The Role of Family in Shaping Children's Islamic Education: A Study in Paku Pasir Village, Leuwisadeng, Bogor

Reffy Ananda Rizki[*], Akhmad Kharis Kurniawan, and Aura Fathan Mubinah

Institut Nida El Adabi, Bogor, West Java, Indonesia
[*]Correspondence: reffyananda01@gmail.com

Abstract: The role of the family is vital in strengthening their children's understanding of Islam, which is a fundamental part of shaping their children's identity and behavior as good Muslims. This study examined how the family, especially parents, contributes to developing their children's understanding of Islamic education. It also explores the factors that support or hinder their efforts to improve their children's Islamic knowledge. To gather information, this study used a qualitative research design, interviewing four participants. All data from these audio interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The analysis identified three main parental roles: involvement, being role models, and providing motivation. These roles are supported by the availability of Qur'an Learning Centers and an Islamic environment. Conversely, challenges faced by parents and guardians include their busyness, lack of Islamic knowledge, and gadget addiction. Parents face both obstacles and supportive factors in guiding their children's Islamic education. It is recommended that parents continue to learn about Islamic teachings and spend more quality time with their children. Such activities will help parents better support their children's Islamic education.

Keywords: family role, Islamic education, parental involvement

Introduction

The family plays a fundamental and irreplaceable role in a child's religious education. As the smallest unit in society, it is within the family that children first encounter and internalize religious values. These early teachings form the basis of a child's moral, ethical, and spiritual development, shaping their religious identity and guiding their behavior throughout life. The family serves as the first environment where religious principles are introduced, practiced, and learned, emphasizing the critical importance of parents in fostering a child's understanding and practice of religion. Indeed, Islam places strong emphasis on the family as the first and foremost source of a child's education, highlighting the pivotal role of parents in laying the foundation for their moral and religious upbringing. The centrality of parental involvement in education is underscored by a substantial number of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions (Hadith), many of which specifically highlight the foundational role of family-based education in shaping a child's moral and intellectual development.

Aside from that, the significance of parental involvement in child development is well-established within educational and psychological frameworks, particularly through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (Crawford, 2020), which asserts that various environmental systems influence an individual's development. The microsystem, which includes immediate settings such as the family, plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's growth and development. However, this theory has been widely applied to the study of academic achievement (Donkor et al., 2024; Piskorz-Ryń & Chikwe, 2024). Most studies focus on how support from family, especially parents, brings significantly higher academic scores. Meanwhile, educating children is more than that, since education is not only limited to the pursuit of scholarly achievement but also encompasses the development of their affective domains, including character, attitudes, and, particularly, religious values. Unfortunately, the role of parents in their children's Islamic education remains largely unexplored.

Children's growth and development are greatly influenced by their immediate family environment, including interactions with parents (Caasi & Pentang, 2022) and other household members. Contemporary developmental psychologists stress that a child's psychological and moral growth is closely linked to their surroundings, both physical and socio-cultural (Ulfa & Na'imah, 2020). When a child is raised in a nurturing and value-driven environment, it has a profoundly positive impact on their developmental path into adolescence and beyond. On the other hand, an adverse environment can impede the development of stable moral and cognitive skills. This underscores the vital role of early family-based religious education, which lays the foundation for a deeper understanding of religion as the child grows. Thus, parents should focus not only on enhancing their children's academic abilities but also on fostering positive values for their future, especially within the framework of Islamic education. This responsibility is both moral and developmental and is clearly outlined in the Holy Qur'an. As stated in Surah At-Tahrim (66:6), the Qur'an highlights the duty of Muslim parents to shield their children from spiritual harm by providing religious education and ethical guidance. This concept is supported by various studies, including those by Rustiawan and Hasbullah (2023) and Fadhilah and Musthofa (2022). These studies confirm that parents should begin instilling a thorough understanding of religion and comprehensive religious knowledge from an early age, as this creates the foundation for moral development and long-term spiritual well-being.

Based on the background above, this research aims to address this gap by examining the family's role in enhancing children's understanding of Islamic Religious Education in Paku Pasir Village, located in Leuwisadeng District, Bogor, Indonesia. Focusing on the local context, this study seeks to explore how families improve children's understanding of Islamic education and identify the factors that support or hinder their roles. While the importance of family involvement in academic education has been well documented, there is a notable lack of research on the family's role in promoting religious understanding, especially in rural Indonesian settings. While existing studies, such as those by Vieri and Gusmaneli (2024), highlight that parents acknowledge their responsibility in teaching religious education, they also indicate the challenges that arise due to a lack of knowledge about Islamic principles. In many cases, parents struggle to provide adequate religious guidance, especially in performing basic religious practices such as daily prayers and Qur'an recitation. This knowledge gap, combined with external factors such as peer influence, school environments, and media, often leads to conflicting messages that hinder the effective transmission of religious values within the family.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a clear exploration of the role of the family in Islamic education. This topic has received limited attention in prior research. It also employs Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to understand the complex relationships among parental involvement, role modeling, and broader environmental factors that influence children's religious education, as well as moral development theory by Nucci and Iten-Gee (2021). According to this theory, individual moral development is not merely an interpersonal process but a socially mediated one that occurs through dynamic interactions with significant others, especially parents and peers. In the context of this study, it emphasizes how parents, as primary socializers, shape their children's understanding of Islam. In communities such as Paku Pasir Village in Leuwisadeng District, where religiosity is highly valued, parental involvement plays a vital role in fostering comprehensive Islamic education for children. Through routine practices, role modeling, and religious discussions, parents serve not only as transmitters but also as facilitators, helping children internalize Islamic principles.

Additionally, the study offers valuable insights into the challenges faced by parents in Paku Pasir Village, a community that is often overlooked in research on religious education. The findings will help inform the development of more inclusive educational policies that recognize the vital role of families in shaping children's religious values. By focusing on this local context, the research provides relevant recommendations for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to enhance family-centered religious education and address the unique challenges that rural communities in Indonesia face. This study not only fills a significant gap in the literature by exploring the family's role in Islamic religious education but also presents a new perspective on how ecological systems influence children's religious development. The findings will provide practical insights for enhancing parental involvement in religious education and help shape policies that support families as key agents in their children's religious socialization.

Research Questions
Overall, this study examined the role of families in Islamic education in Paku Pasir Village, Leuwisadeng District, Bogor. In particular, it answered the questions below.

(1) What is the family's role in improving children's understanding of Islamic education?
(2) What are the supporting factors of the family in enhancing understanding of Islamic education?
(3) What are the factors inhibiting the family's role in improving the understanding of Islamic education?

Methodology

Research Design and Sample

To answer the research questions, this study employed a qualitative research design, which was considered the most appropriate approach given the nature of the inquiry. Qualitative research is particularly effective for exploring complex social phenomena because it enables researchers to gain detailed insights into participants' experiences, perceptions, and behaviors. A qualitative approach enabled the researchers to gather rich, descriptive data that would have been difficult to obtain through quantitative methods. This study employed purposive sampling, a method that involves intentionally selecting participants who meet specific criteria related to the research focus. This method was chosen to ensure that respondents had direct experience and active involvement in Islamic education practices within their family settings. Four participants were chosen: parents living in Paku Pasir Village with children aged eight to twelve years old. This age range was selected because it represents a transitional phase between childhood and adolescence, a critical period for the development of religion and character. The small sample size is appropriate in qualitative research, where the emphasis is on depth rather than breadth. The aim is not to generalize the findings but to thoroughly and meaningfully explore the topic. The demographic traits of the participants—parents with school-aged children actively involved in Islamic activities—were essential to the study. Their direct influence on their children's religious education at home made their insights particularly valuable for exploring the research questions. Additionally, one community leader (head of the neighborhood) was included to provide contextual understanding and triangulate the data, offering a broader view of the community's collective approach to Islamic education.

Data Collection and Instruments

Before conducting the study, the researchers first visited the research site and met with the neighborhood head of Paku Pasir Village. The neighborhood head shared information about the background and culture of the villagers. Next, the researchers submitted a formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which provided both consistency and flexibility in the questioning process. An interview protocol was prepared in advance, containing open-ended questions designed to explore their role in helping their children understand Islamic education, including factors that support and hinder this role. Follow-up questions were used to delve deeper into the participants' responses, ensuring a thorough exploration of the topic. To prevent misinterpretation, the researchers explained the questions to the participants and assured them of their privacy by using pseudonyms. The validity and reliability of the study were maintained through pre-test questions, designed to ensure clarity and relevance, and reviewed by an expert.

Data Analysis

In this study, data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (2014) model, a common approach in qualitative research. The model includes three connected steps: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions or verification. Each step is crucial for organizing and interpreting qualitative data, and choosing this model is justified because it aligns with the study's goals and has been demonstrated to be effective in managing complex, narrative data. The first step, data reduction, involved identifying themes and categories from the data, using an inductively developed coding system. This step is vital for filtering out irrelevant information and focusing on the data most relevant to the research questions. As a result, unnecessary data were removed, and only relevant data were kept for further analysis. Data reduction helps simplify complex datasets, making them easier to manage and interpret.

Next, during the data display stage, the processed data were organized and presented to facilitate easier analysis and interpretation. In this study, the data were visualized using matrices, which allowed the researchers to identify relationships and patterns among different variables. Using matrices provided a clear overview of the data, helping the researchers to draw conclusions and recognize emerging trends more easily. In the final stage, conclusion drawing or verification, the researchers interpreted the data and checked the findings against the established theoretical framework. This process is crucial to ensure that the conclusions align with existing theories, thereby enhancing the study's credibility and validity. The researchers also conducted verification to confirm that the interpretations were genuinely supported by the data and relevant to the theoretical framework established.

Furthermore, triangulation strengthens the validity of the findings. Triangulation involved comparing the collected data with observations and available documents. This approach improves the reliability of the results by allowing researchers to verify consistency across multiple sources. Therefore, triangulation helps reduce bias and increases the trustworthiness of the findings. Overall, using these analytical techniques is very appropriate for qualitative research, as they provide a systematic way to organize, interpret, and verify complex data. These processes ensure that the analysis remains rigorous, well-structured, and grounded in relevant theory.

Results and Discussion

The Role of the Family in Enhancing the Understanding of Islamic Education

The family, especially the parents, acts as the primary school for children. It is within the family environment that children first learn various types of knowledge, including both religious and general knowledge. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory. The theory explains how environmental relationships influence psychological development. Ecological systems are divided into four main types: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems. The family's role, particularly that of parents, falls within the microsystem (Crawford, 2020). This indicates that the family has the most significant influence on children's development, as most children interact with their parents daily. Through home education, Islamic teachings can be embedded in children, encouraging them to behave according to the Islamic values their family teaches. The role of parents is essential in promoting Islamic education (Table 1).

Table 1. Thematic analysis of the role of the family in enhancing the understanding of Islamic education.

Themes	Quote
Parental Involvement	Since her childhood, I have always taught her to perform prayers on time. Additionally, my child was accustomed to studying the Qur'an with me after the Maghrib prayer, and I don't allow her to use her phone before engaging in Qur'anic study with me. (P3)
	Yes, my role as a parent is to educate my child. However, it can sometimes be challenging to teach my child due to their exceptional mischief. If we, as parents, are not truly diligent in giving attention to our children—such as teaching them to read the Qur'an, instructing them on how to perform prayers and ablution, and so on—we must be patient in dealing with them. Especially as mothers, we must be able to connect with our children effectively. (P4)
Being a role Model	By setting an example of good conduct towards Allah SWT, towards fellow human beings, and towards the surrounding environment. (P1)
	By providing a good role model, parents are the primary examples that children encounter every day. (P2)
Motivation	Who else will guide and motivate children to study religion if not their parents? I always encourage my children to learn how to read the Qur'an correctly and perform their prayers properly, as these are essential for their preparation for the hereafter. This is the value I have instilled in them from a young age. (P3)

The involvement of parents in their children's religious education is essential and complex, supported by Islamic, psychological, and educational perspectives. In Islamic tradition, the mother's role is often highlighted with the saying "*Al-ummu madrasatul ula*," meaning "the mother is the first school," which emphasizes the family's, especially the mother's, crucial role in early learning. This emphasizes that a child's formative years are shaped not by formal institutions but within the home. Before children start school and engage with society, their understanding of religion, ethics, and identity is first developed through parental guidance and example.

From an Islamic perspective, parental involvement is not just encouraged; it is a religious obligation. Parents are responsible not only for meeting their children's material needs but also for nurturing their faith, guiding their worship, and instilling Islamic values into everyday life. Helping children practice prayer, read the Qur'an, and exhibit Islamic manners is a vital part of fulfilling this duty. Psychological and educational research also supports the significance of parental involvement. Yasin et al. (2024) found a positive correlation between parental involvement and students' academic success, particularly in Islamic education. Their study revealed that students whose parents actively participated in their religious learning performed better and were more engaged in Islamic topics. Similarly, Romanto et al. (2024) emphasized that Islamic character development is closely affected by consistent parental teaching at home. These findings strongly align with the results of this study, which show that parental involvement is a critical factor in children's ability to understand and embody Islamic teachings.

The theoretical framework guiding this study was based on Fadhilah and Mustofa (2022), where Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory aligns with Islamic teachings mandated in Surah *At-Tahrim* (66). The microsystem, which is the immediate environment surrounding the children—especially parents—becomes the most critical environment for moral and religious development. It means the parents have the responsibility not only to teach but also to embody Islamic values. This integration of theory and empirical findings highlights that parents are not merely passive observers but active participants in shaping their children's spiritual and moral development. Therefore, parental involvement is not only desirable but also essential for the success of Islamic education in children, as supported by Rustiawan and Hasbullah (2023) and Fadhilah and Mustofa (2023). Additionally, the findings of this study confirm that when parents consistently engage in religious instruction and model Islamic behavior, their children are more likely to internalize and practice their faith in a meaningful way. Strengthening parental

involvement, especially within the family as the primary ecological system, is key to fostering lasting and internalized Islamic education in children. This suggests that efforts to improve religious education outcomes should begin by empowering parents, providing them with the necessary knowledge, tools, and time to fulfill their vital role in their children's spiritual development.

Besides active involvement, being a role model is a key responsibility for parents in shaping their children's understanding and practice of Islamic teachings. This study found that children tend to learn most effectively when they observe religious values being consistently practiced within their immediate environment, especially by their parents. As one respondent noted, witnessing parents perform acts of worship and apply Islamic ethics in their daily lives provides children with clear, concrete examples of how religious values are lived out, not just taught. This finding is supported by Risnawaty (2023), who emphasized that Islamic parenting must involve not only instruction but also embodied practice, with parents demonstrating Islamic behavior through their actions.

This concept aligns strongly with moral development theory (Nuci & Iten-Gee, 2021). This theory emphasizes the social and cultural forces that influence an individual's moral growth, especially during childhood. Additionally, this framework clarifies how children's moral reasoning is shaped through culturally rooted family practices and ongoing interpersonal interactions. It means that children observe what their parents do, such as praying, fasting, and reciting the Quran. They also develop ethical qualities, such as honesty, patience, and respect, by observing their parents. In this way, children learn indirectly from their parents. The religious behaviors, practices, and values children routinely see at home serve as the foundation for their moral and spiritual growth. Parental role modeling is not just a supplementary part of Islamic education; it is a vital component. Instilling Islamic values is not a one-time lesson but a long-term, embodied journey that should start as early as possible. The consistent demonstration of Islamic behavior at home sets the groundwork for children's spiritual development and leaves a lasting impact that extends into adolescence and adulthood.

The final yet equally important aspect of parental involvement in children's Islamic education is providing motivation. Motivation acts as the emotional and psychological support that sustains a child's engagement with religious practices, especially those that require consistency, discipline, and focus, such as reading the Qur'an, performing daily prayers, and fasting. In this study, motivation emerged as a subtle but powerful factor that strengthens both learning outcomes and long-term commitment to Islamic practices. Empirical studies support the importance of parental motivation in promoting religious learning. Elvina et al. (2021) found that children who received consistent encouragement from their parents showed better proficiency in reading the Qur'an. This highlights the connection between emotional support and the development of ritual skills. Likewise, research by Alfisyahri et al. (2024) indicated that parental motivation was as influential as teacher motivation in helping elementary-aged students memorize the Qur'an. Given the difficulty of memorization, especially at a young age when focus and endurance are still developing, such motivation serves as a vital driver for persistence and success.

The findings of this research align with those of previous studies, emphasizing that moral and emotional support from parents is crucial for maintaining children's motivation, especially in challenging or repetitive tasks. Parental motivation often manifests through verbal praise, rewards, recognition, or shared activities (e.g., listening to their children recite Qur'anic verses or praying together). These simple actions carry significant importance in strengthening a child's sense of purpose and progress. Additionally, parental encouragement serves as a protective factor against demotivation or disengagement, particularly when children encounter challenges in learning about religious texts or practices. Unlike motivation from teachers, which is usually limited to school or other formal settings, parental support is more personal, consistent, and deeply connected to the child's emotional world. This ongoing encouragement at home helps reinforce Islamic learning as a shared value rather than just an obligation.

Viewed through the lens of motivational theory, parental motivation can be seen as both intrinsic and extrinsic: it inspires children to internalize the importance of Islamic learning while also providing external support systems that validate their efforts. This dual function is particularly critical in early and middle childhood, when identity formation and learning habits are still in development. The act of motivating children is not merely supportive but essential for successful Islamic education. It enhances the effectiveness of religious instruction by fostering resilience, dedication, and emotional investment in the learning process. This study confirms that when parents consistently offer motivation, whether through words, actions, or shared spiritual experiences, they help create a nurturing environment in which children are more likely to develop a deep and lasting understanding of Islamic teachings.

Supporting Factors in the Role of the Family in Enhancing the Understanding of Islamic Education

Improving one's understanding of Islamic religious education is a crucial responsibility that parents must undertake. However, it is also influenced by external factors (Table 2) that can help and motivate parents to enhance their children's knowledge of Islamic religious education. The availability of Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an (TPQ) or Qur'an

Education Centers has become a crucial factor in enhancing children's understanding of Islamic education, particularly when parental involvement is limited. Historically, TPQs have played a key role in Indonesia's Islamic educational system by offering accessible, community-based spaces for children to learn to read the Qur'an, understand Islamic rituals, and internalize religious values. This institutional support is especially relevant in communities where parents face challenges, such as a lack of religious knowledge or limited time, in fulfilling their roles as primary teachers.

Table 2. Thematic analysis of the supporting factors in the role of the family in enhancing the understanding of Islamic education.

Themes	Quote
Availability of Qur'an Learning Center	A supporting factor is taking my child to the Qur'an teacher at the TPQ, with a schedule from Monday to Friday. (P4) I am very grateful for the presence of the TPQ in my neighborhood, as it gives me confidence that my child will have a good understanding of Islam when they grow older, especially since they have been learning at the TPQ from a young age. (P2)
Islamic Environment	We live in a village, and Alhamdulillah, the environment is still very Islamic. The children here are accustomed to studying at the TPQ, and even those who haven't started school yet also participate in Qur'anic study at the TPQ. Additionally, all Islamic religious events are always commemorated, and there are competitions such as adhan, 6ahsin, and religious speeches, among others. (P1)

According to Ayuningtyas and Susanto (2023), TPQs contribute not only to Qur'anic literacy but also to the development of moral and spiritual character in children. This dual focus on both ritual knowledge and character growth aligns closely with the broader goals of Islamic education. The findings of this study support this view, as many parents, including those interviewed, have enrolled their children in TPQ as a practical way to ensure consistent religious teaching, especially when they are unable to do it themselves. For these parents, TPQ acts as a trusted extension of their family's religious education efforts. This aligns with the work of Syamsidar, Zakariah, and Hortono (2024), who reported that TPQ participation had a positive effect on children's religious knowledge and practices, particularly in areas such as reading the Qur'an and performing prayers. The positive impact of TPQ thus becomes not only a supplement to what is taught at home but also a way to fill gaps when home-based religious education is limited.

However, a deeper analysis uncovers an interesting dynamic. While TPQs serve as a helpful support system, some parents tend to rely on these institutions more than necessary, viewing them as a substitute instead of a supplement to parental religious guidance. This delegation of responsibility, though understandable given parents' limited time and knowledge, risks undermining the holistic and ongoing nature of Islamic education, which ideally involves daily reinforcement at home. Such over-reliance may unintentionally diminish the child's view of the family's role in religious life, portraying Islamic learning as something confined to formal institutions rather than an integral part of everyday experiences.

The effectiveness of TPQs varies depending on the quality of instruction, curriculum, and teacher capacity. While many TPQs uphold high educational standards, others may lack trained instructors or structured programs, which can limit their impact. These differences underscore the importance of ongoing support and quality assurance in TPQ operations, particularly in rural or underserved areas such as Paku Pasir Village. TPQs are vital in supporting children's Islamic education, particularly in bridging gaps caused by parental limitations. However, their role should be viewed as part of a collaborative model between institutions and families, rather than as a substitute for parental involvement. Strengthening this partnership through active parental engagement, regular communication with TPQ teachers, and reinforcing teachings at home can improve the overall effectiveness of Islamic education for children.

Another crucial external factor shaping children's understanding of Islamic education is the surrounding Islamic environment. This environment plays a crucial role in shaping children's behavior, attitudes, and worldview, particularly during their formative years. As Hulukati (2015) states, a child's education flourishes when there is an integrated support system involving family, school, and the wider community. In this context, the "environment" includes not just physical surroundings but also social interactions, cultural expressions, and community norms. This study echoes that view by showing that children raised in environments rich with Islamic values tend to develop a stronger connection to their faith. An Islamic environment is one where religious identity is actively expressed and reinforced through daily practices, such as community prayers, modest dress, observing Islamic holidays, and participating regularly in religious activities. In such settings, Islamic values are not only taught but also practiced, giving children consistent, real-life examples of faith in action. The field findings suggest that when parents are part of a supportive Islamic community, their efforts to instill religious understanding at home are greatly reinforced by the social environment.

This connection between home and the wider environment helps make Islamic behavior normal for children, making religious practices a natural and expected part of daily life. The presence of neighbors and community members who consistently embody Islamic values serves as a form of informal education, providing repeated exposure to moral and religious principles that extends beyond formal schooling. These findings support previous research by Lubis and Mahmudah (2022), who highlight that a child's environment serves as a "hidden curriculum," subtly but strongly shaping the internalization of values and the development of religious identity. Similarly, Hotib et al. (2024) found a significant positive link between an Islamic-centered community environment and children's religious and personal behaviors. This is mainly because such environments expose children to various religious activities and provide chances to observe people living according to Islamic principles. This pattern suggests that the environment not only supports but also maintains religious learning by surrounding children with behavioral reinforcement, social expectations, and positive peer influence.

An Islamic environment acts as both a reinforcing and sustaining force in children's religious education. While the family remains the primary agent of faith transmission, the environment provides essential social and cultural support that can enhance or hinder that process. Encouraging strong community ties and promoting Islamic social norms in the broader environment may therefore be key strategies for optimizing children's understanding and application of Islamic teachings.

Inhibiting Factors in the Role of the Family in Enhancing the Understanding of Islamic Education

In educating and guiding children to understand Islamic Religious Education, parents will inevitably face challenges that hinder their role (Table 3). One of the main patterns identified in this study is the effect of parental busyness on children's Islamic education. The growing demands of work and financial responsibilities often leave parents with little time and energy to actively engage with their children, especially regarding religious guidance. As Hasan (2021) notes, when parents are overwhelmed by their work duties, their ability to provide steady religious education at home significantly decreases. This matches the findings of this study, where many parents acknowledged that although they recognized the importance of Islamic education, their busy schedules often prevented them from fulfilling that role effectively. Despite the presence of Islamic schools and institutions serving as external sources of religious education, parents remain the primary figures in shaping their children's beliefs and values. The Qur'anic model of parental responsibility, as shown in Surah Luqman, emphasizes the importance of personally transmitting faith and ethics within families. This underscores that institutional support cannot fully substitute the influence and responsibility of parents in religious upbringing.

Table 3. Thematic analysis of the inhibiting factors in the role of the family in enhancing the understanding of Islamic education.

Themes	Quote
Busyness of Parents	This is because parents often have busy schedules, which results in less attention being given to the religious education of their children. (P1)
	During the day, I am always busy working in the fields, and only in the evening do I accompany my child to study. However, by that time, my child is already sleepy, and I am extremely tired. (P2)
Lack of Islamic Knowledge	This is due to parents' limited understanding of religion and their low level of education. As a parent, I only know the basics, and for more complex matters, I leave it to the teachers at the Qur'an Education Center (TPQ). (P2)
Gadget Addiction	In my opinion, the biggest obstacle for parents is the smartphone. As they are more interested in playing than studying. (P3)
	One of the obstacles I face in providing Islamic religious education to my children is the smartphone. Children today are highly addicted to smartphones. (P4)

Previous studies similarly highlight this tension. For example, Najwansyah, Syahbannuddin, and Syahlan (2023), as well as Auliani (2023), emphasize that while formal institutions play a supporting role, the primary responsibility still rests with parents. Maulana, Irhamudin, and Arifin (2024) further argue that busyness, especially in low- to middle-income households, is often cited as a primary barrier to religious involvement at home. These findings align with the current study and underscore that the issue is not a lack of awareness, but rather structural and time-related challenges that parents face daily. What is particularly noteworthy, and somewhat contradictory, is that many parents in the study still expressed a strong sense of obligation and moral duty toward their children's Islamic development. This indicates that the barrier is not rooted in neglect or disinterest but in practical limitations related to socioeconomic pressures. Some parents attempted to compensate for their limited time by enrolling their children in extracurricular religious programs or relying on extended family members, such as grandparents, to provide religious

instruction. While these efforts are commendable, they also raise questions about the consistency and depth of religious education children receive when parental involvement is limited or intermittent.

This contradiction underscores an important point: effective Islamic education for children relies not only on institutional support but also on the intentional involvement of parents, regardless of their schedules. Therefore, solutions should go beyond just providing access to education; they must also address the broader work-life challenges that hinder parental engagement. Community-based programs, flexible religious education initiatives for busy parents, and integrated family learning sessions could be effective ways to close this gap. Parental busyness presents a significant challenge to effectively transmitting Islamic values and teachings to children. While external educational institutions offer valuable support, they cannot replace the essential role of parents. Addressing this issue requires both structural and cultural strategies that empower parents to reclaim their role in religious education despite demanding schedules.

The second important finding of this study is the lack of Islamic knowledge among parents, which significantly impacts their ability to serve as the primary teachers of their children in matters of religion. Ideally, parents play a crucial role in instilling Islamic values, guiding their children in matters of faith, morality, and religious practices. This expectation is based on the Qur'an, particularly in Surah Luqman, verses 13–19, which emphasizes the importance of parents teaching their children about tawhid (monotheism), moral conduct, worship, and social responsibility (Nurhuda, 2023). However, the reality revealed in this study highlights a gap between the ideal and reality: not all parents possess sufficient religious knowledge, and many are either unable or unwilling to lead their children in Islamic learning actively. This lack of religious literacy among parents creates a series of challenges. When parents are unfamiliar with basic practices like daily prayers, it becomes tough for them to teach or support these rituals at home. As a result, children may struggle with even the most basic aspects of Islamic practice, such as memorizing the required recitations in prayer. This pattern supports the notion that the home environment plays a crucial role in shaping a child's understanding of religion. Without knowledgeable and involved parents, children's exposure to Islamic education becomes incomplete or superficial, maybe limited to what they learn at school or from peers.

In comparison to earlier research, these findings align with studies that emphasize the crucial role of parental involvement in religious development. For example, Nasution and Firdaus (2022) found that children whose parents actively participated in religious education at home showed stronger understanding and practice of Islamic teachings. The difference between active and passive parental roles explains the variations in religious literacy among children in different households. An interesting aspect of this study is that some parents, despite lacking formal religious knowledge, express a strong desire to support their children's Islamic growth. However, their efforts are often hindered by limited access to religious education for adults, time constraints due to economic responsibilities, or a lack of confidence in their knowledge. This contradiction suggests that the issue is not always about unwillingness but often about capacity, as the parents themselves are not sufficiently knowledgeable about Islamic education (Vieri & Gusmaneli, 2024). This finding points to a potential area for intervention: providing religious education programs specifically designed for parents could help them perform their roles more effectively, even if their educational backgrounds are limited.

The final issue is gadget addiction. It has become a serious concern in children's understanding of Islamic education, with 53.3% of children identified as gadget addicts (Rahmawati et al., 2021). This high percentage is alarming, particularly considering its negative impact on children's academic motivation and involvement. Excessive time spent by children on screen-based activities leads to a significant decline in their participation in more productive and educational pursuits, such as learning Islamic teachings and practicing their religion. Interestingly, while platforms like YouTube have gained popularity for sharing Islamic content, simply having access to religious material does not automatically improve children's religious knowledge. This highlights an essential pattern in the study's findings: access to Islamic content does not always lead to deeper engagement or understanding, particularly when children watch such content primarily for entertainment rather than educational purposes. This difference highlights the significance of how children engage with digital media, rather than just the availability of religious content. This emphasizes the need for more intentional and educational approaches to digital engagement.

The findings also reveal that parents consider gadget addiction a significant obstacle that directly affects their children's educational outcomes, especially in Islamic education. This aligns with existing research, which frequently links excessive gadget use to lower academic performance and less engagement in productive activities. The parents in this study noticed that children spent less time on religious duties, including prayer and Quran studies, because of their gadget addiction. This pattern is not unique to this study but has also been reported in earlier research, including work by Hidayatullah, Thaha, and Alauddin (2023), which found that parents of children with excessive

gadget use struggle to support their children's Islamic education. Gadget addiction serves as a barrier to religious participation and understanding, making it harder for children to grasp Islamic teachings fully.

However, one surprising aspect of the study was the mixed response from parents regarding the impact of gadget addiction. While most parents saw a decline in religious engagement, a growing body of research highlights social media as an effective platform for delivering Islamic education (PAI), with evidence showing its positive effects on students' engagement and understanding. A study by Dwistia et al. (2022) found that integrating social media, especially YouTube, has significant potential to support Islamic education. As an audiovisual platform, YouTube enhances student engagement by offering religious content in multimodal formats that are accessible and engaging. In the context of Qur'anic recitation, it serves as a valuable teaching tool, allowing learners to practice independently, listen to expert reciters, and reinforce their learning through repetition. These features align with modern learner-centered principles, where flexibility and autonomy lead to better cognitive and spiritual outcomes. Interestingly, Tanjung and Sebayang (2023) developed instructional media for Islamic Religious Education using TikTok, guided by the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework. The implementation of this media showed a positive impact on increasing students' engagement, interactivity, creativity, collaboration, and independent learning in Islamic Religious Studies.

This discrepancy highlights an interesting area for further research, especially regarding why social media appears to have positive effects when used in schools but yields less favorable or inconsistent results at home, as shown in this study. One possible reason is the different levels of parental involvement. In families where parents actively supervise and manage their children's use of gadgets, children may be more likely to intentionally engage with educational content, even when distractions for entertainment are present. This suggests that the success of digital media in supporting Islamic education depends not only on the platform itself but also on the structure, supervision, and educational goals behind its use. Parental involvement and mediation, therefore, play a vital role in how children interact with digital platforms and whether they gain educational value from them. Although gadget addiction remains a challenge, this study emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balanced approach to digital media use. Parents, educators, and communities must collaborate to ensure children can access and benefit from Islamic education in the digital age while also minimizing the risks associated with excessive gadget use.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The role of the family, especially parents, is vital in helping children understand Islamic education. Parental involvement in guiding, modeling, and encouraging children to embrace Islamic values at home has proven to be essential. The findings indicate that regular exposure to religious practices within the family significantly supports the development of children's religious identity and understanding. External support systems, such as Qur'an learning centers and Muslim community environments, can further enhance children's religious growth. However, challenges like children's excessive use of digital devices are seen as potential barriers to effective religious education at home.

There is a need for ongoing parental education in Islamic teachings, as parents remain the primary teachers during their children's formative years. The results also suggest that stronger collaboration between families and religious educational institutions could improve the effectiveness of Islamic learning. Future research might explore these dynamics across different sociocultural contexts and employ alternative methods, such as longitudinal or comparative studies, to deepen the understanding of family-based Islamic education. The study can help in developing educational policies, like offering programs for parents on effective child-rearing techniques, supporting the growth of Qur'anic Learning Centers (TPQ) through training for ustadz and ustadzah, and conducting awareness campaigns to help parents combat children's gadget addiction—all essential steps to strengthen Islamic education within the family.

It is recommended that parents continually learn Islamic teachings and incorporate them into their daily routines, serving as consistent role models for their children. Parents should also actively involve their children in religious activities, providing both instruction and a good example to foster a proper understanding and practice of Islamic values from an early age. Future research should expand the scope of this study by including a larger and more diverse sample from different regions and socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, using mixed-method or longitudinal approaches could offer deeper insights into the long-term effects of family-based religious education. Comparative studies between rural and urban communities or different religious education models would also enhance the discussion on Islamic education within family settings.

Authorship Details

Reffy (50%): concept and design, data acquisition and analysis, and writing the manuscript. Ahmad (35%): data interpretation, supervision, and editing the manuscript. Aura (15%): data gathering and transcriptions.

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