentiator of Parenting Patterns Patterns

Parenting studies in the 21st century increasingly highlight the unique contributions of Islamic psychology in addressing the interplay between socio-cultural and religious factors in shaping parenting practices. This reflects societal realities where religion serves as a vital norm and guide in life. Religious parenting aspires to create comprehensive models that integrate social and cultural dimensions. Islamic parenting, for instance, emphasizes spiritual values rooted in religious teachings, including five key aspects: education, relationships with God, children, nature, and others (Madyawati et al., 2023).

Islamic psychology, central to Islamic parenting, offers a unique perspective by emphasizing the core concepts of fitrah (innate nature) and tawhid (oneness of God). These principles guide parenting practices by fostering the development of children's spiritual, moral, and social capacities. For instance, fostering fitrah involves nurturing children's natural inclination towards

goodness and spirituality through practices such as establishing regular prayer routines, integrating moral storytelling, and creating environments that reflect Islamic values. Similarly, tawhid as a parenting foundation instills a monotheistic worldview, teaching children to see all actions as interconnected with God's guidance and purpose. The adaptation of Islamic parenting principles in diverse cultural contexts remains a critical challenge. Islam, as a growing global religion, has significant representation, including in European countries like England and Wales. While studies highlight efforts to provide socially sensitive services to Muslims from a faith-based perspective, practical implementation requires addressing cultural variability (Scourfield & Nasiruddin, 2015). For example, parenting models in Jordan focus on Islamic responsibilities such as fulfilling the Five Pillars and children's rights, emphasizing good names, quality education, fair treatment, and meeting psychological and physical needs (Oweis et al., 2012). By contrast, in Indonesia, Zakiah Dradjat's framework on child education offers a more integrative approach, addressing physical, spiritual, psycho-educative, and socio-cultural dimensions.

Zakiah Dradjat's contribution is significant in highlighting multidimensional aspects of parenting that can inform a more comprehensive theoretical framework. Her conceptualization—physical-biological care, fostering a religious soul, psycho-educative development, and socio-cultural education—can be enriched by connecting these dimensions to contemporary parenting challenges, such as balancing spiritual education with cognitive and emotional development. For example, the neglect of spirituality in modern education—which often prioritizes academic achievements over moral and spiritual growth—can be counteracted by integrating Quranic values that promote holistic human welfare (Muhammad & Desari, 2023). Islamic psychology's focus on spirituality highlights fitrah as a primordial essence containing an innate tawhid. Nurturing fitrah involves guiding this potential through education that emphasizes moral character, social sensitivity, and intellectual growth aligned with Islamic teachings. Educators and parents must be morally committed individuals with a strong foundation in spirituality, fostering children's innate nature towards perfection (Ganjvar, 2019).

The model of Islamic psychology specifically identifies ways to address societal challenges by emphasizing the integration of spirituality and socio-cultural adaptation in parenting practices. G. Hussein Rassool advocates aligning Islamic psychology with modern educational needs through curriculum decolonization, proposing a vertical and horizontal curriculum investigation model that integrates spirituality, pluralism, culture, and technology (Rassool, 2023). This paradigm equips children to navigate complex socio-cultural challenges while maintaining their religious identity. For example, in multicultural contexts like the UK, incorporating tawhid into educational frameworks fosters resilience and well-being by harmonizing Islamic values with contemporary societal demands. For example, while modern psychology increasingly recognizes spirituality as a human need, Islamic psychology's holistic approach—rooted in fitrah and tawhid—offers a distinct advantage by unifying spiritual, cognitive, and social development. This model not only addresses the limitations of secular frameworks but also emphasizes the moral and ethical dimensions essential for holistic child development.

3.3. Reading the World of Children and the Interweaving of Popular Islam

New media have emerged as influential authorities in the Muslim world, enabling Muslim intellectuals, artists, musicians, and filmmakers to articulate Islam and its relationship with the state in novel ways. In Indonesia, Noorhaidi Hasan observes that Islam has become embedded in consumer culture, serving as a marker of identity, social status, and political recognition. However, while media platforms amplify Islamic messages, they often fail to address why such messages resonate with some while provoking anger in others (Hoesterey & Clark, 2012). Najib Kailani highlights the rise of "Market Islam," where celebrity preachers commodify Islamic values for personal gain (Kailani, 2018). While Market Islam and Pop-Islamism may strengthen Islamic identity in early childhood education, they also pose risks. Market Islam integrates Islamic values with capitalist ethics, emphasizing productivity and efficiency (Rudnyckyj, 2009). This approach risks shifting education from holistic character-building to utilitarian goals, potentially neglecting creativity, joy, and exploration while imposing performance pressures.

Pop-Islamism, which promotes Islamic values through commercial products and media, risks creating a materialistic environment (Gaffney, 1992). Reliance on Islamic-based educational apps or toys may reduce Islamic teachings to consumer products, steering children away from authentic moral and spiritual guidance. To mitigate these risks, Islamic education must critically assess the role of Market Islam and Pop-Islamism, ensuring a balanced, non-commercial approach that aligns with children's developmental needs. This will help internalize Islamic values deeply rather than superficially. Popular Islam plays a significant role in shaping children's religious identities in the modern era. Its appeal through media and public figures is effective for instilling values but risks distorting authentic Islamic teachings when treated as a lifestyle rather than a value system. Integrating popular Islamic elements in education while safeguarding theological depth is essential to provide children with a meaningful understanding of Islam.

The rise of the spiritual market has enabled autonomous moral guidance shaped by cultural and social environments. Popular Islamic culture now includes Islamic products such as fashion, culinary arts, and entertainment, which address religious and social needs (Jati, 2015). The consumption of such products combines piety with social pride, reflecting the evolving dynamics of Islamic identity in contemporary society. However, this commodification necessitates careful navigation to prevent superficial religious understanding. Successful parenting is influenced by three factors: goals, practices, and parenting styles (Darling & Steinberg, 2017). Parenting goals align with children's developmental milestones, while parenting practices employ strategies to help achieve these goals. Parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—influence children's developmental outcomes, manifesting in behaviors such as anxiety, curiosity, or responsibility.

The Nussa animation, developed in Indonesia, promotes Salafism values through its portrayal of parenting, offering an Islamic reference for urban parenting (Mustakim et al., 2022). The Nussa animation episode titled Belajar Jualan on YouTube reflects the influence of the "Hijrah" movement in Indonesia. This movement, characterized by its fundamentalist tendencies, seeks to revive past Islamic values as alternatives to address cultural globalization crises. The religious style in Nussa aligns with pop-Islamism, which shifts Islamism from political to individual expressions of piety. This model integrates an authoritative parenting style—balancing rationality and flexibility—with popular Islamic practices that emphasize personal piety (Mustakim et al., 2022).

Figure 1. Nusa and Rara

Parenting models must adapt to these media influences to ensure children's religious education remains authentic. The analysis of authoritative parenting styles in response to popular Islamic media underscores the importance of fostering critical thinking and emotional resilience in children. Parents should actively mediate children's exposure to media content to counterbalance potential superficiality in religious understanding. Digital technology integration continues to benefit early childhood education. Studies that combine traditional teaching methods with digital strategies, such as using touch screen devices for prayer memorization, demonstrate that technology fosters experiences akin to natural constructivism (Ariff et al., 2022). However, overemphasis on knowledge transmission risks overshadowing the deeper transmission of values, necessitating a balanced approach to ensure both intellectual and moral development.

Figure 2. Nussa animation titled "Belajar Jualan" via Youtube NussaOfficial

Media literacy should be cultivated in children to help them discern authentic content from misinformation. Additionally, creating an interactive and contextual learning environment can reinforce Islamic teachings in daily life, ensuring a holistic approach to early childhood education. Parents and educators can maximize the benefits of media by carefully selecting content that supports Islamic values, fostering a generation rooted in both religious depth and modern adaptability. Future research should explore the nuanced ways media-driven religious identity formation influences children's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development, particularly in urban contexts where consumer culture intertwines with religious values. Investigating how digital platforms influence cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of children's development would provide valuable insights. Practical recommendations for parents and educators include fostering media literacy, ensuring balanced integration of popular Islamic content, and promoting authentic religious teachings. Such efforts will help bridge the gap between consumer-driven depictions of Islam and its deeper theological foundations, offering a structured pathway for early childhood religious education.

4. Discussion

Islamic psychology plays an essential role in addressing modern educational challenges by offering unique perspectives and solutions that bridge spiritual and material aspects of learning. First, Islam offers a distinct view of humanity, emphasizing both the physical and spiritual aspects of human nature. Second, modern psychological trends prioritize understanding humans holistically, aligning with Islamic principles. Third, modern psychology faces various crises, including the erosion of ethical and spiritual values amid rapid scientific and technological advancements (Nashori, 1996). These challenges underscore the need for a framework that seamlessly blends material and spiritual values, offering a balanced approach to education in today's rapidly changing world. Muhammad Abduh, a prominent modern Islamic thinker, likened children to seeds with the potential to uphold fundamental human values, emphasizing the importance of spiritual ethics in education.

The erosion of religious values in contemporary education necessitates an educational paradigm grounded in Islamic psychological principles. Islamic psychology defines education as a process of nurturing human potential, balancing physical, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions. Achieving this balance helps children grow holistically, integrating their physical and mental well-being, personal and social lives, as well as spiritual and worldly needs. Early childhood education must merge general and religious knowledge to actualize humanity's role as khalifah fil ard (Muhammad & Desari, 2023). This perspective aligns with the assertion that science without religion is blind, and religion without science is paralyzed.

One practical application of Islamic psychological principles is the development of early childhood curricula that prioritize both spiritual and intellectual growth. For instance, digital platforms—such as videos, songs, and books—can introduce children to God, worship, good behavior, and religious celebrations (Mustakim et al., 2022). However, these methods often fail to address dynamic social challenges, reducing Islam to an identity rather than a value system. To address this limitation, Islamic psychology must sustain Islamic values while addressing evolving social issues influenced by pragmatic Western culture. Ibn Sina's critique highlights modern psychology's neglect of the soul's essence, focusing on superficial analyses of psychological phenomena and disregarding philosophical inquiries into the soul (Nasrulloh, 2009).

A critical issue lies in the inadequacy of Western educational psychology theories for Islamic education. These theories often lack alignment with Islamic values, particularly in early childhood education, as they disregard spiritual dimensions. Contemporary Muslim scholars, such as Hamid Fahmi Zarkasyi, critique these theories from an Islamic perspective, emphasizing the limitations of secular worldviews that reduce humanity to biological mechanisms (Kusuma, 2022). Integrating Islamic psychology into early childhood education offers a counter-narrative, emphasizing spirituality and holistic development. To bring these principles into practice, this article suggests ways to integrate Islamic psychological insights into early childhood education. First, educators and parents must clearly understand the purpose of educating children and cultivate good habits from an early age. This requires consistent reinforcement of Islamic values at home and in the community. Second, early childhood education curricula must be continuously evaluated and adapted to address contemporary challenges. For example, incorporating Islamic psychological principles into teaching methods can foster moral, spiritual, and social values. Third, educators should explore innovative approaches to child development, such as integrating spiritual and emotional intelligence into classroom activities (Ramli, 2022). These strategies align with emerging parenting interventions for Muslim families that emphasize religious perspectives (Scourfield & Nasiruddin, 2015).

Islamic psychology also offers practical tools for addressing the pervasive influence of popular culture and digital media, which often reduce religious values to symbolic or commercial forms. For instance, Islamic animations and songs hold potential as educational tools but require critical evaluation to ensure they promote a deep understanding of religious values. This approach ensures that digital educational content remains substantively aligned with Islamic teachings. Additionally, Western educational approaches often neglect spirituality, focusing primarily on cognitive aspects (Miovic, 2004). In contrast, Islamic psychology integrates intellectual development with spiritual growth, making it particularly relevant in multicultural settings, such as Muslim communities in Western countries. Islamic psychology highlights the importance of fitrah and maintaining a balance between spiritual and emotional growth, helping children confidently face cultural challenges while staying true to their identity. This perspective encourages children to internalize true Islamic values rather than superficial representations. For example, children can be taught to critically evaluate popular culture through an Islamic lens, fostering a sincere love for Islam based on understanding rather than external trends. The concept of nafs provides a foundation for guiding emotional development and self-control, essential for fostering moral growth in early childhood. These principles should be operationalized through curriculum design that balances evidence-based psychological knowledge with Islamic traditions rooted in the Quran and Sunnah (Rassool, 2023).

Furthermore, Zakiah Dradjat's adaptive parenting model integrates Islamic values into four key dimensions: physical-biological, spiritual-spiritual, psycho-educative, and socio-cultural (Sulaiman, 2022). These dimensions offer practical guidance for creating holistic educational strategies. By bridging Islamic psychological values, contemporary educational challenges, and Islamic parenting strategies, Islamic psychology transcends theoretical frameworks, offering practical solutions for modern early childhood education. This approach prepares children to become pious individuals capable of navigating social and cultural challenges while maintaining their Islamic identity.

4.1. Research Contribution

This study provides valuable insights into early childhood education by exploring how Islamic psychological principles can be effectively integrated into contemporary practices. It highlights the importance of balancing intellectual and spiritual development, addressing both contemporary and religious challenges. By critically analyzing the shortcomings of Western psychological approaches, this study offers a comprehensive framework for embedding Islamic values in early education. The findings emphasize the role of curricula, parenting strategies, and community support in fostering children's holistic development. These insights serve as a foundation for developing culturally relevant, evidence-based educational policies that align with Islamic teachings. Furthermore, this research underscores the adaptability of Islamic

psychological principles across diverse cultural and socio-economic settings, providing valuable guidance for educators, parents, and policymakers.

4.2. Limitation

While this study offers meaningful contributions, it also faces certain limitations. First, the reliance on secondary data restricts the depth of analysis, particularly in understanding the practical implementation of Islamic psychological principles in diverse educational settings. Second, the generalizability of findings is constrained by the study's focus on theoretical and conceptual frameworks, which may not fully capture the complexities of real-world applications. Third, the absence of empirical data and longitudinal studies limits the ability to evaluate the long-term impact of integrating Islamic psychology into early childhood education. Lastly, this study does not address the influence of technological advancements and globalization on Islamic educational practices, leaving a gap for future research. Future studies should incorporate empirical data, explore the intersection of technology and Islamic psychology, and examine diverse educational contexts to provide a more robust understanding of the subject.

5. Conclusion

This article concludes that Islamic psychology offers a valuable framework for holistic child education, rooted in the concept of fitrah as pure innate potential. It balances intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs, fostering character education through daily practices like collective prayers and discussions about values. Islamic psychology counters the challenges of popular culture and digital media by ensuring that educational tools promote substantive religious understanding. Despite its strengths, the lack of empirical data and interdisciplinary insights limits the evaluation of its effectiveness. Future research should focus on empirical studies and integrate Islamic traditions with contemporary psychology to create a robust educational foundation. This ensures Islamic psychology remains relevant, empowering children to uphold their identity while adapting to global challenges.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

Dimas Ahnan 'Azzam conceived the idea and conducted data collection. Muhammad Novan Leany developed the theory of islamic psychology, holistic education and early childhood education. All authors engaged in discussions regarding the findings, performed the analysis, and made contributions to the final manuscript.

Funding statement

Data availability statement

The dataset generated and analyzed during the research is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Declaration of interests statement

All authors declare that they have no financial or personal interests that could influence the work presented in this manuscript.

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