

## **Islamic Spiritual Leadership in Early Childhood Education: A Systematic Review of Models for Quality and Character Development**

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the concept and application of Islamic spiritual leadership in realizing quality and character-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD). The method used is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) by analyzing 15 relevant national and international articles, obtained from Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Scopus, DOAJ, and Garuda Dikti databases. The results of the study indicate that Islamic spiritual leadership in PAUD emphasizes exemplary behavior, the moral values of knowing-feeling-acting, and the application of the characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, namely shidiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah. Implementation strategies found include teacher training, habituation of religious values, curriculum integration, extracurricular activities, congregational prayer, and strengthening school culture. Obstacles that arise include limited teacher competence, student diversity, and limited time and resources. This leadership model has a positive impact on improving the quality of education, character formation, discipline, and intrinsic motivation of children. The novelty of this study lies in the synthesis of literature that comprehensively links Islamic spiritual leadership with efforts to improve the quality and character formation of early childhood. This study also recommends the importance of ongoing training for educators and empirical studies to strengthen the effectiveness of the Islamic spiritual leadership model in early childhood education institutions. Thus, the results of this study emphasize that Islamic spiritual leadership is not only conceptually relevant, but also constitutes a strategic foundation in realizing quality and superior character PAUD in the modern era.

**Keywords:** Character Education, Early Childhood Education, Islamic Spiritual Leadership, Quality of Education

### **A. Introduction**

Education plays an important role in shaping civilization and determining the direction of a nation's progress. Through education, values, knowledge, skills, and character are instilled from an early age so that children grow up to be intelligent,

moral, and responsible individuals (Achmad, 2024; Nurlina et al., 2023). At this stage, Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is the main basis for the formation of children's personalities as a whole, covering intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual aspects (Muliawati & Setiasih, 2024; Nurlina et al., 2024). The success of the implementation of PAUD is greatly influenced by effective leadership in managing programs and resources professionally (Trihapsari et al., 2025). A number of studies show that leadership has a great influence on the quality of educational institutions, because school principals play a role as a mover, role model, and guardian of values in the organization (Syamhadi, 2022; Harton, 2019). In the perspective of Islamic education, spiritual leadership based on faith, example, trust, and sincerity is believed to be able to foster a quality-oriented and moral organizational culture (Tobroni, 2015; Suhayati & Yulianingsih, 2022). Therefore, an in-depth study of relevant Islamic spiritual leadership models is needed to improve the quality and character of early childhood education.

Although various studies have discussed spiritual leadership in the field of education, studies that specifically highlight Islamic spiritual leadership models at the early childhood education level are still very limited. Most of the previous studies focused on secondary and higher education, even though early childhood education has different characteristics, both in terms of students, learning approaches, and basic values that need to be formed from an early age. Islamic spiritual leadership emphasizes the integration of spiritual, moral, and managerial dimensions in the implementation of leadership functions (Rohmansyah et al., 2024; Barus et al., 2025). In the context of early childhood education, leaders not only play the role of institutional managers, but also become moral and spiritual role models for educators, students, and parents (Barus et al., 2025; Nurlina et al., 2025). Therefore, strengthening the Islamic spiritual leadership model is an important step in building a culture of quality education and character from an early age.

The Islamic spiritual leadership model is based on the main values such as sincerity, trust, fairness, shura (deliberation), and rahmah (compassion), which are the basis for the formation of children's character in accordance with their nature (Rangga et al., 2025; Rohmansyah et al., 2024). This leadership not only functions administratively, but is also a moral and spiritual mandate that is oriented towards improving the quality and fostering the character of educational institutions (Sa'adah et al., 2025). In the context of early childhood education, the application of these values covers three main domains. First, the managerial realm, namely the application of Islamic principles in planning, implementing, evaluating, and developing institutional quality. Second, the pedagogical realm, which can be seen through the example of teachers and school culture that instills spiritual values and Islamic character. Third, the social-spiritual realm, which is manifested through a harmonious relationship between institutions, parents, and society as a form of educational da'wah in fostering noble morals (Jalil & Widyanto, 2025). Thus, the Islamic spiritual leadership model becomes an important conceptual framework in understanding its contribution to

quality improvement and character formation in early childhood education institutions.

So far, research on the application of Islamic spiritual values in the quality management of early childhood education has not been integrated into a systematic conceptual model. This condition shows that the understanding of the role of Islamic spiritual leadership in PAUD is still partial and has not developed into an applicable theoretical framework. Therefore, this study aims to examine and synthesize various study results to formulate a conceptual framework for Islamic spiritual leadership that relates the spiritual dimension, Islamic values, and the quality of early childhood education in an integrated manner. This effort is expected to strengthen the theoretical basis for improving the quality of PAUD institutions that are not only academically superior, but also able to form a generation with Islamic character.

Nationally, the Indonesian government continues to strive to improve the quality of early childhood education through accreditation policies, improving educator competencies, and quality assurance (Rizki et al., 2024; Halima et al., 2024). However, challenges still arise in the leadership aspect of the institution. Several studies show that many PAUD heads do not have adequate leadership competencies, both administratively and spiritually (Putri et al., 2025; Nurmiyanti & Candra, 2019). Other research confirms that spiritual leadership plays an important role in increasing loyalty, teacher performance, and creating a positive school climate (Amzah et al., 2024; Afrida et al., 2025; Harahap & Armanila, 2023). Meanwhile, Islamiyah et al. (2024) also found that the application of Islamic values in transformational leadership styles can strengthen the quality of learning and character formation of students. However, most of these studies are still conceptual and have not systematically explained the application of Islamic spiritual principles in the quality management of early childhood education. This emphasizes the need for literature studies that focus on Islamic spiritual leadership models as the basis for strengthening the quality and character of early childhood education.

In response to the limitations of previous research, this study offers a novelty in the form of a conceptual study of the Islamic spiritual leadership model in realizing quality and character early childhood education. This study was carried out through the analysis and synthesis of various theories and relevant findings of previous research. This research not only examines the concept of Islamic spiritual leadership, but also places it in the context of early childhood education which focuses on the formation of children's character and moral values. By integrating Islamic leadership theory, early childhood education, and early childhood development, this study is expected to provide a new understanding of the relationship between the spirituality of leaders and the effectiveness of quality management of early childhood education institutions.

In addition to providing theoretical contributions, this research also has practical value for early childhood education heads, educators, and policy makers. The results

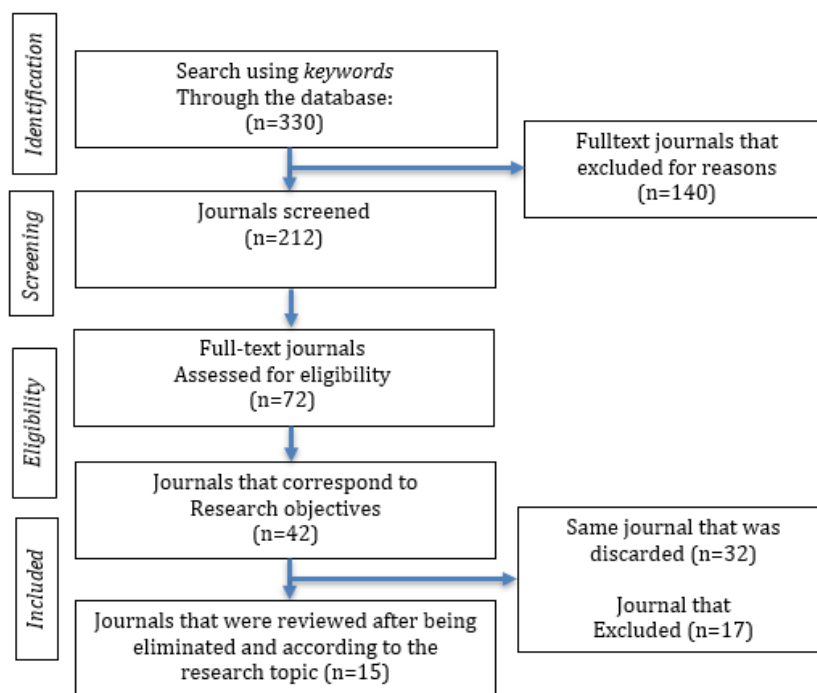
of the study are expected to be a reference in designing a leadership strategy that combines Islamic spiritual values with the principles of effective institutional management. This approach is expected to be able to encourage the formation of early childhood education that is superior, characterful, and based on Islamic values, so that children grow up in an educational environment that balances intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. Based on this, this study seeks to answer the main question: how can an Islamic spiritual leadership model be developed to realize quality and character PAUD in Indonesia. For this reason, this study uses a literature study approach by examining various scientific sources regarding Islamic spiritual leadership and the quality of early childhood education as the basis for the preparation of a conceptual framework.

## **B. Methods**

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SRB) approach, referring to the PRISMA guidelines as the primary framework for identifying, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of literature. This approach was applied to examine and synthesize theories and research findings related to Islamic spiritual leadership in improving the quality and character building of Early Childhood Education (PAUD). The SRB process was conducted in a structured manner through the following stages: literature search, selection based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, content analysis, and thematic synthesis.

The identification phase began with establishing the focus of the study and conducting a literature search in scientific databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, DOAJ, ResearchGate, and Garuda Dikti. Sources included national and international journal articles, scientific books, research reports, and education policy documents. Inclusion criteria were limited to publications published between 2015 and 2025, written in Indonesian or English, and relevant to Islamic leadership, educational spirituality, early childhood education quality, and child character development. From the initial identification process, 330 literatures were collected, and 15 articles were selected through the PRISMA process for further analysis.

The literature selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines, encompassing the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. A flowchart of the literature selection process is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Flowchart of Literature Selection Using PRISMA**

This research did not involve human participation, so all data is secondary data obtained from scientific publications. The instrument used was a literature review matrix, which recorded the publication's identity, research objectives, methods, key findings, and relevance to the study of Islamic spiritual leadership and early childhood education quality.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach through content analysis and thematic analysis techniques. The thematic analysis process followed the following steps: (1) reading the literature thoroughly; (2) identifying and coding relevant sections; (3) grouping codes into categories; (4) compiling main themes inductively without an initial theoretical framework. Coding was conducted manually without Nvivo software, but still adhering to the principles of transparency, consistency, and data traceability.

To increase data validity, the study employed source triangulation, comparing findings from different publication types, contexts, and research approaches. The credibility of the literature was verified through journal reputation, clarity of publication identity, indexing, and DOI.

This study has several limitations, including potential language bias due to its focus on Indonesian and English-language sources, and database limitations that may have led to some relevant studies being overlooked. Furthermore, manual coding has the potential to introduce subjectivity, although this was minimized through triangulation and consistency checks.

## C. Results and Discussion

**Table 1. Reviewed Articles**

No	Title and Author	Research Problem	Research methods	Conclusion
1	Leadership of Early Childhood Education Principals in Implementing Character Learning Based on Islamic Values (Fijriyani et al., 2023)	The application of Islamic values in character learning in early childhood education institutions is not yet optimal.	A descriptive qualitative approach with a multi-site design in two Islamic-based early childhood education centers in Pamekasan	The leadership of the PAUD principal who emphasizes exemplary behavior and the instilling of Islamic values is effective in shaping children's character.
2	Principles of School Moral Spiritual Leadership in Character Development of Early Childhood Education at Nurul Hidayah Kindergarten, Serdang Bedagai Regency (Harahap & Armanila, 2023)	The moral crisis and degradation of spiritual values among educators have weakened role models in early childhood education institutions. Principals with leadership based on moral and spiritual values are needed to shape the character of young children.	Descriptive qualitative approach.	The moral-spiritual leadership of PAUD principals has been proven effective in developing children's character through three stages: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. Principals need to instill moral and spiritual values in every aspect of leadership and learning.
3	Spiritual and Moral Leadership of Early Childhood Education Principals in Improving Early Childhood Character Learning (Baharuddin et al., 2017)	How spiritual and moral-based leadership of school principals can improve character learning in early childhood.	This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach.	Leadership based on spirituality and morals will facilitate the formation of children's character through three stages, namely moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions which can be implemented more effectively in the learning process.
4	Spiritual Leadership (Implementation of Spirituality as a Leadership Model in Islamic Educational	The quality of education in Islamic Educational Institutions is low due to ineffective management, so	Literature study and theoretical studies related to spiritual leadership models in Islamic educational institutions.	Spiritual leadership that emphasizes religious ethics, inspiration, and innovation is the key to changing negative cycles, building educational quality, and creating an

	Institutions) (Siregar & Putra, 2024)	spiritual leadership is needed to improve the quality and learning environment.		effective learning environment in Islamic educational institutions.
5	Professionalism of Early Childhood Education Principals in Developing the Quality of Islamic-Based Learning (Rofingah et al., 2024)	This study discusses how the professionalism of PAUD principals influences the development of the quality of Islamic-based learning in early childhood.	Qualitative research, a type of library research or literature study, is descriptive, analyzing related documents and texts.	A professional and visionary PAUD principal is able to motivate teachers, children, and parents to realize the PAUD vision, namely improving the quality of Islamic-based learning through self- development, teacher innovation, habituation of prayer and religious values, and other educational activities.
6	Transformative Leadership in Islamic Religious Education at Raudhatul Athfal: Advancing Competitive Islamic Management in Probolinggo, Indonesia (Islamiyah et al., 2024)	This study discusses how the transformational leadership strategy of the RA principal can improve the quality of Islamic religious education in early childhood.	Qualitative descriptive, analyzing the principal's approach in Islamic curriculum development, human resource management, facility improvement, and relations with the community and parents.	A PAUD principal in Probolinggo who implements transformational leadership based on Islamic values has been shown to improve the quality of religious education for early childhood. This strategy includes developing an Islamic curriculum, managing teachers through training, improving facilities, and engaging parents and the community. This visionary and inclusive leadership approach is effective in shaping students' character and developing cognitive skills, and can serve as a model for other PAUD institutions.
7	The Role of Principal Leadership in Cultivating Congregational Dhuha Prayer: A	This study discusses how the principal leads and motivates RA residents to perform Dhuha	Qualitative approach through direct observation, interviews with principals, teachers and students, and documentation of	A principal who sets an example by performing the Dhuha prayer in congregation can create a religious culture that fosters discipline and

	Study at RA Bustanul Ulum Jayasakti (Maulidin, 2024)	prayers in congregation, as well as its impact on student character.	activities.	noble morals in students. Obstacles such as time constraints and student absences can be overcome through careful planning.
8	Islamic-Based Educational Leadership Research since 1990: An International Review of Empirical Evidence and a Future Research Agenda (Arar et al., 2022)	This article reviews international evidence on Islamic-based educational leadership models published between 1990–2021, with the aim of understanding research developments and key themes within these studies.	The systematic literature review followed the PRISMA steps, including source identification, data collection, selection, and analysis, to explore policies, leadership models, and gender and social justice issues.	The study highlights key trends in Islamic-based educational leadership, including policies and reforms, leadership models and styles, and gender and social justice issues. This article provides a theoretical and methodological foundation for future research on educational leadership focusing on spirituality, inclusion, and diversity.
9	Character Education Management in Early Childhood Education (Kuncoro et al., 2025)	This study discusses the management strategy for character education and Islamic values in PAUD, as well as the challenges in its implementation, including limited teachers and diverse student backgrounds.	Qualitative case study with interviews, active and passive observation, and documentation; Data were analyzed through triangulation of sources and techniques.	Early character education is crucial for shaping a child's personality, morals, and social behavior. ABABILS PAUD-TK Sukoharjo implements an Islamic education management strategy that integrates the national curriculum with Islamic character values through natural reflection methods, experiential learning, module development, strengthening Islamic values, and developing human resources and infrastructure. Periodic evaluations involve all stakeholders and ensure the program's effectiveness in fostering children's character and spirituality holistically.
10	Leadership in Islamic Education (Fadila, 2019)	This article discusses the importance of leadership in Islamic education to shape children's	This article is conceptual/descriptive in nature, examining Islamic leadership and education theories from the Qur'an, Sunnah, and related literature.	Leadership in Islamic education plays a crucial role in guiding teachers and students to achieve educational goals and instilling Islamic moral values and character. The

		character and personality according to Islamic teachings.		ideal principal emulates the Prophet's qualities, such as honesty, trustworthiness, tabligh (preaching), and fathonah (fearing), and implements a situational or spiritual leadership model.
11	Duties and Responsibilities of School Principals for the Quality of Early Childhood Education (Nipriansyah & Intamano, 2022)	This study examines how the role and responsibilities of PAUD principals in educational management can influence the quality of early childhood education.	This research uses a library research method by collecting and analyzing relevant scientific literature critically and in depth.	Early Childhood Education (PAUD) principals play a crucial role in improving the quality of education through various managerial functions, such as planning, organizing, supervising, decision-making, communicating, and directing. Furthermore, PAUD principals also serve as educators, managers, administrators, supervisors, leaders, innovators, and motivators, all of which determine the success of early childhood education.
12	Spiritual Dimension in Islamic Educational Leadership Through the Leadership Model of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Rohmansyah et al., 2024)	This study examines how Islamic educational leadership can guide students in academic and spiritual fields by referring to the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.	Literature review by analyzing documents, journal articles, and previous research results that are relevant to the topic of spiritual leadership.	The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified leadership that combines the spiritual dimension with the duties of leadership through the obligatory qualities of the Prophet: Shidiq (honesty), Amanah (trustworthiness), Tabligh (discipline), and Fathanah (intelligence). The spiritual dimension encompasses relationships with God, oneself, and others. Strategies to enhance spiritual leadership in Islamic educational institutions include training, strengthening worship, developing sincerity, and fostering

13	Spiritual Leadership Model as a Solution for Building Students' Religious Character (Muarrofah & Hadi, 2025)	This study discusses how spiritual leadership can be used to shape students' religious character as a solution to moral decline in educational institutions.	Qualitative approach through systematic literature review, analyzing various sources related to spiritual leadership and character education.	caring and fairness in leadership. Spiritual leadership focuses not only on academic achievement but also on building students' morals, intrinsic motivation, and religious attitudes. The application of spiritual values in learning and institutional culture can create a generation with strong spiritual integrity.
14	Islamic Management and Leadership in Kindergarten, Raudhatul Athfal, and Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal (Yuda et al., 2024)	This study examines the management and leadership challenges in early childhood education institutions, including RA and ABA, related to human resources, facilities, and parental involvement.	This study examines the management and leadership challenges in early childhood education institutions, including RA and ABA, related to human resources, facilities, and parental involvement.	Integrating Islamic values with modern management practices can create a conducive educational environment and shape a generation of children with strong, balanced, and holistically educated characters.
15	The Principal's Spiritual Moral Leadership in Improving Character Learning Through Outing Programs (Arifin, 2017)	This study examines how the spiritual moral leadership of PAUD principals can improve children's character learning through outing programs.	A qualitative approach with a case study design, using interviews, observation, and documentation. Data validity was tested through credibility, dependability, and confirmability.	The spiritual and moral leadership of early childhood education principals, encompassing educational, moral, and spiritual aspects, has a positive influence on strengthening children's character development. Outdoor programs such as outbound activities, family visits, and social activities are effective in supporting character development and early childhood learning achievement.

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### Principles of Islamic Spiritual Leadership

Islamic spiritual leadership emphasizes the importance of role models as the foundation for leaders' interactions with teachers, students, and other stakeholders.

Effective PAUD principals demonstrate behavior aligned with moral and religious values, thereby serving as role models for the entire school community (Harahap & Armanila, 2023; Baharuddin et al., 2017) . Furthermore, the process of character formation within a spiritual leadership framework involves three stages: moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. These stages guide children to understand values, feel their importance , and ultimately implement behaviors consistent with Islamic values in their daily lives (Baharuddin et al., 2017; Harahap & Armanila, 2023) .

The Islamic spiritual leadership model also refers to the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, known as the obligatory qualities of the Prophet, namely shidiq (honest), amanah (trustworthy), tabligh (conveying trust and knowledge), and fathanah (intelligent and wise). Leaders who emulate these qualities are able to integrate the spiritual dimension in every decision and leadership action, while creating an educational environment that fosters the religious, moral, and intellectual character of children (Rohmansyah et al., 2024; Fadila, 2019) . Thus, the principles of Islamic spiritual leadership emphasize not only managerial and administrative aspects, but also the integrated development of character and morality, which are key to the success of early childhood education in Islamic-based early childhood education institutions.

### **Islamic Spiritual Leadership Implementation Strategy**

The strategy for implementing spiritual leadership in early childhood education institutions emphasizes systematic efforts to internalize religious values in students' daily lives. One important step is to increase human resource capacity through teacher training and development, so that educators have the skills, understanding, and motivation to effectively instill Islamic values in the learning process (Fijriyani et al., 2023; Rofingah et al., 2024) . Furthermore, the instillation of religious values is carried out through routine activities such as reciting prayers, memorizing the Asmaul Husana (The Beautiful Names of Allah), and praying in congregation. These activities not only foster discipline but also strengthen children's moral and spiritual character from an early age (Maulidin, 2024; Arifin, 2017) .

Curriculum integration is another crucial strategy, where the national curriculum is aligned with Islamic values to ensure learning encompasses cognitive, moral, and spiritual aspects. Learning methods are diverse, including outing programs, educational visits, and social activities, which can provide real-life learning experiences and instill character values in the context of everyday life (Kuncoro et al., 2018; Arifin, 2017) . In addition to learning activities, strengthening school culture is also part of the implementation strategy. A supportive school environment, positive norms, and consistent role models create a conducive atmosphere for the holistic

development of children's character, so that spiritual and moral values are naturally internalized in students' daily behavior (Fijriyani et al., 2023; Rofingah et al., 2024) .

### **Obstacles in the Implementation of Islamic Spiritual Leadership**

The implementation of spiritual leadership in early childhood education institutions is inextricably linked to various obstacles that can impact the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. One major challenge is the limited number and quality of teachers capable of consistently serving as role models and guiding children in religious values (Maulidin, 2024; Kuncoro et al., 2018) . This situation requires special attention in teacher capacity development, so that each educator can optimally fulfill their role. Furthermore, the diversity of student backgrounds is a factor influencing the implementation of spiritual and moral values. Differences in family experiences, culture, and social environment can lead to differences in understanding and acceptance of Islamic-based character education, requiring early childhood education leaders to adapt an inclusive and flexible approach to accommodate the needs of all children (Kuncoro et al., 2018).

Time constraints also pose a significant challenge, given that religious activities such as congregational prayer, outing programs, or character education require effective schedule management to avoid disruption to other academic activities. This requires PAUD principals to possess strong managerial skills to efficiently organize and manage the school's agenda (Maulidin, 2024). Furthermore, limited resources, both infrastructure and supporting materials, can limit innovation in the application of spiritual leadership. For example, a lack of facilities for outing activities or limited Islamic religious learning materials can hinder the optimal achievement of character education goals (Siregar & Putra, 2024). Therefore, these challenges need to be addressed through careful planning, teacher capacity building, and the involvement of all stakeholders within the PAUD environment.

### **The Impact and Benefits of Spiritual Leadership in Early Childhood Education**

The application of spiritual leadership in early childhood education institutions has a significant impact on improving the quality of education and developing children's character. Early childhood education principals who are able to integrate spiritual values into their leadership have been shown to be able to optimally encourage children's learning achievements, as teachers and students are motivated to carry out the learning process with an awareness of moral and religious values (Muarrofah & Hadi, 2025). In addition to academic aspects, spiritual leadership also strengthens children's character development, including discipline, responsibility, and tolerance. Activities that emphasize religious values, such as practicing daily prayer, congregational prayer, and *outing programs* , help students internalize moral principles

from an early age. This creates a conducive and supportive learning environment for children's social and emotional development (Islamiyah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, spiritual leadership provides intrinsic motivation for PAUD teachers and staff, making them more enthusiastic in carrying out their educational duties. This motivation not only improves teacher performance but also spreads to students, encouraging children to learn actively, creatively, and responsibly. The integration of spiritual values into school culture creates a harmonious educational atmosphere, with a focus on developing a generation with strong moral and religious integrity (Yuda et al., 2024; Nipriansyah & Intamano, 2022). Thus, the implementation of spiritual leadership in PAUD is not only a managerial approach, but also a transformational strategy that positively impacts the quality of education, academic achievement, character building, discipline, and intrinsic motivation of the entire school community.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications of Islamic Spiritual Leadership in Early Childhood Education**

The findings of this literature review strengthen the theoretical understanding of spiritual leadership in the context of early childhood education. Leadership based on Islamic values, which emphasizes morality, religion, and integrity, can be used as a conceptual model for developing educational leadership theory. The results show that integrating spiritual values with modern managerial principles enables the creation of a leadership paradigm that is effective, adaptive, and relevant to the dynamics of contemporary education (Arar et al., 2022; Rohmansyah et al., 2024). Thus, this study confirms that leadership in early childhood education focuses not only on administrative management but also on developing students' character and spirituality through visionary and ethical leadership practices.

Practically, these findings provide guidance for early childhood education leaders to implement Islamic-based leadership strategies in their schools. Early childhood education principals can integrate spiritual values into decision-making, teacher development, curriculum management, and the formation of a school culture that supports character education. The implementation of these leadership practices not only improves the quality of education and children's character but also motivates teachers and all stakeholders to actively contribute to creating a conducive learning environment (Siregar & Putra, 2024). Thus, spiritual leadership serves as the foundation for establishing a holistic educational management model, balancing academic, moral, and spiritual aspects.

## D. Conclusion

Based on a literature review of 15 related articles, Islamic spiritual leadership in early childhood education has been proven to have a central role in shaping children's character, discipline, and intrinsic motivation from an early age. Leadership principles such as example, moral knowing-feeling-action approach, and the application of the attributes of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (shidiq, amanah, tabligh, fathanah) become ethical and spiritual foundations that support the success of learning. Effective implementation strategies include human resource development, teacher training, integration of religious values into the curriculum, worship habituation, outing activities, congregational prayers, and holistic strengthening of school culture. Obstacles that are often encountered include teacher limitations, diversity of student backgrounds, limited time, and limited resources, but can be overcome through planning, collaboration, and continuous monitoring. The positive impact of the application of spiritual leadership includes improving the quality of education, learning achievement, strengthening of religious character, discipline, and overall motivation of children. The practical implications of this research provide guidelines for other PAUD heads to apply Islamic spirituality-based leadership models, as well as serve as a reference for the development of more systematic character education policies and practices. Further research can test the empirical effectiveness of this spiritual leadership model in various early childhood education contexts, including the evaluation of the long-term impact on the formation of a generation with integrity and strong character.

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