

# **Integration of Islamic Parenting Values to Enhance Social-Emotional Development in Early Childhood**

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Abstract: Highlight the importance of social-emotional competence in supporting learning readiness and long-term success. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework identifies five key competencies: self-awareness, selfmanagement, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. In Indonesia, where Islamic values are deeply ingrained in the culture, integrating these values into early education, primarily through Islamic parenting practices, provides a culturally meaningful pathway for promoting character and emotional development. This qualitative descriptive study aimed to explore how Islamic parenting values are internalized in early childhood Islamic education settings and how they support the development of children's social-emotional competencies. The study involved teachers from selected kindergartens in Serang City, including both Islamic-labeled and culturally Islamic schools. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires, limited observations, and narrative documentation. Thematic analysis revealed that teachers consistently modeled Islamic values, such as rahmah (compassion), sabr (patience), ukhuwah (brotherhood), and ta'dib (moral conduct), through daily routines, prayer, respectful greetings, collaborative play, and conflict resolution. Findings indicate that these practices align with CASEL's five competencies and have a positive impact on children's behavior, emotional regulation, and decision-making. Moreover, parent-teacher collaboration strengthens the continuity of value reinforcement at home and school. This study offers theoretical contributions by bridging Islamic values with SEL, and provides practical implications for character-based curriculum and teacher training in faith-based ECE contexts.

Keywords: Islamic Parenting, social-emotional competence, ECE

# **INTRODUCTION**

Early Childhood Education (ECE) represents a child's initial experience of life outside the family and serves as a critical foundation for the development of all aspects of growth, including physical, motor, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual domains (Dhiu et al., 2021; Hani, 2019). Parental expectations for children's success in ECE are often focused on literacy and numeracy skills(Solichah et al., 2022). However, various studies have shown that social-emotional skills significantly contribute to school readiness and long-term academic success in early childhood (Puspita et al., 2025; Soenaryo et al., 2024). Children with strong social-emotional competence are generally more capable of managing emotions, building healthy relationships, and making responsible decisions in everyday situations(Santrock, 2002).

Given the importance of social-emotional development, it is essential to refer to the framework developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020), which outlines five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These competencies form a vital framework to be nurtured from an early age (Durlak et al., 2011a, 2015). However, in practice, many ECE institutions in Indonesia have not systematically integrated the CASEL approach into their curricula. In fact, the framework is highly adaptable to local cultural values, including Islamic values that are deeply rooted in Indonesian society.

In the context of Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, early education is inseparable from religious values. One meaningful way to instill these values is through Islamic parenting practices. Islamic parenting is defined as a process of nurturing and guiding children based on the principles of tauhid (monotheism), akhlaq (morality), and habituation of virtuous deeds in daily life (Fahham, 2020). Islamic parenting emphasizes compassion, exemplary behavior, strengthening of manners (adab), regular religious practices, and the moral responsibility of adults for children's spiritual and social growth (Tinggi et al., 2024). Core principles such as rahmah (compassion), sabr (patience), ta'dib (discipline and moral refinement), ukhuwah (brotherhood), and 'adalah (justice) strongly align with CASEL's social-emotional competencies. Thus, Islamic parenting is not only religiously significant but also relevant for promoting

children's social-emotional development(Tinggi et al., 2024; Zainuddin & Sulaiman W., 2022).

Several studies in Indonesia have shown that ECE institutions that consistently implement Islamic values can effectively support the development of children's social-emotional competencies. A literature review reveals that strategies for instilling Islamic values in character and ethical formation during early childhood include modeling, habituation, direct instruction, storytelling, interactive activities, environmental conditioning, parent collaboration, the use of media and technology, and positive reinforcement(Ningsih, 2024). These findings indicate that integration of Islamic values and parenting practices in Indonesian ECE settings is already taking place, although it has yet to be systematically examined in relation to formal social-emotional learning frameworks such as CASEL. Field observations indicate that some young children still experience challenges in recognizing emotions, controlling behavior, or understanding the feelings of others (Fitriya et al., 2022). At the same time, Muslim parents and educators desire education that not only promotes academic achievement but also fosters Islamic values from an early age. ECE institutions that adopt Islamic parenting values serve as strategic spaces for the internalization of such values through daily care practices. Habits such as communal prayer, respectful greetings to teachers and peers, sharing, and peaceful conflict resolution exemplify the concrete integration of Islamic values and SEL in early learning environments.

The urgency of this study lies in the need to document and deeply understand how Islamic parenting practices in ECE settings meaningfully contribute to the development of children's social-emotional skills. This research is crucial not only for enriching the literature on Islamic-based character education but also for informing the development of a contextual, spiritual, and culturally relevant early childhood curriculum. Through this study, it is expected that learning and caregiving strategies aligned with both child development needs and Islamic values can be formulated.

While most previous research has focused on Islamic parenting in the context of families or general character education, this study offers a novel contribution by linking teacher parenting practices in Islamic schools with the five CASEL competencies. Thus, this study is expected to provide theoretical insights into the integration of SEL and Islamic values and offer practical benefits for teacher training and the design of parenting programs in Islamic early childhood education institutions.

Based on this context, the present study aims to describe the internalization process of Islamic parenting values practiced by teachers in ECE institutions in Serang City and to analyze the extent to which these practices contribute to the development of children's social-emotional competencies as defined by the five CASEL domains.

### **METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of Islamic parenting practices that support the development of social-emotional competencies in early childhood within early childhood education (ECE) institutions. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore educational processes, the values being instilled, and social interactions contextually from the perspective of teachers as key actors in the field (Creswell, 2012).

The research subjects consisted of teachers from several kindergartens in Serang City, selected using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific objectives and criteria. The main criterion for selection was that the institutions observed must demonstrate consistent habituation of Islamic values in their daily educational practices, either structurally (as Islamic-labeled institutions) or culturally (non-Islamic-labeled but embedding Islamic values in routine activities). Therefore, in addition to TK IT IQRA, TK Islam Tirtayasa, TK Al Aysar, TK Annur Cipocok, and TK Visi Insan Cendekia, this study also included TK Lestari and TK Putra 2 Serang, which, although not officially labeled as Islamic institutions, incorporate daily practices such as collective prayer, moral etiquette (adab), and Islamic character values in their educational activities.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: open-ended questionnaires, limited observations, and narrative documentation. The open-ended questionnaires, distributed via Google Forms, were completed by teachers or trained observers who monitored the children's daily behaviors at school. The questionnaire items were

developed based on the five core competencies of the CASEL framework as well as key Islamic parenting values such as rahmah (compassion), sabr (patience), ukhuwah (brotherhood), and ta'dib (moral discipline). Limited classroom observations were conducted to triangulate and validate questionnaire data, particularly to observe real-time teacher—child interactions within classroom settings. The observation guideline framework is presented as follows:

No.	CASEL Domain	Indicator	Islamic Parenting Values	Relevant Questions (GForm No.)	Sample Indicators / Observed Behaviors
1	Self- Awareness	Children recognize their feelings, self- identity, and positive values	Ta'dib, Rahmah	1, 2, 6, 9	Children display polite manners, greet others, speak kindly, and imitate the teacher's example
2	Self- Management	Children regulate emotions, behaviors, and daily routines	Sabr, Ta'dib	1, 4, 7, 8	Children follow rules, calm themselves, greet others (salam/salim), and engage in guided worship
3	Social Awareness	Children understand others' perspectives and show empathy	Rahmah, Ukhuwah	2, 3, 6, 7	Children greet peers, listen attentively, and express care and concern for others
4	Relationship Skills	Children build and maintain positive social relationships	Ukhuwah, Rahmah	2, 3, 5, 7, 9	Children cooperate, communicate politely, and resolve conflicts with the help of the teacher
5	Responsible Decision- Making	Children make choices aligned with values and social norms	Ta'dib, 'Adalah	6, 8, 9	Children choose good behavior, accept consequences, and understand the rationale behind rules
_	Teacher- Parent Collaboration	Teachers maintain empathetic and continuous communication with parents	Ukhuwah, Rahmah	10	Communication through conversations, daily logs, WhatsApp, etc., to support children's development

Narrative documentation in the form of teachers' reflective notes and narrative reports was also utilized as supplementary material to enrich the contextual depth of the data. The use of these three techniques open-ended questionnaires, limited observations, and narrative documentation was applied in a triangulated manner to enhance the validity of the findings(Sugiyono, 2016).

Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which allowed the researcher to identify patterns emerging from teacher narratives, observation results, and questionnaire responses. The stages of analysis began with coding, followed by theme categorization and interpretation based on the CASEL competency framework: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These themes were then linked to Islamic parenting practices observed in the field. Thematic analysis is particularly suitable for qualitative data, as it captures the subtle nuances and meanings embedded in complex lived experiences (Manurung et al., 2024). Through this approach, a comprehensive picture was obtained of how Islamic values were internalized by teachers in fostering the social-emotional development of young children.

# **RESULT AND DICSUSSION**

Based on observations conducted across several early childhood education (ECE) institutions in Serang City, each kindergarten demonstrated unique characteristics and strengths in implementing Islamic parenting practices. TK IT IQRA exhibited the most comprehensive and consistent application of Islamic-based caregiving. Teachers regularly habituated children to perform daily prayers, including sholat dhuha, and to exhibit polite behavior in their daily routines. Values such as rahmah (compassion), ta'dib (discipline), and sabr (patience) were internalized through teacher modeling—comforting children through gentle touch, providing calm-down time, and speaking with kindness. Children were habituated to greet others with salam, use respectful language, and demonstrate respect toward teachers and peers. Moreover, active teacher—parent collaboration, including communication via WhatsApp and in-person conversations during pick-up times, was an integral component of the caregiving process. The integration of Islamic values, CASEL competencies, and parent involvement made TK IT IQRA the most consistent in value-based caregiving practices.

TK Annur Cipocok excelled in instilling Islamic manners (adab), such as greeting others, asking for permission, and speaking respectfully. Teachers consistently guided children to internalize these behaviors as part of their character. These habits were developed not merely as routines but through reflective and social activities that nurtured empathy. The teachers' gentle corrective approach reflected the values of rahmah and ukhuwah in caregiving.

TK Islam Tirtayasa showed a distinct feature through the contextual use of hadith in moral instruction. Teachers delivered Islamic messages in a non-punitive, meaningful way during interactions. Children were encouraged to perform both obligatory and voluntary prayers and to memorize Juz Amma, indicating a strong spiritual integration in daily learning. TK Al Aysar, Islamic caregiving was evident in children's routines, such as praying before and after activities and memorizing short surahs and hadith. Teachers instilled the values of sabr and rahmah through soft and supportive guidance and encouraged children to show respect and salim (hand-kissing gesture) in daily interactions.

TK Putra 2 Serang emphasized the development of children's responsibility. Children were guided to make ethical decisions, apologize after conflicts, and understand the consequences of their actions. Teachers not only advised but also gave space for children to learn from experience, aligning with the CASEL domain of responsible decision-making. TK Lestari stood out for its caregiving approach that emphasized play-based learning and character development. Teachers facilitated the development of social skills and moral values through group activities and joyful spiritual routines. Finally, TK Visi Insan Cendekia demonstrated strengths in cultivating children's relationship skills. Teachers promoted cooperation, empathy, and ukhuwah through interactive activities that nurtured children's self-confidence and mutual respect.

A summary of these findings is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Observation Findings from Early Childhood Education Centers in Serang City

CASEL Aspect	Indicator	Field Findings
Self-	Children	Children at TK Al Aysar, TK Islam Tirtayasa, and TK
Awareness	recognize	Annur Cipocok are accustomed to greeting others,
	feelings, self-	respecting teachers, speaking politely (e.g., saying
	identity, and	'please' and 'thank you'), and imitating teacher role
	positive values	models. Teachers guide patiently and serve as examples
C - 1C	C1-11-1	in integrating moral etiquette.
Self- Management	Children manage	At TK IT IQRA, children are habituated to prayer, following rules, and are supported by teachers in
Management	emotions,	emotional regulation through comforting, calm-down
	behaviors, and	time, and gentle conversation. Teachers correct
	daily routines	behavior without shouting.
Social	Children	Children at TK Annur Cipocok and TK Islam Tirtayasa
Awareness	understand	regularly greet peers, show concern, and participate in
	others'	group activities that foster values of compassion
	perspectives and	(rahmah) and brotherhood (ukhuwah). Teachers teach
	show empathy	empathy through storytelling and interactive
Relationship	Children build	engagement. At TK Visi Insan Cendekia and TK Lestari, children
Skills	and maintain	greet one another, play together, and demonstrate
	positive social	cooperation. Teachers act as facilitators guiding
	relationships	children to resolve conflicts peacefully and
		respectfully.
Responsible	Children make	At TK Putra 2 Serang, children are guided to make good
Decision-	decisions in	decisions, such as greeting others, apologizing after
Making	accordance with	conflicts, and following queuing rules. Teachers instill
	values and norms	responsibility through gentle advice and Islamic routines.
Islamic	Teachers	All observed kindergartens, such as TK Al Aysar, TK
Parenting	habituate	Islam Tirtayasa, and TK IQRA, habituate children to
C	Islamic rituals	prayer, *sholat dhuha*, memorizing short surahs, and
	and manners in	speaking politely. Teachers serve as direct role models
	daily routines	in daily practice.
Teacher-	Teachers .	At schools like TK IT IQRA and TK Annur Cipocok,
Parent Callaboration	engage in	teachers maintain communication through WhatsApp,
Collaboration	empathetic and sustained	daily logs, or conversations during pick-up times. This collaboration reinforces the continuity of Islamic values
	communication	between school and home.
		control believe and nome.
	with parents	

Based on the findings, children's self-awareness was evident through their polite behavior in interacting with teachers and peers. Observations revealed that children were accustomed to greeting others, kissing the teacher's hand (salim), using polite language such as "please," "sorry," and "thank you," and asking for permission before engaging in

an activity. This behavior indicates the child's understanding of themselves and their surroundings, as well as awareness of prevailing social norms.

The awareness shown by children in greeting and using polite language did not occur automatically, but was the result of consistent habituation by teachers who also served as role models. Habituation is a standard method employed by early childhood teachers to develop social-emotional skills grounded in Islamic values (Hafidz et al., 2022; Paujiah et al., 2022). Modeling is also commonly practiced by PAUD teachers in Indonesia to foster social-emotional competence, particularly self-awareness, as being a role model is an integral part of the teacher's professional competence(Adawiyah & Ubaidilah, 2023; Lisdiyana, 2023).

Educational programs that systematically develop social-emotional competencies can enhance children's abilities to recognize emotions, understand themselves, and exhibit prosocial behavior in school (Durlak et al., 2011b). Although no formal SEL program was explicitly implemented in this observational context, Islamic parenting practices, characterized by polite conduct and affectionate interactions, indicate a similar developmental direction. However, several respondents noted that while most children had shown polite behavior and self-awareness, continuous guidance was still needed to maintain consistency. This suggests that the process of value internalization is ongoing, and sustained reinforcement is crucial for deeply embedding these values (Fitriya et al., 2022; Puspita et al., 2025).

Self-management, the ability to regulate emotions and behavior, is another crucial aspect of early childhood social-emotional development. Based on observations in several Islamic early childhood institutions (PAUD) in Serang City, children demonstrated self-management abilities, including compliance with classroom rules, participation in religious routines (such as daily prayers and the dhuha prayer), and the ability to regulate emotions with teacher guidance.

Teachers responded to children's emotional situations—such as crying or anger—using gentle and patient approaches, allowing space for reflection. These strategies reflect

Islamic values such as *sabr* (patience) and *ta'dib* (moral education), which are essential for fostering self-control from an early age. These findings reinforce previous research, which has shown that empathetic teacher responses to children's challenging behaviors significantly support the development of emotional regulation (Ningsih, 2024; Tinggi et al., 2024). Teachers who speak softly, provide calm-down time, and avoid harsh punishment contribute to positive behavioral changes. Although the observed Islamic PAUD institutions did not explicitly implement a formal SEL curriculum, the approaches used yielded positive outcomes in emotional development. This is important because strong emotional regulation has a significant influence on prosocial behavior in early childhood (Drupadi, 2020).

In addition, children demonstrated increased social awareness through behaviors such as greeting friends, showing concern, and cooperating in group activities. Children whose social-emotional awareness is nurtured from an early age are predicted to be better equipped to face future social behavior challenges (Hanurawan, 2019).

This awareness was shaped through Islamic routines such as collective prayers, forgiving one another, and listening to stories that contain empathetic values. Teachers play an essential role as models, demonstrating *rahmah* (compassion) and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), and guiding children to understand others' perspectives through supportive social interactions. These findings align with the existing literature on the application of Islamic values in early childhood education (Fahham, 2020; Zainuddin & Sulaiman W., 2022).

Children's relationship skills are developed through activities such as playing together, discussions, and resolving peer conflicts. Teachers facilitated friendship-building, peaceful conflict resolution, and encouraged children to share and take turns. This role of the teacher as a facilitator of relationships among children is part of their competence as both educators and caregivers (Lisdiyana, 2023; Nurtiani & Fajriah, 2022; Ritonga et al., 2022; Witarsa & Alim, 2022).

Finally, collaboration between teachers and parents was also found to be an essential factor in supporting children's social-emotional development. Teachers maintained open and empathetic communication with parents through WhatsApp groups, communication books, and informal conversations during drop-off or pick-up times.

This collaboration helps maintain continuity of values between home and school. Parental involvement that aligns with school efforts reflects an attempt to raise *sholeh* (morally upright) children, particularly in terms of their social-emotional competencies (Zainuddin & Sulaiman W., 2022). In Islamic education, such partnerships are not only administrative but also moral, representing a shared responsibility in shaping the holistic character and emotional development of children.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that several early childhood education institutions (PAUD) in Serang City have implemented Islamic parenting values. Identified values, such as *rahmah* (compassion), *sabr* (patience), *ta'dib* (moral conduct), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), are internalized through daily routines, including greeting, praying, participating in religious rituals, and engaging in positive social interactions. These values significantly contribute to the development of early childhood social-emotional competencies, as outlined in the CASEL framework. Teachers serve as both facilitators and role models in nurturing the five CASEL competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These five competencies develop through consistent and contextual Islamic parenting practices.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the data were mainly collected through limited observations and open-ended questionnaires completed by observers, making the results highly dependent on the depth of description and subjectivity of the assessors. Second, the study was conducted in only a few PAUD institutions within Serang City, which limits the generalizability of the findings to Islamic-based early childhood education institutions across Indonesia. Third, the descriptive approach employed in this study did not provide a quantitative measure of the relationship between Islamic parenting practices and children's social-emotional competency achievements.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to employ a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative observational instruments with quantitatively

validated scales based on the CASEL framework. Additionally, the development of teacher training programs and learning modules based on Islamic values and CASEL competencies is necessary to ensure more structured implementation in the field and broader impact on character development from an early age.

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