Community Perspectives on Religion-Based Schools in Indonesia

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Abstract
The interest of parents to send their children to the Integrated Islamic Elementary School is very high, even though the costs for schooling at the Integrated Islamic Elementary School are quite high. Compared to public schools in general, which are usually free (no fees). The aim of this study to find out as well as answer the question why Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools are in great demand by the Indonesian Muslim community, especially parents. This research uses the method Qualitatively using a case study approach, research data were taken through in-depth interviews with five people consisting of school principals, teachers, parents in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools who were selected through Analysis Interactive Model Miles & Huberman. The results of this study show that the interest of parents in sending their children to Islamic elementary schools, this research shows that (i) theological factors are reasons based on religious considerations that parents want their children to have a strong religious foundation in addition to general education, of course. (ii) Sociological factors related to the increasing image of Islamic schools in the last decade in Indonesia. Different from previous times during the end of the new order and reform regime. (iii) Theological factors in the form of parents' desire for their children to be intellectually and spiritually intelligent. The results of this study can be used as initial information and data for future researchers in studying this problem in different contexts and issues.

INTRODUCTION
Education is an effort with full awareness held to explore and develop. Parents' choice of education is an interesting theme among the Muslim community in Indonesia today and Indonesian Muslim parents are more interested in sending their sons and daughters to schools that have advantages in a strong religious basis, for example, such as Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools, Islamic Elementary Schools, Muhammadiyah Schools, compared to public elementary schools. This fact is compared to when parents from Muslim communities in Indonesia are more proud to send their children to schools that have a religious basis (Saihu, 2020).

Nanang Fatchurochman revealed that lately there has been a shift in views towards education in line with the demands of society that are developing on a more macro scale. According to him, parents are afraid and worried about the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency (Sukhoiri, 2022). Therefore, to anticipate and equip children as early as possible
from elementary school with the habituation of religious values and eastern noble values or character education, as revealed by Azyumardi Azra who is the main pillar of the implementation of the education system in Integrated Islamic Schools so that the parents flocked to send their children to the school (Sayyi, 2017).

In about 20 years the number of these schools has reached 10,000 throughout Indonesia from kindergarten to high school level (Trianggorowati & Al-Hamdi, 2020). The development of this school is also supported by the factor of decentralization of education policies at the provincial and district levels so that each party is more flexible to establish educational institutions (Raudah et al., 2021). The Integrated Islamic School is a model educational institution that seeks to combine general knowledge and religion in an integrative curriculum package. Unlike the other three educational institutions, the Integrated Islamic School has its own segmentation. Islamic boarding schools are traditional Islamic educational institutions (Hanipudin, 2019; Nurnaini et al., 2019) that are in demand by Muslims who want their sons and daughters to study religion, for example in the form of memorizing the Koran, hadith, nahwu, shorof, fiqh, and other religious sciences.

Public schools are in demand by the general public, both Muslims and non-Muslims, who prioritize their sons and daughters to master modern sciences, both natural sciences, social sciences and other sciences. Madrasas, which since its inception wanted to bridge the gap between pesantren as traditional educational institutions and public schools as modern educational institutions, are in great demand by groups, especially the Muslim community in Indonesia, who want their children not only to master religious knowledge but also to be supported by mastery of modern sciences. It is hoped that until now it can be said that madrasah alumni will actually become alumni who only half master religious knowledge and general science (Alam, 2017).

Even though the main reason is the desire of parents to shape the character of their children, they still don’t want to be left behind with low academic quality. Parents from Muslim communities in Indonesia want balanced qualities between character building and academic achievement (Azizah, 2018). Thus, besides having the ability to master modern sciences children also have a strong foundation of religious education.

This paper answers the question why Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools are in great demand by the Muslim community in Indonesia. This paper aims to find and find answers to these questions, based on the idea that Integrated Islamic Schools are a new trend of Islamic education in Indonesia, favored by urban Muslim communities, even though the costs are quite expensive. It is certain that there is something that will attract people to choose a school with the full day system. This research is expected to be valuable information. Information about the views of the Islamic community in Indonesia towards Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools has become a reference for other schools to develop their institutional direction. The Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School was chosen as the research location because even though the school is still new and geographically close to other elementary schools, community interest in this school is always increasing from year to year. Thus, the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is seen as a school that has its own charm among parents.

Education is an effort with full awareness held to explore and develop human ability so that a transformation occurs, both in terms of knowledge, behavior, or established norms. Islamic education is different from other education because its size does not only see good or bad. Islamic education must be based on the Koran, which in Islam functions as the main source of law. In addition, Islamic education must also be based on hadith. The final achievement is, humans who have skills in educational aspects that are in harmony with these two main sources of law. So, the ultimate goal is not just changing behavior, or thinking power, but everything must be in tune with the guidance of the Al-Quran and Hadith. Educational and teaching activities can achieve success if supported by good components. Among the main components is the method. That is the way that must be taken by a teacher in educating his students so that goals are achieved that are in line with the guidance of the
Al-Quran and Sunnah (Qowim, 2020).

The history of Islamic education in Indonesia has experienced ups and downs. This is due to the policies taken by the government in regulating the regulation of the national education system. Until the end of the 70s, the education system in Indonesia still had a very strong pattern of dichotomous systems, even today to a certain degree. As the reformation period unfolded in the 1980s, there were attempts by some Muslim circles to try to get out of the existing system by initiating the concept of an integrated model of Islamic education.

In the history of Islamic education, the education system was based on Islamic values with distinctive characteristics. The philosophy refers to the values of monotheism. All education systems, starting from goals, curricula, and so on, must be based on this principle. An education system that combines all aspects of education in one complete goal, namely in the context of serving Allah SWT and becoming the caliph (management and prosperity) of this earth. This thought became the forerunner to the birth of the Integrated Islamic School (SIT) in Indonesia. Majid Irsan al-Kilani said that the basic concept of Islamic educational philosophy is based on the relationship between Kholiq (God) and humans, human relationships with the universe, human relationships with humans, human relationships with life, and human relationship with the afterlife (Dalimunthe, 2017).

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with a case study approach. Sources of data were taken from five informants consisting of school principals, teachers, parents at Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools who were selected through Analysis Interactive Model Miles & Huberman. Qualitative research is a method of systematic research that is used to study or research an object in a natural setting without any manipulation in it and without hypothetical testing, with natural methods when the expected research results are not generalizations based on quantity measures, but the meaning (in terms of quality) of the phenomena encountered (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Shadiev et al., 2021; Adlini et al., 2022; Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022).

The selected informants met four criteria, namely understanding well the problems under study, being active in the field being studied, having time to provide information to researchers and providing information in accordance with the facts that occurred in the field (Nur’aini, 2020; Febriani et al., 2022; Qomari et al., 2022). To meet the criteria as an informant, all informants were school principals, teachers as well as parents at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School. After the interviews were completed, all informants were taken, a transcript process was carried out, then the authors took themes that were in accordance with research needs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Padang’s beloved Integrated Islamic Elementary School is an Integrated Islamic School which was established in 2003 with A accreditation and is located at Jalan Belibis, No. 17, West Water Village, North Padang District, Padang City, West Sumatra. The Buah of the Heart Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School has a vision to form a generation of quality and noble Qur’ani. Apart from that, the Padang Buah Integrated Islamic Elementary School also has the goal of forming students who are creative, independent, responsible and care for the environment (Profile of the Buah of the Heart of Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School).

The Buah of the Heart Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is an Elementary School with a Full Day School system that combines the curriculum of the Office of Education and Culture with the curriculum of the Association of Integrated Islamic School Sub Networks. With the hope of being able to instill Islamic values from an early age, get used to Islamic behavior in everyday life and instill the basics to develop and shape the potential of students optimally.

The Muslim community in Indonesia is willing to pay very high fees compared to
other schools. For the kindergarten or elementary school level, the entrance fee for this school has reached 4 million to 5 million, while education contributions per month can reach 400,000 to 600,000. This figure is more expensive than the cost of entering madrasah and public schools at the same level, even public elementary schools and public elementary schools have launched many free programs and even though the costs are higher than other public schools, parents still don't mind (Sukhoiri, 2022).

This situation is inversely proportional to the opinion of society in previous times. In the past, people thought that quality education could only be carried out by non-Islamic educational institutions, so that many Muslims flocked to choose Catholic schools as educational institutions for their children. The Integrated Islamic School helped awaken the spirit of Islam in a more open and proud manner which in turn influenced the activities of da’wah in Muslim society from various socio-economic strata. This pattern is different as well as a critique of the pattern of preaching in general which is carried out in grand recitation mosques and places of other religious activities (Saihu, 2019; Rahmi et al., 2021; Rasdiany et al., 2022).

“And what distinguishes religious education between Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools and Elementary Schools in general is the formation of the character of children in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools that are comprehensive (Sumumiyyah), namely learning is more framed by Islamic values, for example, such as speech, how to dress and the way the teacher communicates still associated with Islamic values. General learning materials at Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools are more associated with religious values, for example looking for verses related to the material, looking for spiritual values in the learning and not even during study time at the Buah Hati Padang Islamic Elementary School when students have regular breaks, it is recommended to maintain adab and carry out sunnah worship dhuba dhikr al matSurat and other sunnah worship. (1-1).

Based on the results of data analysis, the authors found that the community perspective is that religion-based schools can educate Islamic children, based schools have high discipline in shaping children's character, modern schools such as Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools have their own interest in the academic field which will be described in detail below.

![Fig 1. Views and Reasons for Islamic Based School](image)

**Theological Factors**

The reasons or views of parents in choosing education for their first child are based on religious considerations. The theological reasons parents send their children to the Integrated Islamic Elementary School of Buah Hati Padang is the most dominant factor compared to other factors. The indicator for this theological reason is the desire of parents to make their children pious, good at reading the Qur'an, have memorization and can carry out worship properly.

This was revealed from the various occasions the researchers conducted interviews
with informants to teachers or parents of students at the school where the research was conducted, one of the parents said:

“Since the beginning, the Integrated Islamic Elementary School was the first choice for sending my children to school because of religious considerations. So the first thing I considered was the religion, if the religion was good, I would choose it, if it wasn’t good, I didn't want it even though the other achievements were good and thank God I chose the Padang Buah because of the consideration of its affordable distance” (I-2).

From this interview it was revealed that the parents sent their children to the Buah Hati Padang Islamic Integrated Elementary School because of their religious considerations. Parents will choose a school that has a good religious foundation and the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is one of the Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools which is considered to have good religious education. Informants understand that religion is an important component to make their children pious, without good religious education it is impossible for their children to become pious children.

Similar reasons were also expressed by parents of students who chose the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School because of their own experience of how their child's attitude at home really shows Islamic values. he said:

"I am very impressed to see that my child is able to advise me if I forget to pray and my child advises that prayer should not be missed because it is a very big sin if you miss it. I am very proud of my child, whereas when compared to public schools, it is not certain that elementary school age people are not able to remember that leaving prayer is a matter or a big sin. Therefore, I am very interested in making the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School a school for my next children. Besides that, I don't have to bother giving additional religious lessons at home” (I-3).

Not much different from the reasons of the two parents, the reasons put forward by the next parents, he said:

"It is in accordance with my expectations. My child knows religion even better, he understands how to pray well and is even now good at writing and reading the Koran and that is the main reason I chose the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School so that they are well equipped with religious knowledge” (I-4).

The data revealed from several sources shows that the reason for religious education is an important factor for parents in determining the choice of educational institutions for their children. The encouragement that comes from children (family members) to study Islam is sometimes more touching than encouragement from outside. So that in the family there is a process of reminding each other between children and parents to live an Islamic life. This also has different impacts from the existence of the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School, the presence of the Integrated Islamic Elementary School apparently not only has an impact on increasing the religious myths of students in class but also has a direct impact on the level of religious development of parents at home. Therefore, parents who initially chose the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School as a place of education for their children were also positively affected by this choice.

The reason for parents choosing educational institutions for their sons and daughters at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is because the religious factor is indeed considered a quite rational choice, considering that the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School pays attention to religious education and makes it an important factor in school activities.

Sociological Factors

Sociological factors are also an important consideration as to why the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School has received wide acclaim from the public for sociological reasons. Based on how far educational institutions can fulfill the sociological role of positional allocation roles in the form of important positions and roles in social life; enabling social mobility; the role of strengthening social status and the role of increasing one's prestige in society.

As explained by Azra, the Integrated Islamic Elementary School in general in
Indonesia has experienced an improved image compared to previous times (Afrina et al., 2022). The Integrated Islamic Elementary School is the answer to doubts and the assumption that has been firmly rooted in society that Islamic education cannot come to the fore in the process of education. In the past, people thought that quality education could only be carried out by non-Islamic educational institutions so that many Muslims flocked to choose Catholic schools as the educational anchors for their children.

However, this phenomenon began to shift along with the development of Islamic schools including the development of the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School. The continued improvement in the image of the Integrated Islamic Elementary School in the eyes of the public is one of the sociological factors why parents, who are generally from the Muslim community in Indonesia, are willing to let their sons and daughters study at the Buah of the Heart Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Padang.

The sociological factor that suits the needs of the Muslim community in Indonesia in general at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is the implementation of full day school which requires students to take part in the learning process in a longer time starting from 07.00 to 16.00 WIB. This longer learning time allows the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School to teach all the material contained in the curriculum including the religious curriculum, namely Tafsir and Tahfidz Al-Qur’an. Moreover, students also have the opportunity to practice what they have learned, especially those related to the religious curriculum.

“I am sending my child to the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School because of the full day program. When we are busy working, we need to choose an institution that we can trust to look after children. The purpose of looking after this is to continue to instill kindness while we work” (I-3).

The full day school system is an educational program that provides a longer academic time than the general education program. This academic time is used to train children’s social skills with the freedom to determine time choices. The full day program usually takes place between 07.00 and 16.00 WIB, while the half day program takes place between 07.00 and 12.00 WIB. 00 WIB and for class IV-VI is 07:00 to 16:00 WIB. (Documentation of activity schedules at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School).

The difference between the full day program and the half day lies in the research fact that full day is evident in its application at the local and national levels. This report examines the difference between full day and half day. The main difference between full day and half day lies in the curriculum (Yusanto, 2020).

In connection with the full day school system implemented by the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School, there are considerations from some parents who encourage them to choose this school as a place of education for their children. The awareness of the importance of Islamic education is the main factor. In addition to other technical factors such as wanting to leave their children because they are busy working until the afternoon, children do not spend their time playing or watching television or playing with gadgets so they neglect studying. In general it can be said that parents or guardians of students who send their children to this institution are because they feel technically unable to control their children at home for several reasons. Actually, with the full day school system, the teacher's task becomes more difficult and extra in educating and supervising the development of their students because some of the students' parents trust them to entrust their children to the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School. The full day school system is a unit that is reeged between the various components in the school and especially the student's parents as controllers and creators of the learning atmosphere at home.

The full day school system is profitable for the middle class who are busy working by sending their children to school. With this system they don't need a lot of money to care for their children. They don’t even have to worry about the activities their children are doing after school because the kids are full at school until the afternoon. Where parents have returned from work, this is considered an alternative solution when parents are plagued by...
concerns about the existence of moral damage among the younger generation, whether caused by the use of illegal drugs, criminal acts or promiscuity.

"I am teaching my children at the second Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Basic School because it is full day. I work every day from morning to evening and my husband also has his own busy schedule until the evening, so the child needs to be with people who we believe are capable and whose religion can also develop well. In the end, our choice fell on Buah Hati Integrated Islamic Basic School, Padang" (I-2).

They only need to pay additional money more than other public schools. This amount is a little more expensive when compared to other schools. As a consequence of the full day school system, schools need additional facilities, including having to provide lunch and child motorbike fees for one full day, especially for civil servants, they prefer to send their children to school with a full day school system.

This is also in line with working hours in Indonesia which means they don’t have time to care for their children when they send them to public schools that do not implement a full day school system. The full day school system is considered a practical solution for them. These are some of the advantages that motivate parents from the Muslim community to send their children to the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School, which ultimately contributes to the success of several Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools to improve their status as an established school, called elitist.

The amount that must be spent by parents who send their children to the Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Buah Hati Padang is higher than the number of parents who have to send their children to public elementary schools or Madrasahs, even those two types of educational institutions are free school programs from the government. This shows that parents who send their children to the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School are from the middle class.

**Academic Factors**

Academic factors are based on the achievements and performance of educational institutions which show that these educational institutions are managed professionally. The performance and professionalism of the management of educational institutions will have a significant influence on the level of academic achievement, and educational institutions that have high achievements, for educated people, will become educational institutions that many people choose.

Academic reasons are also an important factor for the parents of the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School students in sending their children to the school. The academic reasons at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School are in the form of school achievements with quality teachers who are qualified for a good learning process and adequate infrastructure in the learning process. This the researchers found on several research opportunities through interviews with one of the students’ parents said:

“I had a very good first impression of the teachers here. At that time my child didn’t want to go to school. Because my child is classified as shy, it is difficult to adapt to new friends. However, when I came here, my children and I were greeted by very friendly and friendly teachers and eventually my children wanted to go to school here” (I-4).

One of the experiences of parents, as revealed in the interview above, shows that the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School has all qualified teachers. The teacher’s task is not only to convey subject matter in class, but also as a play partner, companion, motivator, and even as a substitute for parents at home. That is what the teachers of the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School understand, not only having a role when students are already sitting pretty in class and ready to take part in the learning process, but being warm, friendly, enthusiastic and friendly in welcoming students to school.

This move turned out to be very effective in making students feel happy at school, so that one of the prospective students, who initially did not go around to various schools and did not feel fit, finally wanted to attend the Integrated Islamic Elementary School.
"In my opinion, the strength of the teachers here is their talent in accompanying their students to act like parents at home. Not just conveying subjects in class, but really accompanying full children. Indeed, the world’s small children still love to play. Sometimes students also can’t tell which ones are at home and which ones are at school and I see the teachers here understand that very well" (I-1).

It seems that teacher talent is very important for parents at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School. Hindi realized that children of primary school age did need more intensive attention than school teachers at school. Teachers are required not only as formal teachers in their interactions in class, but also as parents, playmates, study companions, and even more importantly as moral guides. Without strong patience, it is impossible for a teacher to carry out these roles properly. The teachers at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School really live up to their role.

As a moral guide (murabbi) the teacher’s role is not just conveying lessons in class, the teacher has a more important role in the form of the task of instilling strong Islamic values in students. Therefore, the teacher does not only regard students as students but as partners to jointly develop knowledge and convey da’wah messages. In this way the intellectual capacity and moral integrity of students can develop properly.

This was also pointed out by one of the teachers at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School that the Integrated Islamic Elementary School does not lie in the description of the curriculum in general but rather in the ability of a teacher to instill religious moral values in students through concrete examples of how a teacher speaks good language and behaves according to good principles as determined by Islamic values.

“To guarantee the Islamic commitment of the teachers at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School, they leave one day for meetings and in these meetings the teachers evaluate themselves. Programs for installing teachers' Islamic values and commitment are carried out continuously in an integrated manner in daily activities at school. They are required to understand that school is a place to strengthen the monotheism of Muslims in order to make the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wasallam a model in everyday life (I-1).

Almost the same reasons were also conveyed by one of the students' parents through interviews. He said:

“This school has good teachers who understand the world of children. This is very important for children. Often my child is more impressed with how the teacher treats children than the material presented in class. So when you go home what your child tells you is not about the lessons but about experiences with the teacher outside the classroom. And my child sometimes feels sad when he goes to school but the teacher doesn’t come to school because he is sick. Why is that because my child is very comfortable with the attitude of the teachers at the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School” (I-3).

In addition to the factor of academic quality teachers, the Buah of the Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Padang, was also evident in the graduates produced, this was revealed from the following interviews:

“Alhamdulillah, my first child also graduated from here and when he continued to a higher level he was also still accomplished and influential. And the knowledge gained from the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School was still strong too” (I-2).

Character education that is instilled in disciplined schools and the quality of learning turns out to have an impact on graduates who are also able to compete when they have continued to the next level.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research and data analysis, the authors conclude that there are three reasons why the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School is in great demand by the surrounding Muslim community. Because the views and reasons of parents in sending their sons and daughters to the Buah Hati Padang Integrated Islamic Elementary School include three factors, namely: theological factors, sociological factors and academic factors.
The theological factor is the reason that is based on religious considerations, parents want their children to have a strong basic religious education in addition to general education, of course. Sociological factors are related to the increasing image of Islamic schools in the last decade in Indonesia. Different from previous times during the end of the new order and reform regime. The theological factor in the form of parents’ desire for their children to be intellectually and spiritually intelligent. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, the future development of elementary schools needs to consider quality Islamic religious education in order to attract parents’ choices in sending their children to school among the Muslim community in Indonesia.

REFERENCES


