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Religious Habituation and the Internalization of Spiritual and Emotional Intelligence: A Case Study of Akidah Akhlak Education

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Akidah Akhlak Education; Spiritual Intelligence; Emotional Intelligence; Moral Internalization; Religious Habituation

Abstract

This study aims to examine the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in internalizing students' spiritual and emotional intelligence and to distinguish meaningful moral awareness from compliance with religious routines. A qualitative case study was conducted at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan, a madrasah situated within a pesantren environment. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with one Akidah Akhlak teacher, one student affairs coordinator, and six Grade XII students, supported by observation and documentation. Descriptive learning records from 30 students provided supplementary evidence. Data were analyzed through coding, thematic categorization, data condensation, display, verification, and triangulation. Findings indicate that teachers serve as educators, spiritual mentors, role models, supervisors, and companions. Internalization is supported through contextual instruction, religious habituation, exemplary conduct, educative sanctions, and personal mentoring across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Nevertheless, some students follow religious rules primarily to avoid sanctions, suggesting that visible compliance does not necessarily indicate internalized values. Descriptive records show higher achievement in mastery of learning material (90%) than in consistent responsibility (73.3%). Family circumstances, peer relationships, and social media also shape the process. The study highlights the importance of evaluating moral education through students' understanding, self-awareness, and behavioral consistency beyond direct supervision, rather than relying solely on participation in prescribed religious activities.

Kata kunci:
Pendidikan Akidah Akhlak; Kecerdasan Spiritual; Kecerdasan Emosional; Internalisasi Nilai Moral; Pembiasaan Keagamaan.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran guru Akidah Akhlak dalam internalisasi kecerdasan spiritual dan emosional siswa serta membedakan kesadaran moral dari kepatuhan terhadap rutinitas keagamaan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus di MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan, madrasah yang berada dalam lingkungan pesantren. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semiterstruktur dengan seorang guru Akidah Akhlak, seorang pengelola kesiswaan, dan enam siswa kelas XII, didukung observasi serta dokumentasi. Catatan hasil pembelajaran terhadap 30 siswa digunakan sebagai data deskriptif pendukung. Analisis dilakukan melalui pengodean, pengelompokan tema, kondensasi data, penyajian, verifikasi, dan triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru berperan sebagai pendidik, pembimbing spiritual, teladan, pengawas perilaku, dan pendamping siswa. Internalisasi berlangsung melalui pembelajaran kontekstual, pembiasaan keagamaan, keteladanan, sanksi edukatif, serta pendampingan personal yang mencakup ranah kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotorik. Namun, sebagian siswa menaati aturan karena takut terhadap sanksi, sehingga kepatuhan yang tampak belum tentu mencerminkan internalisasi nilai. Data deskriptif menunjukkan penguasaan materi mencapai 90%, sedangkan konsistensi tanggung jawab sebesar 73,3%. Kondisi keluarga, pergaulan teman sebaya, dan media sosial turut memengaruhi proses tersebut. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya mengevaluasi pendidikan moral berdasarkan pemahaman, kesadaran, dan konsistensi perilaku siswa di

luar pengawasan langsung, bukan hanya berdasarkan keterlibatan dalam kegiatan keagamaan yang terjadwal.

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Introduction

Secondary education is responsible not only for academic achievement but also for the formation of personality, emotional maturity, and moral awareness of students. Madrasah Aliyah students are in adolescence, when they are required to make decisions, control feelings, resolve disputes, and be accountable for their actions. In this context, spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence are two complementary aspects. Spiritual intelligence is understood as the ability to face issues of meaning and value, while emotional intelligence is understood as the ability to monitor and distinguish oneself and others' emotions and use them to direct thoughts and actions (Mayer et al., 2004). Goleman (1995) details emotional intelligence into self-awareness, emotional management, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 1995). A systematic review and meta-analysis found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and student achievement (Zhou et al., 2024), while theoretical studies place spiritual intelligence as an aspect related to the meaning of learning and academic involvement (May, 2022). Nevertheless, the boundaries of the concept of spiritual intelligence remain a subject of scientific debate (Skrzypińska, 2021), so field research needs to clearly formulate the indicators and distinguish them from the emotional intelligence indicators.

In madrasahs, the Akidah Akhlak subject is directly related to discussions of beliefs, moral values, and the application of morals, so that teachers of this subject occupy a strategic position in fostering these two intelligences. Several previous studies have examined the roles and strategies of Akidah Akhlak teachers. Mustika (2019) studied the efforts of Akidah Akhlak teachers in developing students' emotional intelligence at MAN Binamu, Jeneponto (Mustika, 2019). Hidayah (2021) examines the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in fostering the spiritual intelligence of third grade students at madrasah ibtidaiyah, and in the same year Wijayani (2017) researching the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in enhancing spiritual intelligence in madrasah ibtidaiyah (Wijayani, 2017). Ilham (2023) discusses strategies for Akidah Akhlak teachers in shaping students' spiritual intelligence at private madrasah aliyah

(Inspiration, 2023). Rahman and Maulidi (2024) studied the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in developing students' emotional and spiritual intelligence at MA Ahlussunnah Waljama'ah, East Ambunten (Rahman & Maulidi, 2024). Furthermore, Maemonah (2025) examines the role of teachers in fostering students' spiritual intelligence in Akidah Akhlak learning at MIN 6 Bima (Maemoenah, 2025), and Zaki et al., (2026) examining the role of Islamic religious education teachers in enhancing students' spiritual intelligence through a phenomenological study (Zaki et al., 2026). Outside of the study of the teacher's role, Razak et al., (2024) developing spiritual competency training for secondary school students in Indonesia (Razak et al., 2024), and Wati (2026) examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and academic achievement in Islamic religious education (Watts, 2026).

Initial data at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan shows a gap between religious activities and student behavior. This madrasah is located within a Salafi Islamic boarding school environment and has daily habits such as the recitation of Asmaul Husna, Qur'an recitation, duha prayer, and congregational zuhr prayer. However, the Akidah Akhlak teacher and student affairs department found that there are still students who speak impolitely to the teacher, smoke, and do not participate in lessons. The Akidah Akhlak teacher also conveyed that some students obey rules out of fear of sanctions, so many are not fully aware of the meaning of spiritual intelligence. These initial findings indicate that the existence of religious programs does not automatically mean values have been internalized.

From this explanation, the *research gap* can be formulated in three areas, based on the focus of previous studies examined. First, previous research generally describes the role or strategy of Akidah Akhlak teachers, so what is reported is what the teacher does, not whether what is done produces value awareness in students or only results in compliance. Second, some studies focus on one type of intelligence or are conducted at the madrasah ibtidaiyah level, whereas in madrasah aliyah adolescents, spiritual and emotional intelligence work together in decisions and daily behavior. Third, a clear distinction between obedience and internalization, as well as mapping the internalization process in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains through direct and indirect learning pathways, has not been a main focus, especially in madrasahs in Salafi pesantren environments with dense religious habituation. The unanswered issue is therefore both conceptual and empirical, namely how the teacher's role works and to what extent complete religious habituation truly results in internalization, not merely adherence to rules.

Theoretically, the internalization of values is understood as the process of instilling and internalizing values so that it does not stop at knowledge but is reflected in awareness, attitudes, and behavior. Social learning theory explains that individuals learn behavior, attitudes, and responses through observation of models in their environment, so teacher role modeling becomes an important element. Character education emphasizes respect and responsibility as values that need to be practiced through school (Lickona, 1991). School programs that strengthen social and emotional learning are also reported to impact students' social-emotional competencies (Durlak et al., 2011). Based on this framework, this study distinguishes *direct learning*

(delivering materials, advice, and direction) and *indirect learning* (role modeling, habituation, madrasah culture, and social interaction), as well as examining them in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. In this study, compliance is understood as behavior that arises due to supervision or the threat of sanctions, while internalization is understood as behavior accompanied by value interpretation and still appears when not supervised.

This study aims to (1) describe the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in internalizing students' spiritual intelligence, (2) describe the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers in internalizing students' emotional intelligence, and (3) analyze the results of internalizing both intelligences, including supporting and inhibiting factors, at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan. The novelty of this research lies in three aspects. First, this study examines both intelligences simultaneously with differentiated indicators. Second, this study uses the perspectives of three informant groups, namely teachers, student affairs staff, and students, in pesantren-based madrasahs. Third, this study uses the difference between compliance and awareness as a lens to assess the success of internalization. The results are expected to provide an empirical basis for teachers and madrasahs in designing guidance that does not stop at the implementation of activities. The argument tested is that the success of internalization is not only measured by program implementation, but by the meaning and consistency of student behavior outside supervision.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design (*case study*). The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to deeply understand the meaning given by individuals to a social or humanitarian issue (Poth, 2024), not testing the influence between variables statistically. The case study was chosen because the research focus is on the question of "how" regarding contemporary phenomena within a clearly defined institution (Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, 2016). The case studied is the practice of Akidah Akhlak teachers in internalizing spiritual and emotional intelligence at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan. This design allows the researcher to trace how the teacher's role is carried out while assessing whether the practice leads to student awareness, by combining the perspectives of several informants and several data sources in one case.

The research was conducted at MA Miftahuttholibin, Timbang Village, Cigandamekar District, Kuningan Regency, West Java. This private madrasah is located in a Salafi Islamic boarding school complex, established since 1986, and accredited A in 2023. The madrasah was deliberately chosen because it has scheduled daily religious habits and because students aged 15-18 are in a transitional period of spiritual and emotional development. Informants consist of one Akidah Akhlak teacher (G), one student affairs manager (K), and six 12th-grade students aged 16-17 years (S1-S6). Informants were selected purposively (Patton, 2015) with criteria of

being directly involved in learning and coaching, or directly experiencing such learning and coaching. Akidah Akhlak teachers and student affairs managers were selected because they carried out coaching and handled rules, while grade XII students were chosen because they had undergone the longest learning and habituation so they could explain their experiences more fully. Informant identities were disguised with codes.

The researcher acts as the main instrument (*key instrument*). Data were collected through three techniques. *First*, semi-structured in-depth interviews using interview guidelines consisting of 12 questions for Akidah Akhlak teachers, 9 questions for student affairs, and 10 questions for students. Questions included internalization strategies, related materials, habituation, sanctions, evaluation, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors. *Second*, observation of religious activities before learning, teacher-student interactions, and student behavior during learning. *Third*, documentation in the form of the madrasah profile, activity photos, learning evaluation notes, student reflection sheets, and discussion assessment rubrics. Student achievement data were collected from observation notes, reflection sheets, discussion rubrics, and learning evaluation results of 30 students participating in Akidah Akhlak learning. The percentage was calculated from the number of students who met the indicators for 30 students. This data is descriptive and not statistically tested.

Data analysis was conducted in three stages: data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions accompanied by verification. At the condensation stage, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were read thoroughly, coded, then grouped into categories and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), namely the teacher's role, internalization process, internalization results, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors. At the presentation stage, data is arranged in thematic narratives and concise tables containing habituation activities, mapping learning pathways and domains, as well as student achievements. At the conclusion drawing stage, findings are compared among informants and between techniques, then re-verified with sources.

The synthesis of findings was carried out using an analytical framework built from the referenced theories. First, the role of teachers is mapped according to direct learning pathways, namely delivering material, advice, and guidance, as well as indirect learning, namely role modeling, habituation, madrasah culture, and social interaction. Second, each pathway is mapped into the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Third, internalization results are assessed by distinguishing between compliance and internalization. Behavior is categorized as compliance if it arises due to supervision or threat of sanctions, and as internalization if accompanied by value interpretation and still appears when not supervised. Spiritual intelligence is analyzed through indicators of religious value meaning, awareness of worship, and

moral considerations. Emotional intelligence was analyzed through indicators of self-control, empathy, acceptance of reprimands, and social relationships. Data validity was tested using source triangulation (teachers, student affairs departments, and students), technique triangulation (interviews, observations, and documentation), and time triangulation. Information differences were re-verified with sources until accountable explanations were obtained.

Results And Discussion

Results

The Role of Teachers in Internalizing Spiritual Intelligence

The results show that Akidah Akhlak teachers at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan internalize students' spiritual intelligence through three interrelated roles: educator through contextual learning, spiritual guide through religious habituation, and guide in learning meaning. In this study, spiritual intelligence is analyzed through indicators of religious value interpretation, awareness of worship, and moral considerations in action. Differentiating these indicators is necessary so that religious activities are not immediately seen as evidence of spiritual intelligence. Data from Akidah Akhlak (G), student affairs (K), and students (S1–S6) teachers show that teachers do not limit themselves to delivering material but rather strive to connect religious teachings with students' daily experiences. This distinction also serves as a basis for carefully assessing the teacher's role, by separating what the teacher does, what students understand, and what is apparent in behavior. These three roles are explained in the following paragraph. The first role is the educator through contextual learning. According to G, the material is intended to be practiced in life, for example in the chapter "Morals of Youth Interaction" in grade XI. This material is linked to simple things, such as how to dress, manners of eating and drinking, as well as how to socialize at home and at school. Teachers also show learning videos themed around adolescent interactions, doing good to parents, and various kinds of righteous deeds as concrete illustrations of the application of Islamic teachings. This approach gives students the opportunity to see the relevance of religious values to the situations they experience. PhD students conveyed that religious learning made them better acquainted with Islam and motivated to practice the material studied. This statement shows that contextual learning is perceived by students as motivation to practice values, even though one individual experience cannot yet represent all students. This effort is intended so that moral values are not only understood theoretically but manifested in observable habits, both at home and at school.

The second role is spiritual guidance through religious habituation. Before the learning begins, students recite Asmaul Husna, then perform Qur'an recitation at the madrasah mosque from 07:00 to 07:15. According to K, the target is one juz per day with a rotating reading system. Duha prayer is performed every Friday after recitation together, while congregational Zuhur prayer is followed by students together with

educational staff. Teachers not only guide students to participate in activities but also explain the meanings of Allah's names and relate them to daily life so that students remember their meanings and practice them. Tilawah activities are also intended to help students who are not yet able to read the Qur'an. This series of activities, as summarized in Table 1, shows the madrasah's efforts to guide students from reading ability toward understanding and applying values. Tilawah and Asmaul Husna are routinely performed before class hours so that students start the day with the same religious activities. This regularity becomes a direct experience that allows students to build worship habits and discipline.

Table 1. Religious habituation at MA Miftahuttholibin and the indicators trained

Activities	Implementation	Trained indicators	Line
Recitation of Asmaul Husna	Before the lesson; the teacher explains the meanings of Allah's names and relates them to daily life	The Meaning of Religious Values	Direct and indirect
Qur'an Recitation	At the madrasah mosque from 07:00 to 07:15; target one juz per day on a rotating basis; helping students who are not yet able to read the Qur'an	Awareness of worship, discipline	Not at all
Salat Dua	Every Friday after recitation together	Awareness of worship	Not at all
Congregational Zuhr Prayer	Attended by students along with educational staff	Awareness of worship, exemplary behavior	Not at all
Respect for teachers	Shaking hands and kissing the teacher's hand when meeting	Social relationships, appreciation for others	Not at all
Social service activities at the residents' mosques and prayer rooms	Helping the community (according to K)	Empathy, cooperation, social responsibility	Not at all

The third role is to guide the meaning of learning. G expressed the hope that students' purpose in attending school is solely to seek knowledge and that the knowledge gained can be practiced. According to G, if the intention at home is good and earnest, students will also be earnest when studying at the madrasah. This orientation shows that teachers link learning activities with intention, moral responsibility, and the practice of knowledge, not only with academic achievement, which aligns with understanding spiritual intelligence as the ability to face issues of meaning and value (Zohar, 2000). On the other hand, G states that many students do not fully realize the meaning of spiritual intelligence because some of them obey rules solely out of fear of sanctions. Thus, data about religious activities need to be distinguished from evidence of value appreciation. Figure 1 shows one form of habituation that serves as the main means of the teacher's role in the spiritual aspect.

Among these three roles, the uniqueness of practice in this madrasah lies in the integration of classroom learning with the surrounding pesantren culture. Akidah Akhlak material is discussed in class, then trained through the same daily habituation

series for all students and attended by teachers and educational staff. When read with the indicator of spiritual intelligence, the data shows that the strongest value interpretation is seen in the explanation of the meaning of Asmaul Husna and guidance on learning intention; awareness of worship is evident in some students, while moral considerations in acting are still reported weak in students who obey due to fear of punishment. Thus, complete religious activities are a necessary requirement, but they are not sufficient to conclude the existence of spiritual intelligence.



Figure 1. Qur'an recitation activities before lessons.

The Role of Teachers in Internalizing Emotional Intelligence

On the emotional aspect, Akidah Akhlak teachers and student affairs teachers carry out four forms of guidance: habituation of respect, self-control development through a religious approach, enforcement of discipline without physical violence, and personal accompaniment. Emotional intelligence in this study is analyzed through indicators of self-control, empathy, acceptance of reprimands, and social relationships. The starting point of development is the problem conveyed by G, namely that Madrasah Aliyah students sometimes still use impolite language when dealing with teachers. This issue forms the basis for teachers and the student affairs division to design guidance that does not stop at warnings but directs students to review their behavior. This guidance is not carried out by the Akidah Akhlak teacher alone, but together with the student affairs division who handles student rules and problems. This division of roles allows development to take place both in the classroom and in the daily life of the madrasah. The four forms of coaching are described below. The first form is the habituation of respect towards teachers. According to K, students are required to shake hands and kiss the teacher's hand when meeting as a form of respect. This habit is aimed at instilling values of appreciating teachers, discipline, and self-confidence. K also mentions feedback between students, teachers, and parents as part of this approach. This habituation takes place in the daily life of the madrasah so that politeness values are not only discussed as subject matter but are practiced through direct interaction. In relation to emotional intelligence, this habituation trains students to adjust behavior to social norms and show appreciation to others, which is part of

social relationship skills. Nevertheless, handshakes as a formal habit are not enough to conclude that students are capable of maintaining polite communication in various situations. Further assessment requires observation of how students speak, listen, and respond to reprimands.

The second and third forms relate to self-control and personal accompaniment. For internal factors, K stated that students who speak harshly or resist are told to perform ablution, then pray, and then recite the Quran. This religious approach gives students the opportunity to pause briefly before returning to face the problem. For external factors such as the environment, K undertakes a three-way mediation between teachers, students, and parents. The approach used is direct (*man to man*) involving the family. Parents are also involved when students' problems relate to family situations or require further handling. This approach shows that guidance considers the background of the problem, not just the apparent behavior. Its benefits for emotional control can only be assessed if accompanied by explanations about behavior that need improvement and observations of subsequent behavioral changes, while informants' statements do not detail how students manage pressure after accompaniment. The fourth form is the enforcement of discipline through educational sanctions and learning that trains social sensitivity. According to G, sanctions in madrasahs are not physical punishments, but tasks such as making useful and educational works, such as brooms, recycle buckets, or reading short letters. In the classroom, discussing adolescent social interactions with video helps students to recognize the feelings of those involved, consider the consequences of an action, and develop alternative solutions. These forms of sanctions and learning relate to responsibility, response control, and the ability to understand others. Thus, sanctions and classroom learning are directed so that students understand the consequences of their actions, not just endure punishment. However, G revealed that some students still obey the rules because they fear sanctions. Figure 2 shows the interaction between teachers and students in the learning process, which serves as a platform for development.

When read with indicators of emotional intelligence, habituation of reverence relates to social relationships, commands to perform ablution, prayer, and recite the Quran related to self-control, educational sanctions accompanied by explanations related to receiving warnings, while the discussion of adolescent social interactions with videos relates to empathy. The uniqueness of guidance in this madrasah lies in the use of religious facilities as pauses to manage emotions and in the involvement of families through three-way mediation, so that guidance does not stop at punishment.



Figure 2. Interaction between Akidah Akhlak teachers and students in learning

Internalization Process through *Direct Learning* and *Indirect Learning*

Research data shows that the internalization of spiritual and emotional intelligence in madrasahs does not occur individually, but through interconnected stages. These stages include introducing values, providing understanding, habituation, experience of values in social interactions, behavioral control, strengthening through educational consequences, personal mentoring, and applying values in daily life. Introduction of values occurs through the material on Youth Social Morals and learning videos. Understanding is provided when the teacher explains the meaning of Asmaul Husna. Habituation is seen in tilawah, duha prayer, and congregational zuhur prayer. Social experience arises from the habit of reverence to teachers as well as activities in mosques and prayer rooms of residents, which according to K include social service and helping the community. One activity can include several stages at once, for example, the recitation of Asmaul Husna which includes habituation as well as providing understanding, so the stages are more appropriately seen as repetitive and mutually reinforcing processes. These stages are carried out through direct learning pathways. This pathway is seen when teachers deliver Akidah Akhlak material, give advice, explain why a behavior is considered good or bad, and guide students whose behavior is not yet appropriate. Explanation of the meaning of Asmaul Husna is an example of direct learning because the teacher explicitly connects the names of Allah with the students' lives. Directing the intention to seek knowledge and guidance to students who speak improperly is also included in this pathway. Direct learning is also seen in individual guidance, where teachers and student affairs officers speak directly with students who break rules to understand their problems, so students receive explanations and not just warnings. Direct learning provides a foundation for understanding the values to be instilled. However, data shows that this knowledge is not always realized in action, especially among students who still obey the rules out of fear of sanctions.

The second pathway is indirect *learning*. This pathway takes place through teacher role modeling, habituation of worship, a culture of reverence, and a religious atmosphere formed in the madrasah and pesantren environment. The habit of shaking hands and kissing the teacher's hand, congregational Zuhr prayer followed by teachers and educational staff, as well as morning tilawah activities, provide students with direct experience without always being accompanied by verbal explanations. G stated that religious instillation in madrasahs is very strong and the environment supports the formation of Islamic character, thus facilitating the internalization process. G also emphasized that the responsibility for internalization does not only belong to the Akidah Akhlak teacher but to the entire madrasah community. In addition, activities in mosques and prayer rooms for residents as well as social service provide valuable experiences outside the classroom, allowing students to see the application of care, cooperation, and social responsibility in real situations. Thus, indirect learning works through a consistent environment, not just through a single subject. Both pathways can be mapped to the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, as summarized in Table 2. In the cognitive domain, students understand values and are able to provide examples of their application through material and video discussions. In the affective domain, respect and appreciation are formed through advice, role modeling, and behavior development. In the psychomotor domain, values are manifested in real actions, such as worshiping in congregation, maintaining cleanliness through educational sanctions, and being polite to teachers. Direct learning provides understanding and indirect learning provides experience, so both complement each other and need to be implemented simultaneously so that values do not stop at knowledge. This mapping also shows that the affective and psychomotor domains require repeated practice, while the cognitive domain is reached more quickly through explanations. Figure 3 shows one of the interview activities that serves as a data source regarding the process of internalizing moral values in students.

Table 2. Mapping of learning pathways in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains

Domain	Direct learning	Indirect learning	Observed existence
Cognitive	Material on Adolescent Social Morals, learning videos, explanation of the meaning of Asmaul Husna, guidance on learning intention	A religious atmosphere that provides examples of values without always being accompanied by verbal explanations	Students understand the values and are able to provide examples of their application
Affective	Advice, explanations of reasons for good and bad behavior, individual development (man to man)	Teacher Exemplary and Culture of Respect	Respect and appreciation of values
psychomotor	Directions for worship practice and behavior improvement	Tilawah, duha prayer, congregational zuhur prayer, educational sanctions, social service	Worship in congregation, maintain cleanliness, and be polite to teachers



Figure 3. Interview regarding the process of internalizing moral values in students

Internalization Results and Student Achievements

The internalization results were assessed from three sources: perceptions of student affairs, student experiences, and achievement data from 30 students. K assessed that the level of students' spiritual and emotional intelligence was considered moderate because the madrasah environment is close to the pesantren, so the conditions were relatively evenly distributed, with no excesses or shortcomings. This assessment is qualitative and based on visible behaviors, such as politeness, mutual respect, fulfilling obligations, respecting teachers, and obeying rules. From the students' side, the undergraduate degree stated that attending a madrasah makes them a better person because the teachers help educate Islamic character, while the doctoral degree stated that they know Islam better after attending religious studies. This explanation provides a positive picture but is not sufficient to establish a category of intelligence level for all students. Thus, this description is more accurately understood as a qualitative assessment based on interviews and reported behavior, not a measurement applicable to all students. Besides the positive picture, G and K found behaviors that still required guidance. These behaviors included the use of impolite language, smoking, truancy, and violations of rules. G stated that violations were more frequently committed by male students than by female students. G also described differences in character between levels. Grade X students are still at the *pious stage* and fear punishment, so they choose to study diligently. Grade XI students are in a period of instability because they are starting to dare to break rules but still fear punishment. Meanwhile, Grade XII students are more aware and obedient to rules because they start thinking about steps after graduation, whether continuing college or working. This picture shows that students' spiritual and emotional conditions are not uniform and develop according to grade level. Therefore, coaching needs to be adjusted to the character of each level, because students who are equally obedient may have different reasons, namely fear of sanctions, awareness, or future considerations.

Achievement data on 30 students provide a more measurable descriptive picture, as summarized in Table 3. Knowledge was the highest achievement, with 27

students (90%) reaching the minimum set score. In the spiritual intelligence aspect, 25 students (83.3%) were involved in religious activities and were able to explain their meanings. In the emotional intelligence aspect, 23 students (76.7%) were able to respond politely to differences of opinion, and 24 students (80%) consistently showed politeness during the observation period. Social concern was achieved by 26 students (86.7%), demonstrated through cooperation and willingness to listen to friends' opinions. Responsibility was the lowest achievement, with 22 students (73.3%) completing tasks according to the requirements, with shortcomings mainly in punctuality and adherence to learning agreements. Achievements between aspects were therefore uneven.

Table 3. Student achievement based on descriptive data (n = 30)

Aspects	Indicators	Number of students	Percentage
Knowledge	Achieving the minimum set value	27	90,0
Spiritual intelligence	Involved in religious activities and able to explain their meanings	25	83,3
Emotional intelligence	Responding to differences of opinion politely	23	76,7
Emotional intelligence	Consistently showing politeness during observation	24	80,0
Social care	Collaborate and listen to friends' opinions	26	86,7
Responsibilities	Complete tasks according to the requirements	22	73,3
Supporting data	Providing examples of the application of morals in the worksheet of adolescent social interaction cases	26	86,7
Supporting data	Identifying moral messages in learning videos	25	83,3
Supporting data	Participate and collaborate in group discussions	26	86,7
Supporting data	Write down behaviors that need improvement on the reflection sheet	24	80,0
Supporting data	Understanding the meaning of religious activities in the reflection sheet	25	83,3
Individual coaching	Showing behavioral improvement (from 8 student case examples)	6	75,0

All figures are descriptive. The percentage is calculated for 30 students, except for individual coaching which is calculated for 8 students.

Supporting data from the learning strategies showed a similar pattern, with 24 to 26 out of 30 students able to provide examples of moral application, identify moral messages in videos, participate in discussions, write behaviors that need improvement, and understand the meaning of religious activities. In individual guidance for 8 students as an example case, 6 students showed improvement in observed behavioral indicators, while 2 students did not show changes according to the criteria. These results indicate that mentoring has the potential to help improve behavior, but the two students who have not changed indicate that each student's development is not the same and some require further guidance. All these figures are

descriptive and are not used to draw causal conclusions about the influence of teacher strategies.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The most prominent supporting factor for internalization is the madrasah environment located within the pesantren complex. According to G, there is a difference between students who attend madrasahs and those who study outside madrasahs, because in madrasahs the instillation of religious values is very strong and the environment supports the formation of Islamic character. K also believes that the closeness of madrasahs to pesantrens makes students' spiritual and emotional conditions relatively even. Daily habits such as Asmaul Husna, tilawah, duha prayer, and congregational zuhur prayers are part of the religious culture experienced by students every day. The existence of regular and scheduled programs provides repeated opportunities for students to practice practicing religious values. In other words, the pesantren environment is not only a setting but also a source of religious experience that strengthens Akidah Akhlak learning in the classroom. The next supporting factor is the involvement of all madrasah members and parents. G emphasized that the important role in internalizing spiritual and emotional intelligence is not only the responsibility of the Akidah Akhlak teacher but of the entire madrasah academic community. K described a three-way mediation between teachers, students, and parents when problems arise from the environment. K also hopes that principals, teachers, and education staff will work together to advance students' Islamic character, because such success will benefit students while increasing public trust in the institution. G's affirmation and K's hope show a shared view that internalizing values requires consistency from all parties interacting with students. However, the data does not yet detail the contributions of each party separately, so the form of cooperation is reported only as mentioned by the informants.

The first inhibiting factor comes from the family environment. G mentioned that some students come from broken *homes* and that the family's economic conditions sometimes also influence it. K added that family factors can affect students in the form of low enthusiasm for learning and frequent daydreaming. This condition shows that student behavior problems do not always originate from the madrasah, so guidance that only focuses on warnings or sanctions may not reach the root of the problem. K distinguishes between personal delinquency, such as smoking and truancy, from family factors. This distinction helps madrasahs determine handling, namely a direct approach to personal problems and involving family as factors from home. Nevertheless, informants have not explained to what extent parental involvement has successfully changed students' behavior, so its effectiveness needs to be further explored in further research. The second inhibiting factor comes from the environment outside the madrasah. G mentioned playmates, social media, and free association as external factors influencing students. G also compared current students with those in

the past who he considered highly respectful of teachers. According to G, students now find it easier to report teachers to their parents, and the restrictions felt that teachers limit some students more easily behave arbitrarily. In addition, G assessed that students at school are reluctant to break because they fear rules, but at home they are free from rules. The behavioral differences between these two environments show that strengthening values in madrasahs has not always continued outside of teacher supervision. To address this challenge, K uses a direct approach and three-way mediation, while G emphasizes the involvement of all madrasah members, but its long-term effectiveness cannot yet be confirmed from the available data.

Discussion

Program Implementation and Internalization

The most important finding of this study is that the implementation of religious programs is not yet identical to internalization. Madrasahs have provided complete habituation, but teachers find that some students obey rules because they fear sanctions and have not yet realized the meaning of spiritual intelligence. This finding aligns with the concept of internalization, which requires the internalization of values, not merely the implementation of behavior. Compliance driven by supervision and the threat of sanctions is more accurately understood as the initial stage of habit formation, while awareness is marked by behaviors that persist when not supervised. G's statement regarding the differences in student behavior at school and at home reinforces this reading. Therefore, participation in activities is not the only indicator of success, as participation can be driven by madrasah schedules and rules. More appropriate indicators include students' interpretation and consistency of behavior outside supervision, as distinguished in Table 4.

Table 4. Differences in compliance and internalization and their evidence in research data

Dimensions	Compliance	Internalization	Evidence in data
Behavioral drivers	Supervision, schedule, and threat of sanctions	Meaning of values and awareness	G: some students obey the rules because they fear sanctions; 11th-grade students start violating but are still afraid of sanctions
Behavior outside of supervision	Tends to stop when unsupervised	Still appears when unattended	G: students are reluctant to violate at school, but at home are free from rules
The role of habituation and sanctions	Behavioral barriers	A Lesson in Responsibility and Meaning	Educational sanctions in the form of beneficial works; explanation of the meaning of Asmaul Husna
Assessment indicators	Participation in activities	The ability to explain the meaning and consistency of behavior	83.3% of students were involved and able to explain meaning; responsibility 73.3%

This distinction between obedience and awareness adds perspective to previous research on Akidah Akhlak teachers. Rahman and Maulidi (2024), Ilham (2023), Muhlis and Maemonah (2025), Hidayah (2021), and Wijayani (2017) examines the role or strategy of teachers in fostering student intelligence. This study continues this study by examining whether the role and strategies of teachers lead to student awareness, shifting the focus from role descriptions to outcome assessment. This lens is also relevant to the debate on the concept of spiritual intelligence, whose limits are still being studied scientifically (Dorobantu, 2023). Because the conceptual boundaries are not yet final, worship activities visible from the outside cannot be the sole measure. The fact that 83.3% of students are involved and able to explain the meaning of religious activities means that some students still need guidance in interpreting in addition to habituation.

G's explanation about the differences in character between levels adds an important consideration, namely that compliance is not singular. Students who are equally obedient may be motivated by fear of sanctions, awareness, or future considerations. Therefore, the more appropriate evaluative question is not only whether students are obedient, but also why and under what conditions they comply. Future considerations for 12th-grade students can be the gateway to awareness, but they can also stop at instrumental motives if not accompanied by meaning. This reading needs to be considered carefully because the picture of class differences comes from the teacher's account and has not been verified through student data at each level.

Direct and Indirect Learning as a Single Network

The results also show that direct and indirect learning work as a single series. Direct learning provides a foundation for understanding, while indirect learning provides experiences that strengthen appreciation. This series can be read through social learning theory, which explains that individuals learn through observation of models. The habits of shaking hands with teachers, praying in congregation with teachers, and the politeness of teachers' language in class become models observed by students every day. This aligns with character education's emphasis on respect and responsibility that need to be practiced. Contextual learning that links material to students' real situations aligns with studies on authentic learning (Nachtigall et al., 2022). As for daily repetition, its explanation can be aided by the principle of repetition in learning science (Carpenter, 2022), even though the evidence relates to knowledge and has not been tested for value. Thus, the strength of habituation lies in orderliness, while its depth depends on explanation of meaning and reflection. Consequently, exemplary behavior only works if consistent throughout the madrasah environment, so the responsibility for internalization, as emphasized by G, is collective and not the task of one teacher.

In the emotional domain, the coaching practice in this madrasah seeks to turn violations into learning opportunities. Sanctions such as making brooms and trash bins link consequences to responsibility towards the environment, while commands to

perform ablution, prayer, and Quran recitation for rude students provide pauses before students return to face problems. These pauses relate to emotional management within the framework of emotional intelligence. Nevertheless, this study does not conclude that religious practices themselves improve emotional control; these practices are more accurately understood as structures that help regulate behavior. The man-to-man approach and three-way mediation demonstrate the relational dimension of coaching. Teacher empathy is a social-emotional competency aspect relevant to interaction with students (Aldrup et al., 2022), and school programs that strengthen social-emotional learning are reported to impact student competence. This provides a basis for developing more planned coaching, for example through case discussions and written reflections.

Achievement data show a gap between knowledge and behavior. Knowledge occupies the highest position (90%), social care and religious involvement range from 83–87%, while responsibility to complete tasks is the lowest achievement (73.3%). A difference of about 17 percentage points indicates that understanding grades is not automatically followed by consistent implementation, in line with findings of violations such as truancy and smoking that still occur despite ongoing habituation. Studies on the relationship between emotional and spiritual intelligence with student achievement and learning engagement are relevant as comparisons, but these relationships are correlational and do not prove that teacher strategies in this madrasah cause the observed achievements. The differences in character between levels presented by G also indicate that internalization is developmental in nature, so the approach needs to be adjusted, for example by explaining moral reasons for students who still comply out of fear of sanctions. Guidance at the secondary level therefore needs to provide space for dialogue and reflection, not just rule affirmation. Inhibiting factors from family and external environments emphasize that internalization cannot be left to teachers alone. Within the framework of social learning theory, students observe models from several environments simultaneously, including family, peers, and media (Bandura, 1977). If the model at home and social interactions do not align with the values taught at the madrasah, reinforcement at school can weaken. Therefore, collaboration with parents in madrasahs realized through three-way communication and mediation is a core part of the internalization strategy, not a complement. Compared to previous research that described the role of teachers in one aspect of intelligence or at the madrasah ibtidaiyah level (Hidayah, 2021), this study maps two intelligences simultaneously in pesantren-based madrasah aliyah.

Conceptually, the findings of this study can be summarized as the internalization continuum, namely compliance driven by supervision, habituation that forms habits, meaning that connects habits with values, and self-consistency when not

supervised. The teacher's role does not stop at providing activities but moves students from the initial stage to the next stage through explanation of meaning, role modeling, mentoring, and reflection. Thus, spiritual and emotional intelligence is not only understood as the result of program implementation, but rather as the result of a process that can be read from the meaning and consistency of behavior. This continuum is the researcher's reading of data in one case that has not been tested, so it needs to be tested in another context. Practically, madrasahs can complement habituation with written reflections and case discussions, tailor development to the character of each grade level, explicitly include spiritual and emotional indicators in lesson planning and evaluation, and strengthen harmony between the madrasah, family, and student social environment.

Conclusion

This study concludes three points according to its objectives. First, in spiritual intelligence, the Akidah Akhlak teacher at MA Miftahuttholibin Kuningan acts as educators through contextual learning, spiritual guides through religious habituation, and guides in learning meaning. Second, in emotional intelligence, teachers together with the student affairs field carry out coaching through habituation of respectful attitudes, self-control with a religious approach, educational sanctions without physical violence, and personal accompaniment. Third, internalization takes place through direct and indirect learning in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains with uneven results, namely knowledge achievement (90%) exceeding consistent responsibility (73.3%) and some students obeying rules out of fear of sanctions. The pesantren environment and the involvement of all madrasah members are supporting factors, while family conditions, social interactions, and social media are inhibiting factors. The main finding of this study is that complete religious habituation in pesantren-based madrasahs has not automatically resulted in internalization. The success of internalization is not solely judged by the implementation of activities, but by the awareness and consistency of student behavior, including outside of teacher supervision.

Theoretically, this study confirms that role modeling, habituation, and contextual learning are the main pathways for value development as described in previous research on the role of Akidah Akhlak teachers. Its main contribution is the distinction between compliance and internalization as well as the reading of *direct learning* and *indirect learning* in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains as a framework for analyzing the internalization of spiritual and emotional intelligence. The theoretical implication is that the study of the teacher's role in Islamic religious education needs to shift from depicting what the teacher does to assessing whether what is done produces consistent meaning and behavior. Practically, habituation needs to be accompanied by meaning and reflection, guidance needs to be adjusted to

the character of each grade level, and learning planning and evaluation need to explicitly include spiritual and emotional indicators.

This study has limitations. The study was conducted only at one madrasah with one Akidah Akhlak teacher, one student affairs manager, and six twelfth-grade students as interview informants. The achievement data came from 30 students and is descriptive in nature; the lesson planning documents have not been analyzed in depth, and the observations are not longitudinal. Therefore, the findings are contextual and not intended to be generalized, and the description of character differences between grades X and XI is sourced from teachers' accounts. Further research is recommended to include more madrasahs and informants (including parents), analyze lesson plan documents, and regularly observe changes in student behavior so that understanding of the internalization process becomes more comprehensive and development policies can be formulated more accurately.

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Ethical Statement

This qualitative case study involved an Akidah Akhlak teacher, a student affairs coordinator, and six Grade XII students aged 16–17 years. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, while additional descriptive learning achievement data were obtained from 30 students. Participant identities were represented using identification codes to reduce the risk of disclosure. Given the involvement of minors, the authors should clarify the actual procedures for obtaining institutional permission, parental or guardian consent, student assent, and any applicable ethical approval before publication. The reporting of interview excerpts, photographs, and student information must respect participants' privacy and the permissions obtained.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Statement

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used solely to assist with language editing, grammatical correction, and improving the clarity and readability of the manuscript. AI was not used to generate or manipulate interview transcripts, observation records, student achievement data, qualitative coding, thematic analysis, or research conclusions. All scholarly interpretations, references, and substantive content were

reviewed and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

Author Contributions

The authors contributed to the conceptualization, research design, field investigation, data collection, qualitative analysis, interpretation of findings, and preparation of the manuscript. Contributions also included methodological validation, critical examination of the internalization framework, and manuscript review and editing. The specific responsibilities of each author should be identified according to their actual contributions. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no financial, professional, institutional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the conduct, analysis, interpretation, or publication of this research.

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