

THE APPLICATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS VALUES THROUGH THE MONTESSORI METHOD IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Dwi Hastuti^{1*} and Raden Muhammad Ali²

^{1,2}Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: dwi.hastuti@pgpauud.uad.ac.id

Abstract. The Montessori method is an effective learning approach in supporting holistic early childhood development. The integration of Islamic religious values in this method is a crucial strategy for instilling spiritual and moral character from an early age. This study aims to systematically examine studies that discuss the application of Islamic religious values through the Montessori method in PAUD institutions in Indonesia. The study employs a systematic review approach, adhering to the PRISMA method. Data sources were obtained from Google Scholar within the 2017–2021 publication range, with inclusion criteria that covered relevant and fully accessible research journal articles. Out of the 135 articles searched, six articles were selected for further analysis. The results of the study demonstrate that the Montessori method can be effectively integrated with Islamic values in various early childhood learning activities, particularly through activities that emphasize independence, order, and developing good habits. These studies employ a case study and literature review approach, highlighting opportunities and challenges in their implementation. In conclusion, although there are still limitations in the number of studies and teacher training, the Islamic Montessori method has great potential in shaping children's spiritual and moral character. Curriculum development and further research are necessary to support the wider application of this method and standardize it.

Keywords: Islamic religious values; Montessori method; early childhood education; systematic review.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (PAUD) is the primary means of supporting children's growth and development, laying the necessary foundations for further development in the next level of education, encompassing all aspects, including physical, psychomotor, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual (Sarkawi, 2008). Permendikbud No. 37 of 2014 said that there are six aspects of child development that must be stimulated in Early Childhood Education. The six aspects encompass the development of religious and moral values, cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical, motor, and artistic skills (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). One of the aspects of development developed in PAUD is the development of religious and moral values.

Religious and moral values are crucial to instill from an early age, enabling children to develop strong beliefs, resist negative influences, and discern between good and bad things (Fauziddin, 2016). Moral and religious development in early childhood is a psychological change experienced by children related to their ability to understand and perform good behavior, as well as understand and avoid bad behavior in accordance with the religious teachings they adhere to (Sarkawi, 2008).

Recently, many print and electronic mass media have presented various phenomena of negative behavior carried out by some children, such as poor manners, imitating inappropriate scenes, or

imitating violent scenes. This condition is concerning because a child should be engaged in educational play activities and be in an environment that provides support for their growth and development (Setiawati, 2006).

The Montessori method is one of the alternative educational opportunities to support early childhood development (Lillard, 2021). The Montessori method has a distinct peculiarity compared to other early childhood education methods, namely, making children the primary subject of learning. At the beginning of the twentieth century, this method gained significant recognition in children's education and spread widely to many countries (Kiran, Macun, Argin, & Ulutaş, 2021). The Montessori method, which has been widely applied around the world for over a hundred years, has also been implemented in several early childhood education institutions (PAUD) in Indonesia, both private and public.

Montessori is an educational method developed by Maria Montessori, an Italian physician. This method is a child-centered approach (children-centered) and is based on scientific observations of children (scientific observation). From this observation, it is evident that there are five key aspects of Montessori, including practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics, and culture (Britton, 2017; Paramita, 2017; Zahira, 2019). According to Montessori, a child is the primary holder of control over the actions and exercises they perform (Montessori, 2008). Teachers play a more significant role as observers of work and child development, as well as facilitators and administrators (Gettman, 2016).

In its development, an early childhood education institution emerged that utilizes the Montessori method, integrating the five aspects of Montessori with the spiritual aspects of Islam in each of its activities. This is based on an awareness that the most important obligation of parents and teachers is to instill religious and moral values from an early age (Zahira, 2019). The Prophet Muhammad PBUH affirmed, "If a child can distinguish between left and right at the age of 7, teach him how to pray, and when he is ten years old and does not want to pray, punish him" (Mustaghfirin & Kurniawan, 2020). In Islam, prayer is the pillar of religion, so it must be instilled from a young age. The Prophet PBUH also emphasized that religious education for parents should not happen without being well-informed. In other words, religious education must be provided correctly.

Various research studies on the application of religious values in combination with the Montessori method have begun to emerge in Indonesia (Permataputri & Syamsudin, 2021). There needs to be a systematic review study that conducts reviews of these research articles to measure the extent of their implementation and effectiveness.

METHODS

This study uses a systematic review following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) method. This method is implemented systematically through stages designed to identify, select, and synthesize articles on the application of Islamic religious values in the Montessori method in early childhood education in Indonesia. The systematic review process includes several steps: (1) background and purpose; (2) research question; (3) literature search; (4) selection criteria; (5) screening process; (6) quality checklist and procedures; and (7) data synthesis strategy. The inclusion criteria for the articles are research journal articles focused on aspects of Islamic religious values in the Montessori method in early childhood education in Indonesia. Articles excluded are those that are not full-text or are theses. Some criteria used for article selection are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Selection Criteria

Topic	The Value of Islam in the Montessori Method
Language	Articles published in Indonesian and English
Type of article	Research journals (excluding Thesis/Thesis)
Area scope	Limited to studies conducted in Indonesia
Publication Time	Range of years 2017-2021

The search for articles is limited to the Google Scholar database and the time period of publication from 2017 to 2021. The keywords used in the article search were Montessori, religious values, early childhood education, and early childhood. Articles that meet the inclusion criteria are systematically collected and checked. The search process obtained six articles that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The results of all the stages are shown in the PRISMA flowchart in Figure 1.

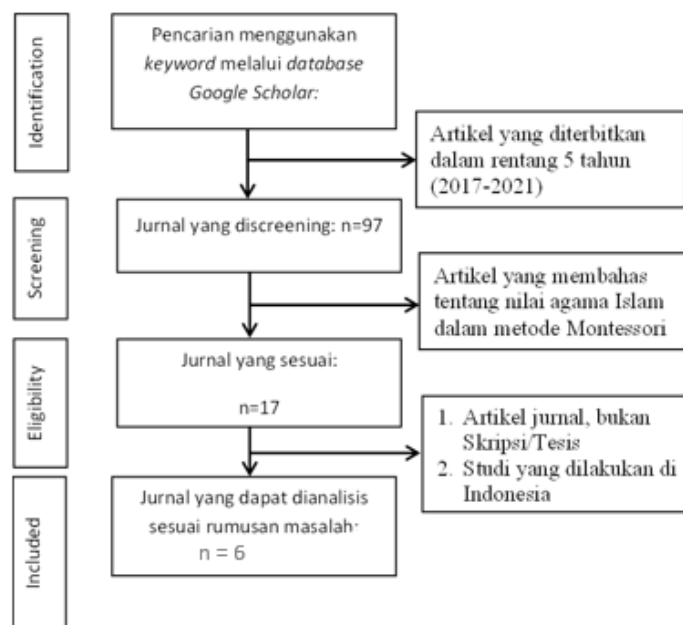


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

All qualified data is then classified. After the screening process is carried out, the results of this data extraction can be used to determine the number of individuals who are still eligible for further analysis to obtain important findings. In this study, data extraction was conducted by reviewing the entire set of six corresponding articles, extracting key findings from them, and then proceeding to the next stage. Data synthesis is carried out by meta-analysis or meta-synthesis techniques. The important data that has been extracted is then grouped so that conclusions can be drawn to answer the goal.

RESULTS

Based on the results of a search on the Google Scholar journal database using specific keywords, 135 articles were identified. Then, from this number, articles that can be accessed in full text in the last 5 years, from 2017 to 2021, were selected, and data from 97 articles were obtained. After *screening*, 17 articles with appropriate titles were obtained, and then selected again based on eligibility in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Ultimately, six articles were selected for further *review*. The strategies employed in searching for literature are presented in Table 1.

Table 2. Literature Search Strategy

Search engines	Google Scholar
Keywords	Montessori, nilai agama, <i>religious value</i> , PAUD, <i>early childhood</i>
Search results	135
Full text, 2017-2021	97
Appropriate title	17
Eligible according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria	6
<i>Results</i>	6

After being reviewed, the quality of the study from 6 articles can be categorized as good, and then data extraction is carried out. At this stage, data analysis was carried out based on the author's name, year of publication, title, journal name, purpose, method, and research results. The results of the data extraction are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Data Extraction Results

Writer/ Year	Heading	Journal	Purpose	Method	Result
Dhiah Intan Permataputri, Amir Syamsudin, 2021	Early Childhood Learning of Religious and Moral Values through the Montessori Method during the COVID-19 Pandemic	Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education	Describe the implementation of NAM learning through the Montessori method during the COVID-19 pandemic	Descriptive qualitative	NAM learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was carried out with social media (Zoom and WhatsApp). NAM learning is collaborated with the child-centered Montessori method and teaches about life skills, so that

Writer/ Year	Heading	Journal	Purpose	Method	Result
					children can easily understand and have life skills
Nency Ucik Kusnawati, Anwar Sa'dullah, Eko Setiawan, 2021	Application of Islamic Montessori Activity in Early Childhood Learning Activities at RA Tunas Mulia Dua, Pandanlandung Village, Wagir District, Malang Regency	Dewantara: Scientific Journal of Early Childhood Islamic Education	Identify the application of Islamic Montessori in RA Tunas Dua, its impact, and supporting and inhibiting factors.	Qualitative approach with case studies	The application of Islamic Montessori <i>Activities at RA Tunas Mulia Dua in the lesson plan is implemented in seven areas of Montessori, namely Islamic Studies, Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, Culture, and Art.</i> The props used are created by teachers and guardians. Every learning activity is always linked to an understanding of Islam.
Febrina Indyati, Dadan Suryana, Asdi Wirman, 2020	The Influence of Montessori Method Learning on Early Childhood Islamic Religious Education	Tambusai Education Journal	Examining several references to journal articles that discuss Montessori learning, which is combined with the process of education and learning by Islamic religious methods	<i>literature review</i>	This learning method, which uses the Montessori method, will have a very good impact on early childhood if combined with teaching methods that are in accordance with Islamic religious teachings

Writer/ Year	Heading	Journal	Purpose	Method	Result
Septi Gumiandari, Ilman Nafi'a, Dindin Jamaluddin, 2019	<i>Criticizing Montessori's Method of Early Childhood Education Using an Islamic Psychology Perspective</i>	Journal of Islamic Education	Critically examining the Montessori concept of early childhood education through the perspective of Islamic Psychology	<i>qualitative methodology with a literature approach</i>	The results of the study show that (1) the Montessori method pays more attention to the cognitive aspects of child development alone while the child's potential does not only consist of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor aspects, but also spiritual; (2) reinforcement (giving gifts and punishments) is not necessary in the Montessori method, while in Islamic Psychology, rewards can improve children's learning and punishment is needed so that children are disciplined in carrying out the rules; (3) The learning environment must be structured, sequential, realistic and natural. This concept is only

Writer/ Year	Heading	Journal	Purpose	Method	Result
					suitable for upper-middle-class educational institutions, while lower-middle-class educational institutions cannot enjoy it.
Jamiludin Usman, 2018	Basic Principles of Children's Education (Comparative Study of Abdullah Nasih Ulwan's Thinking with Maria Montessori)	Tadris Journal	Comparing Abdullah Nasih Ulwan's Thoughts with Maria Montessori on Children's Education	qualitative approach, with the type of literature research	There are similarities between Ulwan's thinking and Montessori which can be seen in terms of philosophical views, educational goals, and the application of educational methods. The difference in views between Ulwan and Montessori lies in their approach to punishment.
By Julita and Rudi Susilana, 2018	Implementation of the Curriculum of Montessori Breathing Islam in Early Childhood Education of Rice Playhouses in the City of Bandung	Journal of Educational Research	To get an overview of curriculum implementation, including the reasons or basis for thinking about curriculum implementation, the planning process, learning strategies, the environment prepared,	Case studies with a qualitative approach	The implementation of the Montessori Curriculum with Islamic elements in PAUD Rumah Playhouse Padi contains interrelated elements, namely the foundation of the curriculum, observation, planning, implementation, evaluation, and

Writer/ Year	Heading	Journal	Purpose	Method	Result
			assessments, and teachers' responses to supporting and inhibiting factors.		the prepared environment.

Based on the analysis, data was obtained that the purpose of the article research was to describe the implementation of learning Islamic religious values through the Montessori method (Permataputri & Syamsudin, 2021); (Kusnawati, 2021); (Indyati, Suryana, & Wirman, 2020), describe the implementation of the Islamic Montessori curriculum (Julita & Susilana, 2018), critiquing the concept of Montessori through the perspective of Islamic Psychology (Gumiandari, Nafi'a, & Jamaluddin, 2019), and compare the thoughts of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan and Maria Montessori on children's education (Usman, 2018).

Table 4. Research Implementation Objectives

Writer	Purpose
Permataputri & Syamsudin, 2021 Kusnawati, 2021 Indyati, Suryana, & Wirman, 2020	Describe the implementation of learning Islamic religious values through the Montessori method
Julita & Susilana, 2018	Describe the implementation of the Islamic Montessori curriculum
Gumiandari, Nafi'a, & Jamaluddin, 2019	Criticizing the Montessori concept from the perspective of Islamic Psychology
Usman, 2018	Comparing the thoughts of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan and Maria Montessori on children's education

Table 5 shows the distribution of studies included in the systematic review by year of publication.

Table 5. Distribution of Articles by Year of Publication

Year	Writer
2018	Jamiludin Usman, 2018 By Julita and Rudi Susilana, 2018
2019	Septi Gumiandari, Ilman Nafi'a, Dindin Jamaluddin, 2019
2020	Febrina Indyati, Dadan Suryana, Asdi Wirman, 2020
2021	Nency Ucik Kusnawati, Anwar Sa'dullah, Eko Setiawan, 2021 Dhiah Intan Permataputri, Amir Syamsudin, 2021

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that 2 articles were published in 2021, 1 article was published in 2020, 1 article was published in 2019, and 2 articles were published in 2018. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the study by year.

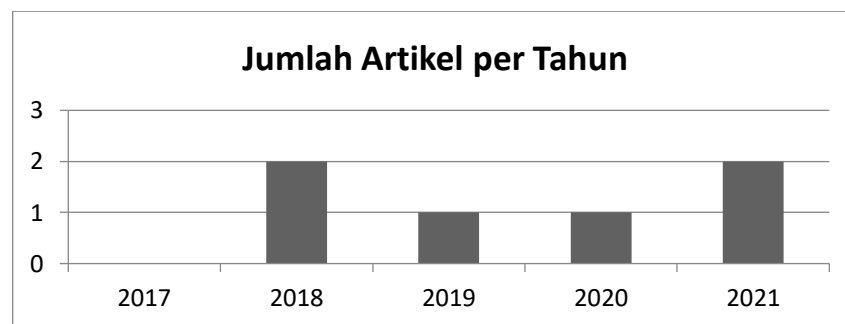


Figure 2. Distribution of Articles by Year of Publication

The results of the analysis of six articles showed that three articles employed a descriptive qualitative design with a case study approach, and three articles used a qualitative approach with a literature review type. Table 6 shows the distribution of articles by research design.

Table 6. Distribution of Articles by Research Design

Research Methods	Article
Descriptive qualitative research with a case study approach	Dhiah Intan Permataputri, Amir Syamsudin, 2021
	Nency Ucik Kusnawati, Anwar Sa'dullah, Eko Setiawan, 2021
	By Julita and Rudi Susilana, 2018
	Febrina Indyati, Dadan Suryana, Asdi Wirman, 2020
Descriptive qualitative research with a literature review approach	Septi Gumindari, Ilman Nafi'a, Dindin Jamaluddin, 2019
	Jamiludin Usman, 2018

DISCUSSION

This study aims to systematically review articles that discuss the application of Islamic religious values through the Montessori method in early childhood education institutions in Indonesia. The search results indicate that only six articles met the inclusion and exclusion criteria within the 2017–2021 time frame. This suggests that studies specifically examining the integration of Islamic religious values into the Montessori method are still relatively scarce in terms of quantity, as Marshall (2017) also emphasized that research on the effectiveness of the Montessori method globally remains limited.

Of the six articles analyzed, two main approaches are used by researchers: the descriptive qualitative approach, which includes case studies (3 articles), and the literature review approach, also known as a literature study (3 articles). The case study approach generally focuses on the actual implementation of the Islamic Montessori method in classroom learning activities, while the literature approach reflects the conceptual study and comparison between Montessori and Islamic education perspectives.

In general, the findings of the reviewed articles show that the Montessori method can be flexibly integrated with Islamic religious values in various aspects of learning. For example, Permataputri and Syamsudin (2021) demonstrate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, learning religious and moral values can still be achieved by utilizing online platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp, employing a child-centered Montessori approach. This demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of the Montessori method in response to changing learning conditions.

Kusnawati et al. (2021) describe the comprehensive application of *Islamic Montessori Activities in seven Montessori learning areas, including* practical life, sensory, mathematics, culture, and Islamic studies. The use of teaching aids created by teachers and guardians demonstrates the community's involvement in the success of learning that incorporates religious values.

However, a critical perspective emerged in the research of Gumiandari et al. (2019), which examined the Montessori method through the lens of Islamic Psychology. They highlight that Montessori tends to emphasize the cognitive aspects of the child, while Islamic Psychology encourages the importance of a balance of spiritual, affective, and psychomotor development. In the Islamic view, rewards and punishments play a role in shaping children's discipline, whereas Montessori avoids such a system of reinforcement. This inconsistency reveals a point of friction between pure Montessori principles and a more conventional approach to Islamic education.

Meanwhile, a comparative study conducted by Usman (2018) between the thoughts of Abdullah Nashih Ulwan and Maria Montessori revealed the existence of a wedge of philosophical and methodological values, such as attention to the stage of child development, the importance of example, and the use of approaches that are in accordance with the child's nature. A significant difference lies in the approach to discipline, where Ulwan accommodates punishment within Islamic educational corridors, while Montessori emphasizes freedom of responsibility without external punishment.

Another study by Julita and Susilana (2018) demonstrates the implementation of the Montessori curriculum with Islamic nuances at the Rice Playhouse in Bandung, which includes the planning process, supervision, and an environment prepared in accordance with Islamic values. This study shows that Montessori can be adapted to build a conducive and structured Islamic learning environment.

Even so, there are still obstacles in terms of the affordability of the Montessori method for all groups. Gumiandari et al. (2019) stated that this method is more suitable for application in educational institutions with adequate resources. However, research by Mavric (2020) and Wijaya (2021) confirms that the Montessori approach can still be adapted by utilizing local resources, such as the use of second-hand goods or natural materials as learning media, so that it can reach more educational institutions, including those in areas with limited resources.

From the overall discussion, it is evident that the integration of the Montessori method with Islamic religious values has significant potential for application in early childhood education. This method allows for a holistic approach to learning, child-centered, but still aligned with spiritual and moral values. However, this implementation still faces challenges, including a limited literature base, inadequate teacher training, and the absence of integrated curriculum standards between the Montessori approach and Islamic education.

Further research is needed that is not only descriptive but also evaluates the impact of the Islamic Montessori method quantitatively and longitudinally on the development of children's character, particularly in spiritual, social, and emotional aspects. In addition, training for educators

and the development of Islamic Montessori-based curriculum modules need to be designed so that this approach can be widely and sustainably implemented in various PAUD units in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This systematic study demonstrates that integrating the Montessori method with Islamic religious values has significant potential in supporting the spiritual and moral development of young children in early childhood education institutions. Of the six articles analyzed, most research indicates that the Montessori method can be used flexibly and effectively to instill Islamic values through a child-centered learning approach.

The application of Islamic Montessori is able to accommodate seven areas of development by incorporating religious values in a contextual manner. Although there are differences in principle between the Montessori approach and Islamic education, especially in terms of punishment and reward, they have philosophical similarities in emphasizing the importance of education that is in accordance with the development and nature of children.

The primary challenges in applying this method are the limitations of the scientific literature, the lack of specialized teacher training, and the absence of a standard curriculum that systematically integrates Islamic values into the Montessori approach. Therefore, more in-depth and measurable follow-up research is needed to evaluate the impact of implementing Islamic Montessori on children's character development, as well as the development of appropriate practice guidelines and teacher training.

REFERENCES

- Britton, L. (2017). *Montessori Play and Learn*. Yogyakarta: PT Bentang Pustaka.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (2014). *Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture*. Sec. 37.
- Fauziddin, M. (2016). Improving Cooperation Ability through Group Work Activities in Group A Children of Kartika Salo Kindergarten, Kampar Regency. *Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 2(1), 29–45. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v2i1.47>
- Gettman, D. (2016). *Basic Montessori Teaching Methods, Learning Activities for Children Under Five* (1st ed.). Yogyakarta: Student Library.
- Gumiandari, S., Nafi'a, I., & Jamaluddin, D. (2019). Criticizing Montessori's Method of Early Childhood Education using Islamic Psychology Perspective. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5(2), 133–148. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v5i2.5835>
- Indyati, F., Suryana, D., & Wirman, A. (2020). The Influence of Montessori Method Learning on Early Childhood Islamic Religious Education. *Tambusai Education Journal*, 4(3). Retrieved from file:///D:/S3 Dual/DISSERTATION/DISSERTATION REFERENCES/Montessori Articles/Implementation of Islamic Montessori/Met Montessori thd PAI AUD.pdf
- Irsad, M. (2017). Maria Montessori's Method in the Perspective of Educational Philosophy. *Journal of Educational Communication*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32585/jkp.v1i1.16>
- Julita, D., & Susilana, R. (2018). Implementation of the Montessori Curriculum Breathing Islam in Early Childhood Education at Rice Playhouses in the City of Bandung. *Journal of Education Research*, 11(2). Retrieved from file:///D:/S3

Dwi/DISSERTATION/DISSERTATION

REFERENCES/Montessori

Articles/Implementation of Islamic Montessori/Islamic Montessori-Bandung.pdf

- Kiran, I., et. al. (2021). Montessori Method in Early Childhood Education: A Systematic Review. *Cukurova University Faculty of Education Journal*, 50(2), 1154–1183. <https://doi.org/10.14812/cuefd.873573>
- Kusnawati, N. U. (2021). The Application of Islamic Montessori Activity in Early Childhood Learning Activities at RA Tunas Mulia Dua, Pandanladung Village, Wagir District, Malang Regency. *Dewantara Journal*, 3(1), 1–12.
- Lillard, A. S. (2021). Montessori as an alternative early childhood education. *Early Child Development and Care*, 191(7–8), 1196–1206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1832998>
- Marshall, C. (2017). Montessori education: a review of the evidence base. *Npj Science of Learning*, 2(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41539-017-0012-7>
- Mavric, M. (2020). The Montessori Approach as a Model of Personalized Instruction. *Journal of Montessori Research*, 6(2), 13–25. <https://doi.org/10.17161/jomr.v6i2.13882>
- Montessori, M. (2008). *The Absorbent Mind* (1st ed.). Student Library.
- Mustaghfirin, A., & Kurniawan, A. (2020). The Concept of Parent-Child Education Relations in Islamic Perspectives. *DIRASAT: Journal of Islamic Studies and Civilization*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1001/ds.v15i01.121>
- Paramita, V. D. (2017). *Falling in Love with Montessori, the Art of Early Childhood Parenting*. Yogyakarta: PT Bentang Pustaka.
- Permataputri, D. I., & Syamsudin, A. (2021). Early Childhood Learning of Religious and Moral Values through the Montessori Method during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Obsession: Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 6(2), 693–703. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i2.1042>
- Sarkawi. (2008). *Formation of Children's Personality*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Setiawati, F. A. (2006). Moral education and religious values in early childhood: Not just routine. *Paradigm*, 1(02).
- Usman, J. (2018). Basic Principles of Children's Education: A Comparative Study of the Thinking of Abdullah Nasih Ulwan with Maria Montessori. *Tadris*, 13(1), 149–166. <https://doi.org/10.19105/tjpi.v13i1.1716>
- Wijaya, B. (2021). *Islamic Montessori, Children's Education at Home Based on Islamic Activities*. Yogyakarta: Puskata Al-Uswah Publishers.
- Zahira, Z. (2019). *Islamic Montessori, Inspired Activity*. Yogyakarta: Bentang Pustaka.