Humanistic Approach to Islamic Education Learning Management in Shaping Religious Maturity Among High School Students: An Exploratory Study

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Info Artikel	Abstract
Keywords: Humanistic, Islamic Education, Religious Maturity.	Research that explicitly explores the relationship between the humanistic approach in Islamic Religious Education and the formation of students' religious maturity remains very limited. This gap highlights the need for further investigation, both theoretically, to understand how humanistic principles relate to adolescent religious development, and practically, to design effective instructional strategies in increasingly pluralistic school environments. Moreover, the application of the humanistic approach in the management of Islamic Religious Education learning, especially at the senior high school level, has not been extensively studied. This study aims to provide an exploratory overview of the management of Islamic Religious Education learning through a humanistic approach in senior high schools. A qualitative method was employed, involving interviews with four teachers across four different schools. The data were analyzed using NVivo version 15. The findings indicate that teachers have applied humanistic-based learning management to foster students' religious maturity, starting from the planning stage to implementation and evaluation. However, several challenges remain, including students' low awareness of worship practices, uneven levels of religious consciousness, and limited supporting facilities. This research recommends strengthening teacher training and institutional support to ensure the optimal implementation of the humanistic approach in PAI learning.
Kata Kunci: *Humanistik, Kematangan Beragama, Pendidikan Agama Islam*	*Penelitian yang secara eksplisit mengeksplorasi hubungan antara pendekatan humanistik dalam pendidikan agama Islam dan pembentukan kematangan beragama siswa masih sangat terbatas, kesenjangan ini menunjukkan pentingnya kajian lebih lanjut, baik secara teoritis untuk memahami kaitan prinsip humanistik dengan perkembangan keberagaman remaja, maupun secara praktis untuk merancang strategi pembelajaran efektif dalam konteks sekolah pluralistik dan pendekatan humanistik dalam manajemen pembelajaran PAI, khususnya di tingkat SMA, masih jarang diteliti secara mendalam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan gambaran secara eksploratif terhadap manajemen pembelajaran PAI dengan pendekatan humanistik yang dilakukan di SMA. Metode yang digunakan adalah Kualitatif, dengan teknik wawancara pada empat guru pada empat SMA pengolahan data menggunakan aplikasi NVIVO versi 15. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru telah menerapkan Manajemen pembelajaran dengan pendekatan humanistik sebagai upaya pembentukan kematangan beragama siswa, mulai dari perencanaan, pelaksanaan dan evaluasi pembelajaran, Namun, sejumlah tantangan masih ditemui, antara lain kurangnya kesadaran siswa dalam beribadah, kesadaran religius yang belum merata, serta keterbatasan fasilitas penunjang pembelajaran. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan perlunya penguatan pelatihan guru dan dukungan kelembagaan agar pendekatan humanistik dapat diimplementasikan secara optimal dalam pembelajaran PAI.*

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of a humanistic approach to management in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the Senior High School (SMA) level is expected to provide a crucial foundation for achieving an educational transformation that is more meaningful and relevant to contemporary times. This curriculum focuses on shaping students' overall personality, encompassing not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor domains. (Taylor, 2010). The humanistic approach enables the adaptation of teaching materials to the real-life conditions and experiences of students, making learning more contextual and meaningful. In the context of PAI, the humanistic approach emphasizes the importance of human development as a whole, encompassing intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects, and aligns with the principles of humanistic psychology, which focuses on self-actualization and the development of positive human potential. (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022; Mahbub et al., 2020; Usman et al., 2017).

With the development of increasingly sophisticated times and growing social demands, educational institutions must become agents of change, namely institutions that can bring about changes in the environment. (Banting, 2023). There needs to be two screening processes, school philosophy and learning psychology, so that the application carried out in schools has a significant effect on the learning process. (Leng, 2020). It is not just a formality, but a model that students need. (Alexander, 2005). In addition, the determining factor is that teachers' awareness of humanistic Education is still low, which affects the goals, materials, and evaluation of learning carried out at school. (X. Wang, 2020). Teachers face challenges in implementing a humanistic approach, as seen in the Hong Kong case study, where expectations are not always aligned with the results achieved. (Lau, 2009).

A key principle in the application of a humanistic approach is the need for a comprehensive system of fundamental freedoms that is compatible with a system of equal freedom for all. Although its application may be challenging, the principle of freedom remains highly relevant in educational processes that employ a humanistic approach. Students are given freedom in carrying out their educational process, and of course, there is supervision from teachers at school. (Barnes, 2016). Schools should be a place where children learn according to their interests, and children are free to learn what they want to know. Schools are a place where individual thoughts, feelings, and actions converge in a democratic climate. (Ainley, 2007; A. L. Tan et al., 2021). The success of the democratic process requires that individuals take responsibility for their decisions, accept the consequences of their choices, and have confidence in their abilities. (Nesteruk, 2015).

The humanistic approach in Islamic Religious Education aims not only to transfer religious knowledge but also to form a whole human being who thinks critically, empathizes, and possesses complete self-awareness. (Usman et al., 2017). This approach becomes very relevant when applied at the Senior High School level, where students are in adolescence, a phase of psychological development that is full of self-discovery and life values (Lisa et al., 2023). During this period, adolescents need not only cognitive understanding of religion but also guidance to achieve religious maturity, which is the ability to live a mature, reflective, and responsible life about their faith. (C. Tan & Ibrahim, 2017). With this background, it is essential to explore further how the humanistic approach in PAI learning can contribute to shaping students' religious maturity, considering both teaching strategies and evaluation methods, as well as the challenges encountered in its application.

In research conducted by (Nicole Leach, 2022) Four characteristics of the learning environment in the humanistic approach are identified: relationships, community, respect, and awareness, which aim to develop existing skills in the post-industrial social era. Although the humanistic approach in Education has long been discussed, there has been no pure and intact development of a humanistic approach, especially in the context of Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools. This makes it challenging to conduct a valid assessment of the curriculum's effectiveness and impact in reality, in the field. (Okur, 2023). In addition, the results of the bibliometric analysis indicate that the understanding of integrating humanistic learning, particularly in Education, still faces conceptual and implementation gaps. This finding reinforces the urgency of conducting more comprehensive and in-depth studies on the humanistic approach, including at the secondary Education level.(Rawal & Madhubala, 2025). In this context, the study conducted by Salamuddin et al. (2024) Revealed that the level of religious maturity among junior high school students was at a moderate level, suggesting that religious development efforts through Education remain suboptimal.

This presents a greater challenge when implementing a humanistic approach at the senior high school level, where students face more complex stages of psychological and social development. On the other hand, the content-based curriculum that is currently dominant in schools is increasingly irrelevant to contemporary global issues. This condition necessitates a reformulation of the curriculum that is not only informative but also transformative, fostering students' intellectually and spiritually mature personalities. (Kushner, 2023)Unfortunately, research that explicitly explores the relationship between the humanistic approach in PAI and the formation of students' religious maturity remains minimal. This gap highlights not only a theoretical urgency to deepen our understanding of how humanistic approach principles align with religious development in adolescence, but also a practical need to design effective pedagogical strategies that respond to the challenges of religious maturity in increasingly diverse and pluralistic school environments.

This study aims to examine humanistic learning management related to learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation used as an effort to form students' religious maturity, as well as to provide an overview of the impacts, challenges, and obstacles in applying humanistic concepts to Islamic Religious Education lessons at the senior high school level. This exploratory study is expected to provide a realistic picture of how humanistic principles can be integrated into contextualized Islamic Religious Education learning practices in schools. In addition, this study is also expected to enrich the scientific repertoire in the field of Islamic psychopedagogy and provide practical recommendations for teachers, curriculum developers, and Education policymakers in designing learning that supports the growth of substantial religious maturity in students. Thus, this study contributes to bridging the gap between the theoretical approach and the implementation of the humanistic approach PAI curriculum in the context of secondary Education in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach with an exploratory study design, aiming to investigate phenomena that are not yet clearly defined by exploring participants' experiences in depth. (Creswell, 2013). The exploratory study was chosen to investigate the application of the humanistic approach in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and its relationship with the formation of religious maturity in high school students. The research focused on the teachers' subjective

understanding of the strategies, methods, and challenges of implementing a humanistic approach PAI in the school environment.

Location and Research Subjects

The research was conducted in four high schools in Indonesia, which were purposively selected based on specific criteria. (Maxwell & Reybold, 2015). The selected schools were chosen due to their implementation of relatively progressive PAI curricula, as well as their student populations that reflect a diversity of religious backgrounds and levels of religious understanding. These characteristics were considered essential for providing rich and varied contexts to explore the application of a humanistic approach in PAI. In this study, institutional criteria refer to public (state) high schools operating under the authority of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. The selection of public schools was intended to ensure consistency in curriculum standards, administrative structures, and the implementation of the national Education policy. The research participants consisted of PAI teachers who were actively teaching in each school.

Research Participants

Table 1. Participant Information

Code	Age	Gender	Last Education	Length of Teaching
G1	51	Male	Master of PAI	28 years
G2	43	Male	Bachelor of PAI	20 years
G3	29	Female	Master of PAI	7 Years
G4	51	Female	Bachelor of PAI	25 Years

Source: Data Collection, 2025

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

### The Implementation of Humanistic Approach PAI Learning Management

Based on interviews with Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, it was found that in implementing a humanistic approach to PAI learning, teachers employed a variety of strategies, including practice-based learning, group discussions, meaningful assignments, and reinforcement of material through lectures. Although lectures are still used particularly to convey a deep understanding of religious doctrine, teachers acknowledge the importance of combining this method with more participatory strategies.

Observations reveal that Religious Education (PAI) teachers integrate various instructional methods in their teaching practices. Lecturing remains a key component, as it is considered essential for accurately conveying religious teachings and minimizing the risk of students misinterpreting complex concepts. This aligns with the historical practice of the Prophet, who delivered teachings through sermons. However, teachers do not rely solely on lecturing; they also incorporate interactive methods such as discussions and, at times, debates. These approaches are employed to foster critical thinking and active engagement among students, indicating a balanced and thoughtful instructional strategy in the learning process.

Nevertheless, a critical reflection on the dominance of lecture methods remains necessary. While lectures are intended to strengthen students' understanding, this approach may limit students' autonomy and exploration in the learning process. Therefore, the consistent integration of core humanistic values such as open dialogue, personal exploration, and opportunities for student self-actualization is essential to enhance the effectiveness of PAI learning grounded in humanistic principles.

Based on the results of the interview data related to learning strategies, it can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 1. Results of Nvivo Analysis 15 Implementation of Learning
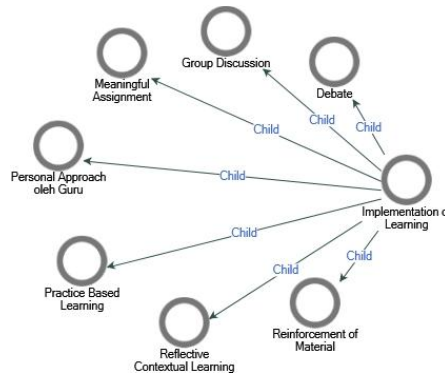
Within this humanistic framework, teachers assume roles that extend beyond being information providers; they act as facilitators, mentors, and role models in students' daily lives. Teachers emphasize the importance of empathy and contextual learning that relates to students' real-life experiences, as highlighted in G2's statement:

> *As teachers, we not only convey knowledge but also apply it in our daily behavior, such as showing tolerance between teachers of different religions, so that students can emulate this. (Interview, 2025).*

Furthermore, teachers seek to promote student autonomy and self-actualization by fostering a classroom environment that is open and responsive to students' questions and initiatives. This is echoed in the statements of G4, G2, and G3:

> *We act as facilitators in the classroom, not just delivering material, but also helping students to become active and grow. (Interview, 2025),*

The data obtained in relation to the role of the teacher in applying the humanistic approach can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 2. Results of NVIVO Analysis 15: Teacher's Role in Implementing the Humanistic Approach
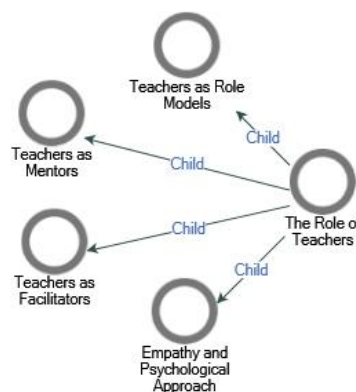
The findings from both observations and interviews indicate that the school environment functions as a structured religious ecosystem that actively supports the development of students' religious character. This is reflected in the availability of school policies and physical spaces that accommodate religious practices such as duha prayers, congregational prayers, Friday prayers, and commemorative Islamic events like Isra Mi'raj and Maulid Nabi. These structured activities help students develop a habit of practicing their faith within the school setting.

In addition, religious values are reinforced through school regulations, such as the enforcement of hijab usage for Muslim female students, particularly during Islamic Education (PAI) lessons. Teachers play an active role in upholding these policies by delaying the start of lessons until the students comply. These findings suggest that religious habituation is not only institutionalized through routines and activities but is also supported by school-level policies and teacher enforcement, indicating a cohesive effort to internalize Islamic values in the daily lives of students. In addition, the school also provides sufficient space for students with a high interest in Islam, offering extra-curricular activities through IRMA (Ikatan Remaja Masjid). The interview data related to the theme of school space as an ecosystem of diversity can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 3. Results of NVIVO Analysis 15 School Space as a Religious Ecosystem
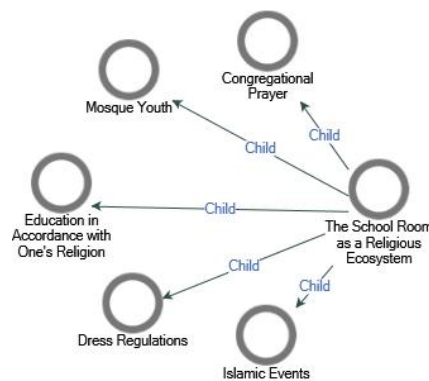

Learning Evaluation

Observations indicate that teachers employ a variety of assessment techniques, encompassing both written and non-written forms. These include memorization of Qur'anic verses, oral examinations, and worship practice activities aligned with the lesson content. Oral tests are more frequently used than multiple-choice assessments, as they allow teachers to observe students' understanding of the material directly. Additionally, practical evaluations such as Hajj simulations or marriage ceremonies are conducted to address specific topics. This approach reflects teachers' efforts to adapt assessment methods to the context of the subject matter, while ensuring the authenticity of students' comprehension, especially in an era where access to technology, such as Google and artificial intelligence, is widespread.

G3 also employs another technique for evaluating student habits by monitoring the use of the prayer worksheet. If a student fails to complete the prayer worksheet, I address the issue immediately. This response reflects a more punitive approach, which contrasts with the humanistic principles of empathy and guidance that are essential for students. Such instances highlight the need for further teacher training in implementing consistent humanistic values in classroom management.

> *Suppose the father himself conducts an attitude assessment among students in his daily life at school. In that case, it adds value, for example, students who diligently pray and have a good attitude go into added assessment" (Interview, 2025).*

The interview data related to the evaluation of learning with a humanistic approach can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 4. Results of NVIVO Analysis 15 Humanistic PAI Learning Evaluation
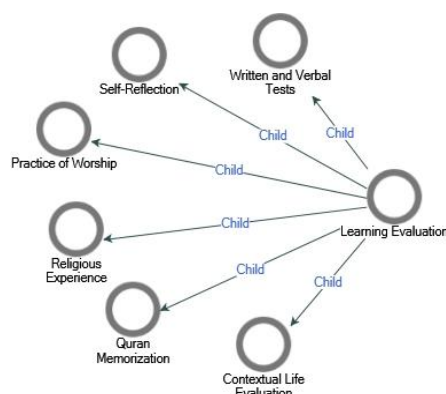

The impact of the Humanistic Approach on PAI Learning Management

Learning with a humanistic approach has a positive impact on the process of achieving religious maturity for high school students, as indicated by the results of interviews with G3. Learning through a humanistic approach has a positive impact on the process of achieving religious maturity among high school students. Observations indicate that behavioral changes are occurring among students, although not widespread, which reflect meaningful progress. Some students have begun to demonstrate critical thinking skills, improved conduct, and a gradual understanding of their religious teachings.

In certain instances, students are seen responding to their inner spiritual callings, such as voluntarily participating in congregational prayers. This suggests the emergence of intrinsic motivation fostered through the applied learning process. Additionally, students with a good understanding of their religion tend to perform their religious duties independently, without prompting, and exhibit positive behavior in their daily lives. These observations suggest that a humanistic approach can effectively foster an internalized religious character in students.

Such a statement suggests that it is not only classroom learning that has an impact on religious maturity, but also the school ecosystem that supports students' religious activities plays a role. The results of interviews with the theme of the impact of the humanistic approach on religious maturity can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 5. Results of NVIVO Analysis 15: impact of Humanistic Approach on Religious Maturity
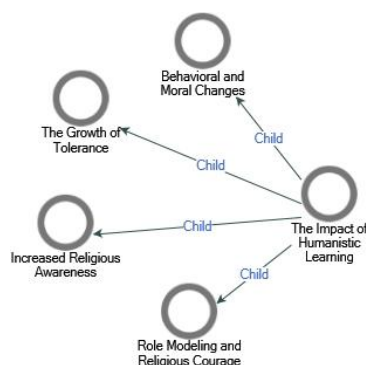
Students' religious maturity is reflected through several indicators based on the results of interviews with G4 and G3 who stated that "students often ask things that are beyond reason related to the material or related to their lives, there are just questions" (Interview, 2025), for

tolerance attitudes all interviewees mentioned that high school students already have a fairly good value of tolerance for religious differences, corroborated by the statement of interviewee G2.

> *Here, there are almost no conflicts due to different religions, and tolerance is quite good (Interview, 2025).*
> *However, some students excel academically but struggle in religious practice, and vice versa. Some children*
> *are quiet, yet diligent in terms of attitude and prayer (Interview, 2025).*

In addition, teachers' observations of students regarding daily habits and worship activities sometimes result in conflicting findings, as evident in the statements of G2 and G3. The results of interviews with the theme of religious maturity indicators can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 6. Indicator of Students' Religious Maturity
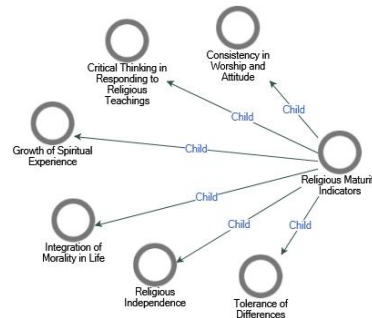

Challenges in Implementation

Observations suggest that implementing a humanistic approach in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) presents several practical challenges within the classroom and school environment. Among the main obstacles are student passivity during group work, low participation in religious practices such as prayer, and inadequate learning facilities. These issues often hinder the optimal application of student-centered and character-building methodologies. While teachers have made efforts to overcome these challenges through varied strategies such as integrating group discussions, debates, and practical assignments, the responses tend to be individual rather than systemic.

School-wide policies and support mechanisms, such as structured mentoring programs, consistent supervision, and improved infrastructure, remain limited. These findings highlight the need for stronger institutional support and collaborative frameworks to ensure the effective and sustainable implementation of humanistic Education in religious learning. As one teacher expressed :

> *There are, of course, obstacles, for example, students are less active, especially when working in groups;*
> *only the diligent ones, the lazy ones do not help" (Interview, 2025).*

Interview data on the topic of challenges in implementing the humanistic approach can be presented in the form of a project map as follows:

Figure 7. Results of NVIVO Analysis: 15 Challenges in Implementing the Humanistic Approach
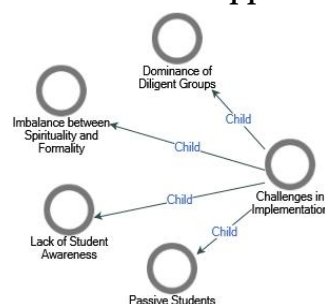
DISCUSSION

Lesson Planning

In terms of planning, PAI teachers demonstrate an awareness of the importance of designing learning that extends beyond the mere delivery of teaching materials to incorporate human and spiritual values. (Pujianti, 2024). Educators integrate humanistic principles, such as compassion, empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility, into lesson plans, aiming to shape students not only as individuals with a textual understanding of Islamic teachings but also as agents capable of contextualizing those values in pluralistic societies. (Kurniawan et al., 2025). This orientation aligns with (Gaspar & Garmaz, 2016)

The findings suggest a significant tension between the philosophical ideals of humanistic Islamic Education, which emphasize the cultivation of moral behavior, personal responsibility, and active student engagement, and the actual teaching practices observed in the classroom. Although humanistic principles are acknowledged in instructional planning, their translation into practice remains limited by a continued reliance on conventional lecture-based methods. This reliance appears to stem from a concern among teachers about students' ability to interpret religious content independently, as reflected in G2's rationale that the Prophet historically used sermons as a mode of instruction, and G4's concern that student-led interpretation may lead to misunderstanding. These perspectives indicate a pedagogical conservatism that prioritizes doctrinal accuracy over dialogical engagement, thereby limiting the full realization of a humanistic approach grounded in active learning, reflection, and mutual respect. (Suroso et al., 2023)

It was also emphasized that while the humanistic approach holds promise, its success depends on consistent teacher effort and institutional support. Moreover, (Syahid, 2025) Found that systemic pressures, such as rigid curriculum targets, often limit teachers' ability to implement dialogical and student-centered methods fully. These findings raise questions about whether the incorporation of humanistic values in planning can be fully realized without structural changes. Therefore, while PAI teachers demonstrate intent and initiative, more sustained efforts, including institutional support, pedagogical innovation, and professional development, are necessary to bridge the gap between planned ideals and the practical implementation of humanistic Islamic Education.

Learning Implementation

The research findings indicate a shift in pedagogical practices among PAI teachers toward participatory and student-centered approaches, consistent with the principles of humanistic Education. Rather than focusing on memorization, the learning process emphasizes the construction of meaning, encouraging students to take initiative in seeking out information and reflecting on their learning experiences. This approach reflects an awareness of students' developmental maturity and the need to foster independence in learning. By allowing learners the freedom to explore materials from diverse sources, teachers position themselves more as facilitators of knowledge rather than as sole authorities. Such practices align with the humanistic aim of nurturing the whole person cognitively, emotionally, and socially, thereby contributing to a more integrative and transformative educational environment.

The concept of learning in this manner already reflects humanistic Education, which aims to develop the whole person and integrate cognitive, physical, and emotional development. (Mahbub et al., 2020) Lecture and discussion learning strategies are also suitable strategies to use in Islamic religious Education materials. (Ma`arif et al., 2022). This aligns with Carl Rogers' opinion

that humanistic learning is student-centered, where the teacher acts as a facilitator and builds relationships based on empathy and trust. This opinion is also corroborated by Abraham Maslow's statement that teaching should be interdisciplinary to enrich students' learning experiences. (Feigenbaum, 2024;Kuzmin, 2015).

In the research findings, the teacher acts as a facilitator for students in their learning, which aligns with the humanistic approach in Education. Teachers are required to be knowledge facilitators. (Cecila et al., 2024), ethical and social role models, and can demonstrate humanistic values such as honesty and social responsibility (Beltran & Canizalez, 2021; Kuzmin, 2015). In addition, teachers also provide space for students to maximize their creativity and help them find meaning in learning experiences. (Kazanjian & Choi, 2016), thereby playing a crucial role in helping students develop important interpersonal skills, such as communication, collaboration, and social responsibility. Not only that, teachers must update their knowledge and skills to improve the quality of Education provided, and be ethically committed to guiding students towards comprehensive development. (Al-Zoubi et al., 2019; X. Wang, 2020).

The role of schools in building religious ecosystems provides a space for freedom in developing students' spiritual attitudes, and these findings reflect that schools can be a valuable environment for spiritual growth and mentoring relationships between adolescents and adults, which is an integral part of religious Education and student services. (Geiger & Gardner, 2012). In a humanistic educational approach, schools are not only places for cognitive learning, but also foster communities that uphold interpersonal relationships, respect, self-awareness, and social responsibility. These values align with the goals of Religious Education, which integrates spiritual intelligence to transform lives, both individually and socially, in a positive manner. (Morales et al., 2024) Furthermore, religious Education can contribute significantly to students' moral and spiritual development, promoting tolerance and understanding in a multicultural environment. (Malazonia et al., 2021).

Learning Evaluation

The research findings reveal that teachers adopt a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to learning evaluation in Islamic Religious Education. Rather than relying solely on standardized tests such as multiple-choice or essay assessments, teachers integrate a variety of assessment forms that encompass cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This includes evaluating students' attitudes, participation in religious practices, and practical skills relevant to the subject matter. The shift away from conventional written tests reflects a critical awareness of contemporary challenges, such as the ease of accessing information through digital technologies like Google and AI, which can compromise the authenticity of student responses. Consequently, teachers prioritize oral assessments and practice-based tasks to gain deeper insight into students' understanding and internalization of religious values. Additionally, assessments of daily behavior, such as students' consistency in prayer and demonstration of good character, are considered integral to the evaluation process. This holistic assessment model aligns with the principles of humanistic Education, which emphasize the development of character and the formation of the whole individual, extending beyond academic performance alone.

These various forms of evaluation are used to measure the success of teachers in delivering teaching materials in class, which already reflects the form of evaluation in humanistic learning with the principle of self and social development. (Li, 2025). The use of formative evaluation aims to provide constructive feedback, while summative evaluation is carried out to assess students' final achievements. (Daniel & David, 2021; Freitas et al., 2014). Evaluation, in the form of rewards

and recognition, also contributes to the learning process as a means of appreciation for the results of the discussion. (Sholikhah & Widjajanti, 2022). The use of various evaluation methods can increase student participation and overall learning outcomes. (Daniel & David, 2021).

The form of evaluation carried out is based on humanistic principles, which emphasize the importance of integrating personal freedom and social responsibility. (Darom, 2005). This is particularly relevant in the context of Islamic Religious Education, where learning outcomes extend beyond cognitive achievement. Additionally, evaluation should encompass ethical, political, and democratic aspects to foster students who are participatory, reflective, and aware of their role in society. (Daniel & David, 2021). Evaluation in humanistic Education should be student-centered, with an emphasis on personalized learning and the development of social and emotional skills. Teaching methods that incorporate humanistic Theory and mindfulness Education have been shown to increase class participation, interest in learning, and students' collaborative and empathetic skills. (Li, 2025).

However, evaluation with a humanistic approach has several weaknesses. This is presented as something that must be considered in the implementation of learning evaluation with a humanistic approach, namely:

a) *Subjectivity and Lack of Standardization*

Evaluations with humanistic approaches often rely on qualitative measures such as self-reflection, empathy, and personal growth, which can be highly subjective and difficult to standardize. (Mahbub et al., 2020), leading to inconsistencies in evaluation results and making it difficult to compare results across different contexts or students (Zagoto et al., 2019).

b) *Potentially Biased*

Forms of evaluation based on humanistic principles can be influenced by the personal biases of teachers, who may have different interpretations of what constitutes personal growth or self-actualization, thereby affecting the fairness and objectivity of the assessment process. (Daniel & David, 2021; Zagoto et al., 2019).

c) *Challenges in Measuring Long-Term impact*

Education with a humanistic approach aims to foster students' long-term personal development, which can be challenging to measure in the short term, typically used for educational evaluation. Since the impact of Education may only be evident in the long term, it makes it difficult to assess its effectiveness directly. (Yarabel et al., 2023).

The impact of the Humanistic Approach on PAI Learning Management

This finding suggests that the success rate in learning with the Humanistic approach has a positive impact on the formation of students' religious maturity, as the Humanistic Education paradigm emphasizes the spiritual and moral development of students, providing them with the freedom to make ethical choices in real life. (Akhmadieva et al., 2017). The findings suggest that the humanistic approach in Islamic Religious Education has begun to produce observable impacts on students' religious awareness and behavior, albeit in varying degrees. Teachers report gradual yet meaningful changes, particularly in students' ability to think critically, their behavioral attitudes, and their internalization of religious teachings.

Although not widespread, these shifts indicate an emerging sense of personal responsibility and spiritual consciousness among some students. Instances where students voluntarily engage in congregational prayers without being prompted reflect the development of intrinsic motivation and a deeper understanding of religious values. These behavioral indicators imply that, when

consistently applied, the humanistic approach can foster moral and spiritual maturity, even if the progression occurs incrementally and is more evident in a subset of students.

Such a statement indicates that effective teaching practices involve connecting religion to students' daily lives, thus encouraging a deeper and more practical understanding of their beliefs. (Wong, 2019). Likewise, reflective practices such as journaling about students' daily lives can encourage students to take responsibility for their spiritual development, resulting in a deeper connection with their beliefs. (Geiger, 2016). It is not surprising that Education with a humanistic approach can support the development of maturity in thinking and maturity in faith, as it combines humanistic values with religious teachings from a balanced perspective. (Rodriguez, 2025).

These findings reflect some of the attitudes that result from learning with a humanistic approach, as Education is often associated with humanistic and holistic Education that emphasizes critical and diverse thinking, and is not limited to religious Education. (C. Tan & Ibrahim, 2017), suggesting that a humanistic approach can support students' spiritual development without being tied to specific religious doctrines. Additionally, self-development and social skills are crucial for achieving religious maturity through a humanistic approach. Students are taught to understand themselves and their environment, which is a key aspect of self-actualization. (Mahbub et al., 2020). Nevertheless, some attitudes remain obstacles to the process of achieving religious maturity, such as the Influence of the school environment, worship experiences, and interpersonal relationships, which play a significant role in this regard. (Yuen et al., 2024).

This age period involves significant changes across a wide range of domains, including cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, along with key aspects that should be present during the middle school years:

a) *Cognitive Maturity*

During adolescence, there is significant development in higher-order cognitive skills, such as the ability to plan, make decisions, and solve complex problems. These skills become crucial as adolescents begin to face a variety of social, academic, and emotional situations that demand strategic thinking and the ability to evaluate the consequences of each action. These skills not only support independence in making decisions but also play a role in shaping adolescents' identity and life direction amidst the dynamics of a changing environment. (Greiff et al., 2015). This suggests that although cognitive abilities are beginning to develop, emotional maturity and self-control are not yet fully stabilized, indicating a need for assistance and strengthening reflective thinking skills during the educational and character development process. (Luna & Sweeney, 2004).

b) *Emotional Maturity*

Emotional maturity in adolescents is characterized by the ability to understand, manage, and respond adaptively to emotions, both to oneself and others. During this period, adolescents experience high and fluctuating emotional intensity; however, as they mature, their capacity to regulate emotions also increases. (Kim et al., 2011). These abilities include awareness of personal emotions, control of emotional expression, and empathy for the emotional states of others. Well-developed emotional maturity is closely correlated with more effective interpersonal skills and higher levels of psychological well-being, making it a crucial aspect of holistic adolescent development. (Kesek et al., 2008).

c) *Social Maturity*

Social development during adolescence encompasses many important aspects that are interrelated and play a role in shaping individual maturity. Social competence is a key

foundation that includes the ability to build effective interpersonal relationships, understand social norms, show empathy, and communicate and cooperate constructively with others. Additionally, adolescents are in the process of forming their self-identity, exploring various social and personal roles to develop a complete and coherent sense of themselves. (Ramdhanu et al., 2019).

In addition, social development is also characterized by increased responsibility and independence, where adolescents begin to manage their lives more independently and make their own decisions, while still considering the consequences for others around them. These three aspects support one another in forming individuals who are socially mature and ready to navigate the dynamics of community life. (Buntaran et al., 2024).

Challenges in Implementation

This finding provides a realistic picture of a humanistic approach, starting from the readiness of teachers who are always in need of improvement to facilitate humanistic learning. (Tigelaar et al., 2004). The findings highlight several challenges in implementing humanistic learning within Islamic Religious Education, particularly in relation to student engagement and the internalization of religious practices. One key issue is the uneven level of participation during collaborative activities, where only a portion of students, typically those who are more diligent, actively contribute, while others remain passive.

This indicates a gap in students' sense of responsibility and group accountability, which can hinder the effectiveness of participatory learning strategies. Furthermore, the low level of awareness and autonomy in performing religious obligations, such as prayer, suggests that external compliance often takes precedence over internalized conviction. Such behaviors, like attending prayer sessions merely to fulfill attendance requirements, reflect a superficial engagement with religious practice, thereby posing a challenge to the goals of humanistic Education, which emphasizes personal growth, moral consciousness, and authentic religious commitment. Indicating gaps in student engagement, which can Influence the success of humanistic learning and cause disparities in self-understanding (X. Wang, 2020).

Moreover, the emphasis on individual growth within the humanistic framework can inadvertently downplay the importance of interpersonal skill development, which is crucial in a collaborative classroom environment. (RoBnagel et al., 2021). The research findings indicate that infrastructural limitations pose a significant barrier to the effective implementation of humanistic learning in Islamic Religious Education. Teachers acknowledge that inadequate facilities can disrupt the continuity and depth of the learning experience, particularly in an educational context that emphasizes communal interaction, cooperation, and moral development. Such limitations hinder the creation of a conducive environment where students can fully engage in holistic and experiential learning processes.

In response to these constraints, there is a need to reinforce the humanistic approach with intentional strategies that promote both personal and social growth. Structured group activities, collaborative dialogue, and cooperative learning models offer potential pathways to bridge individual autonomy with communal responsibility, key tenets in Islamic Education. These strategies not only compensate for infrastructural shortcomings but also embody the values of empathy, mutual respect, and shared learning.

Additionally, the challenge extends to curriculum design, which must be aligned with the goal of nurturing the whole learner cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually. Some teachers attempt

to address this by diversifying instructional strategies, combining discussions, debates, meaningful assignments, and practice-based tasks to cultivate critical thinking and real-life application. These efforts reflect an awareness among educators of the complex demands of holistic Education and a commitment to fostering well-rounded student development, even in the face of contextual limitations.

The ideal curriculum should not only emphasize cognitive aspects but also include affective and social dimensions in a balanced manner. This is important so that students grow as individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also have emotional sensitivity and the ability to interact healthily in a social environment. (Emel, 2023). Teaching methods aligned with this principle, such as narrative pedagogy, have been proven to develop practical skills, foster empathy, and strengthen students' professional identity. However, challenges arise when existing curricula are too technical and focused on academic outcomes, leaving less room for reflective, dialogical, and transformative approaches as emphasized in humanistic learning. (M. Wang et al., 2025). The challenge demonstrates that implementing the humanistic approach in PAI learning requires continuous efforts from all elements within the school, including teachers, students, and school facilities.

Table 2. Synthesis of Research Findings, Theoretical Analysis, and Contribution

Research Findings	Theoretical Analysis	Contribution
Teachers use lectures, discussions, and assignments, but lectures still dominate.	Aligns with Carl Rogers' and Maslow's humanistic Theory, focusing on student-centered learning.	Highlights the tension between traditional lecture-based PAI and humanistic ideals.
Teachers act as facilitators and role models.	Supports the humanistic view that teachers guide self-actualization.	Emphasizes the holistic role of PAI teachers beyond knowledge transmission.
School ecosystem supports prayers & Islamic events.	Matches the humanistic concept of context-based, value-driven Education.	Shows institutional role in fostering religious maturity.
Evaluation uses diverse methods (oral, attitude, practice).	Reflects the humanistic principle of holistic assessment.	Offers a model of multi-aspect assessment for PAI.
Challenges: low student participation, facility limitations.	Consistent with the literature on humanistic barriers in rigid systems.	Reveals context-specific barriers faced by Indonesian schools in applying humanistic approaches

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2025

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that learning management with a humanistic approach holds significant potential in fostering students' religious maturity. This finding aligns with the principles of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, which emphasize student-centeredness, self-actualization, and the development of individual potential through meaningful and empathetic educational experiences. (Feigenbaum, 2024). These humanistic principles are reflected in the observed practices of lesson planning, implementation, and evaluation in Islamic Religious Education across the studied schools. However, this study also reveals several ongoing challenges, including the lack of students' active participation, uneven levels of religious awareness, and limited learning support facilities. These findings are consistent with prior studies that underline the difficulty of translating

humanistic ideals into practice within institutional constraints. To address these challenges and strengthen the impact of humanistic learning, this study recommends operational strategies, including enhancing teacher training in humanistic pedagogy through workshops on empathetic communication, dialogical learning, and spiritual development. Furthermore, institutional support is required through policies that align with humanistic values, provision of spaces for reflective and interactive religious learning, and continuous evaluation systems to ensure sustainability.

This study has limitations. It was conducted in only four public schools, and the findings may not be generalizable to all schools in Indonesia, particularly private institutions. Additionally, the data relied solely on teacher interviews, without incorporating student perspectives, which could result in a gap between teacher intentions and student experiences. Nevertheless, the study contributes to the academic discourse on learning management, particularly in the context of Islamic Religious Education, by highlighting the relevance and challenges of implementing a humanistic approach to support students' religious and personal growth.

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