



## Developing Qur'an-Based Self-Assessment Instruments for Measuring and Internalizing Religious Character Values

Zainuddin<sup>1,2</sup>, Syihabuddin<sup>1\*</sup>, Aminuddin Prahatama Putra<sup>2</sup>, Nahadi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Language and Literature Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Science Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

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### \*Correspondence Address:

syihabuddin@upi.edu

**Abstract:** This study aims to develop a valid, practical, and effective self-assessment instrument based on Qur'anic teachings to measure and internalize religious character values. The instrument was designed to evaluate five main aspects: faith, piety, sincerity, righteous deeds, and virtue. Employing a mixed-method approach, the development process included a comprehensive literature review, expert validation, and testing with 71 participants comprising educators and students. Results indicate that the instrument is highly valid (average validation score: 4.5/5), practical (85% usability satisfaction), and effective (88% impact satisfaction). It successfully fosters self-reflection (*muhasabah*) and enhances the internalization of Qur'anic values such as honesty, patience, and social awareness. The findings underscore the critical role of integrating Qur'anic principles into self-assessment tools to address the challenges of spiritual development in modern education. This instrument offers practical applications for educators at various levels, from schools to higher education, and contributes to the development of character education models rooted in Islamic teachings. Further studies are recommended to explore its application in diverse cultural settings and assess its long-term impact on character building.

## INTRODUCTION

Human creation is guided by three primary purposes as outlined in Islamic teachings: worshiping Allah (Q.S. Az-Zariyat/51:56), acting as caliphs on earth (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:30), and engaging in da'wah to invite others to the path of Allah (Q.S. An-Nahl/16:125). These purposes serve as a means to seek rewards in the hereafter without neglecting worldly responsibilities (Q.S. Al-Qashash/28:77) and as a reminder to repent for past shortcomings (Q.S. At-Tahrim/66:8). However, rapid advancements in technology, particularly in transportation and information, have

shifted human priorities. Studies indicate a growing trend where individuals become preoccupied with material pursuits, leaving limited time for spiritual reflection (A. Ali, 2018; Khan, 2019; Najafzadeh, 2017). For example, Khan (2019) reported that 65% of respondents spent significant time on digital activities, often neglecting spiritual practices. This phenomenon perpetuates unfulfilled desires, creating new, more complex demands that consume time and attention (J. A. Ali, 2023a, 2023b). Consequently, humans often overlook preparation for the hereafter, leading to wasted opportunities (Q.S. Al-Ashr/103:1-3) and distractions

from wealth and worldly matters (Q.S. Al-Munafiqun/63:9).

In this context, the Quran provides clear warnings about the allure of worldly life. It describes material possessions as tests from Allah (Q.S. Al-Kahfi/18:7) and cautions against being deceived by them (Q.S. Fathir/35:5). Specific behaviors, such as arrogance (Q.S. Al-A'raf/7:146), boastfulness (Q.S. At-Takatsur/102:1-7), denial of Allah's signs (Q.S. Al-A'raf/7:182), and neglect of divine reminders (Q.S. Al-An'am/6:44), are explicitly prohibited. Moreover, the Quran addresses the misconception that worldly success, especially among disbelievers, equates to true prosperity (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:212). Such preoccupations often lead to anxiety and sadness, even among those with abundant wealth, potentially culminating in depression or stress (Capehart & Wisman, 2013; Khan, 2019; Murtaza, 2011; Zaman, 2010).

Preventing such psychological distress requires a revival of religious values rooted in the Quran, which Allah declares as a source of healing and mercy (Q.S. Al-Israa/17:82). Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a critical role in addressing contemporary challenges by focusing on three core components: nurturing individuals who are faithful and God-conscious, integrating faith, Islam, and *ihsan* to shape holistic individuals, and fostering a Quranic paradigm to navigate modern advancements in science and technology (Abidin et al., 2022; Khaledian et al., 2017; Rajab, 2017; Sa'ari et al., 2020; Subandi et al., 2022).

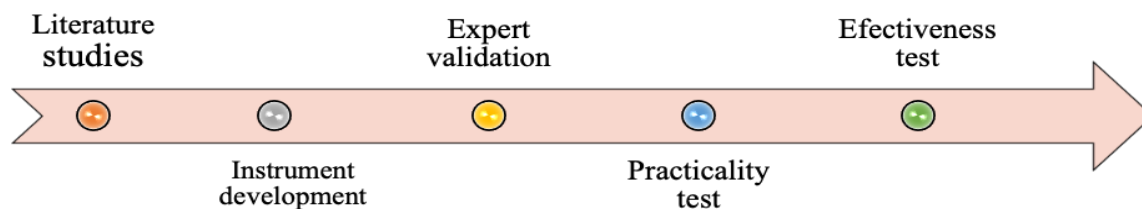
The Quran also highlights the dangers of pride, greed, and malice as foundational sins (Imam Ahmad Ibn Qayyim in Sjinqithi, 2013) and warns of *istidraj*, or gradual punishment for those who deny and neglect Allah's guidance (Ibn Athaillah in Syamsi H. & Aswadi,

2013). To counter these threats, individuals must practice self-evaluation (*muhasabah*) and remain aware of Allah's constant observation (*muraqabah*) (Imam Al-Ghazali in Hawwa, 2017). Such practices help avoid transgressing limits and prioritizing worldly gains (Chagas et al., 2023; Romeiro et al., 2018; Saad et al., 2022).

As an anticipatory measure, this research aims to develop a self-assessment instrument based on Quranic values to internalize religious character. While existing instruments address aspects of religious character, none comprehensively align with Quranic teachings. This study addresses this gap by designing an instrument that is valid, practical, and effective for measuring Quran-based religious character values (Esperandio, 2021; Lucchetti et al., 2024; Surzykiewicz et al., 2022). The research also seeks to answer a critical question: What are the criteria for a valid, practical, and effective self-assessment instrument to measure and internalize Quran-based religious character values? (Chagas et al., 2023; Sielicki, 2019).

## METHOD

The research method employed in this study combines a literature review approach with a development process, as outlined by Bramer et al. (2018), Rashid et al. (2019), and Snyder (2019). The literature review focused on analyzing existing manuscripts, including books and scholarly articles, that discuss Quranic verses related to religious character values and their defining attributes (Albayrak, 2022; Galadari, 2021; Quadir, 2020). This comprehensive review provided the foundational framework for the subsequent development phase, ensuring that the instrument aligns with authentic Quranic teachings and scholarly interpretations.



**Figure 1.** Research Steps.

This research began with a systematic literature review process (Figure 1). The initial step was identifying research topics related to self-assessment instruments based on Qur'anic values. After determining the topic, relevant texts, articles, and books were sourced to support the conceptualization and development of the instrument, referencing reliable studies such as those by Hughes (2020) and Mohamed Shaffril et al. (2021).

Once the literature was collected, an in-depth analysis of Qur'anic verses discussing self-reflection (*muhasabah*), religious character values, and their internalization was conducted. This step ensured that the instruments were grounded in Islamic teachings. The analysis focused on verses related to self-evaluation, the characteristics of individuals with religious character, and the process of internalizing these values (Allison et al., 2019; Ismagilova et al., 2022). The findings informed the preparation of an initial design for the self-assessment instrument, which served as the basis for subsequent testing and validation phases (Cooper et al., 2018; Lazar & Chithra, 2020). Additional steps included reviewing relevant reading materials, refining the instrument, and subjecting it to validity testing by three validators—an evaluation expert, an education expert, and an Islamic religious expert. The instrument was later disseminated to test subjects to gather responses regarding its practicality and effectiveness.

Three research instruments were developed for this study: (a) the Self-

Assessment Instrument (IPD), (b) the Instrument Validation Sheet (LV-IPD), and (c) the Practicality and Effectiveness Response Sheet (LR-PEI). Data collection employed documentation techniques to record relevant Qur'anic verses (Abdussalam et al., 2021; Dye, 2021; Hakak et al., 2017). The data analysis process was systematic and involved several steps: (1) collecting and categorizing validation results from experts, (2) analyzing participant responses to assess practicality, and (3) interpreting feedback to evaluate the instrument's effectiveness. These analyses were presented in a narrative and descriptive format, emphasizing key findings supported by evidence. The procedure followed a structured timeline, including initial coding, theme categorization, and synthesis of results to ensure a comprehensive evaluation.

The study involved purposive sampling to select participants who met specific inclusion criteria: (1) religious education lecturers, (2) general course lecturers with a background in religious studies, (3) teachers of religious instruction, and (4) students enrolled in Islamic education programs. Participants without a background in religious education or unwilling to complete the study requirements were excluded. This sampling method ensured the relevance of participants to the research objectives and enhanced the replicability of the study. The test subjects included 71 participants from various groups, comprising religious education lecturers, general course lecturers, general subject teachers, and students.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Need for Qur'an-Based Self-Assessment

Self-assessment, or *muhasabah* (self-introspection), is a divine call addressed to believers, as stated in Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18. According to Dewantoro (2014), this call urges believers to continuously evaluate their actions, examining their gains and losses. Such introspection helps individuals to repent for their mistakes and strive (*mujahadah*) in their devotion to Allah before the Day of Reckoning (Dewantoro, 2014). The necessity for self-assessment arises because *shaytan* constantly tempts humans toward evil and immorality (Q.S. An-Nur/24:21), misleading them into an excessive love of worldly pursuits (Q.S. Fathir/35:5). These worldly temptations, described as adornments in Q.S. Al-Kahfi/18:7, include wealth, power, and desires (Juntika, 2016).

The prophetic approach, derived from Q.S. Al-Jum'ah/62:2, emphasizes *tazkiyah* (soul purification) as one of its main components (Syihabuddin, 2013). According to Imam Al-Ghazali in Hawwa (2017), *muhasabah* is a fundamental method for purifying the soul, aligning with Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18. Through *muhasabah*, individuals can uncover their flaws and shortcomings, motivating them to seek forgiveness (*istighfar*) and improve themselves. This practice is also integral to the M-3 instructional model developed by Syihabuddin (2013) and is supported by Q.S. As-Sham/91:8-9, which highlights the virtue of self-purification.

Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, as cited in Tatan (2017), emphasizes the importance of understanding one's essence, purpose, and ultimate return. These existential questions—"Where am I from?", "Where am I going?", and "For what purpose?"—are answered in the Quran. Q.S. Al-Isra'/17:70 explains human origin, Q.S. Al-Mu'minun/23:115-116 describes the place of return, and Q.S. Az-Zariyat/51:56

outlines the purpose of creation. Allah declares that humans are not created in vain (Q.S. Al-Mu'minun/23:115) but are endowed with specific functions: servitude (Q.S. Az-Zariyat/51:56), stewardship (*caliphate*) on earth (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:30), and the responsibility of *da'wah* (Q.S. Al-Ashr/103:1-3; Q.S. Ali-Imran/3:104; Q.S. An-Nahl/16:125; Q.S. Fussilat/41:34) (Sauri, 2010).

Honesty is a fundamental requirement in self-assessment because Allah is ever-present and observant. The Quran repeatedly emphasizes that Allah: (a) guards and supervises (Q.S. An-Nisa'/4:1), (b) observes all deeds (Q.S. Al-Hadid/57:4), (c) knows the innermost thoughts of the heart (Q.S. Al-Hadid/57:6), (d) is aware of all hidden matters (Q.S. At-Taghabun/64:4), (e) considers what resides in the heart (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:284), and (f) observes all actions, with nothing concealed from Him (Q.S. Jonah/10:61). These verses underscore the need for absolute sincerity when reflecting on one's actions, ensuring alignment with divine guidance and accountability.

### Qur'an-Based Religious Character Values

The values of human religious character encompass attitudes and behaviors rooted in obedience to religious teachings, tolerance toward the practices of other religions, and harmonious coexistence with followers of different faiths (Suresman, 2020). These values align with the first three objectives of national education: faith, piety, and noble character (Sarbaini & Fatimah, 2012). The essence of *taqwa* lies in integrating the aspects of *iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission), and *ihsan* (benevolence) within an individual. A devout individual embodies all three attributes, making them a *mu'min* (believer), a *muslim* (obedient servant), and a *muhsin* (one who acts with excellence). *Taqwa*, in relation to Allah's commands and

prohibitions, involves safeguarding oneself from divine punishment by adhering to His commandments and avoiding His prohibitions (Dewantoro, 2014).

The Qur'an serves as guidance for those who are pious (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:2), a source of healing and mercy for believers (Q.S. Yunus/10:57), a guide for Muslims (Q.S. An-Nahl/16:89), and a source of wisdom and mercy for those who act benevolently (Q.S. Luqman/31:2-3). According to Sauri (2010), *taqwa* manifests through three core criteria: (1) self-involvement with the Absolute (*iman*), (2) surrendering one's life and actions to the Absolute (*Islam*), and (3) consciously aligning behavior with values derived from the Absolute (*ihsan*). Attitudes toward religion can be categorized into four possibilities: (a) believing with full consciousness, (b) believing through conformity, (c) believing with hesitation, or (d) not believing at all. The development of human nature is, therefore, inherently tied to fostering faith and piety in Allah (Suroyo, 2013).

Faith is incomplete without *taqwa*, and the Qur'an frequently calls upon believers to embody this virtue. Nine verses explicitly appeal to believers to be pious, including Q.S. Al-Ahzab/33:70, Q.S. Al-Anfal/8:29, Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:278, Q.S. Al-Hadid/57:28, Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18, Q.S. Al-Maa'idah/5:35, and Q.S. Ali-Imran/3:102, 200. Achieving *taqwa* grants individuals numerous divine rewards, including the ability to distinguish between right and wrong (Q.S. Al-Anfal/8:29), blessings from the heavens and the earth (Q.S. Al-A'raf/7:96), honor in the sight of Allah (Q.S. Al-Hujurat/49:13), and the promise of entering a paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth in the hereafter (Q.S. Ali-Imran/3:133).

In the perspective of the Qur'an, religious character is synonymous with *taqwa*, encompassing values such as *iman* (faith), *Islam* (submission), *ihsan* (benevolence), and *amal shaleh* (righteous deeds) (Taja et al., 2021). These elements form a holistic framework for fostering spiritual and moral excellence, aligning individual conduct with divine principles and preparing believers for success in both this world and the hereafter.

### Validation Results, Practicality, and Effectiveness of Instruments

The validation process, conducted by three experts comprising an evaluation expert, an education expert, and an Islamic studies expert, yielded high validity scores for the self-assessment instrument. The average score across all aspects was 4.5 out of 5, indicating strong overall validity. This score reflects the instrument's clarity, relevance to Qur'anic values, and ease of comprehension. Among the evaluated aspects, the highest score (4.6) was recorded for the clarity of indicators, underscoring the instrument's effectiveness in defining the aspects of religious character to be assessed.

The validation process focused on several key criteria: the clarity of indicators, relevance to Qur'anic values, appropriateness of question items, ease of understanding, and alignment with the concept of *muhاسبah* (self-reflection) in Islam. These criteria ensured that the instrument not only adheres to the principles of Islamic teachings but also provides a clear and practical tool for assessing religious character values. The high scores achieved across these dimensions affirm the robustness of the instrument as a valid and reliable measure for its intended purpose.

**Table 1.** Details of the Validation Score of Each Expert.

Assessed Aspects	Educational Evaluation Expert	Islamic Educator	Religious Experts	Average Score
Clarity of Indicators	4.7	4.5	4.6	<b>4.6</b>
Relevance to Qur'anic Values	4.6	4.4	4.5	<b>4.5</b>
Suitability of Question Items	4.5	4.3	4.4	<b>4.4</b>
Ease of Understanding	4.4	4.2	4.5	<b>4.4</b>
Conformity with the Concept of <i>Muhasabah</i>	4.6	4.5	4.6	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Average mount</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>4.52</b>	<b>4.49</b>

The validation results demonstrate that the instrument fulfills the validity criteria with consistent scores across all evaluated aspects. Education evaluation experts provided an average score of 4.56, Islamic education experts assigned 4.38, and religious experts awarded 4.52. These scores indicate that the instrument possesses clear indicators, exhibits strong relevance to Qur'anic teachings, and is effectively applicable for religious self-assessment purposes.

The validation process not only ensures alignment with the principles of character education but also reinforces the practice of *muhasabah* (self-reflection), as highlighted in Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18. This verse emphasizes the significance of self-evaluation for individual growth and accountability, making this instrument a

valuable tool for fostering introspection within diverse educational contexts. Its robust design aligns with the goals of personal and spiritual development as guided by Islamic teachings.

To evaluate the practicality of the Qur'an-based self-assessment instrument, a trial was conducted involving 71 participants, comprising lecturers, teachers, and students. Participants provided feedback on various aspects of practicality, including the clarity of instructions, relevance of question items, suitability to educational contexts, efficiency of completion time, and language clarity. These evaluations confirmed the instrument's usability and effectiveness, as summarized in Table 2, demonstrating its potential for seamless integration into educational practices.

**Table 2.** Evaluate the Practicality of the Instrument.

Practical Aspects	Number of Participant	Participants who Agreed (%)
Clarity of Charging Guide	71	87
Relevance of Question Items	71	83
Suitability to the Educational Context	71	82
Efficient Charging Time	71	80
Language Clarity	71	86

The practical trial involved 71 participants, including religious education lecturers, general course lecturers, teachers, and students. The results revealed that 85% of participants found the instrument easy to understand and use. Feedback from the participants highlighted several aspects: clarity of the filling guide (87%), relevance of the question items (83%), suitability to the educational context (82%), efficiency of completion time (80%), and clarity of language (86%). These findings indicate

that the instrument is practical and adaptable for use across various educational settings, effectively supporting religious reflection and character assessment.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Qur'an-based self-assessment instrument, participants were asked to provide feedback on its impact on their awareness and internalization of religious values. The aspects assessed included increasing awareness of faith and piety, reflection through

*muhasabah*, internalization of the values of good deeds (*amal shaleh*), motivation to perform virtuous acts, and enhancement of social awareness. The summarized results of this assessment are presented in Table 3.

The effectiveness of the instrument was further confirmed through self-reflection conducted by the 71 participants after using it. A significant 88% of participants reported increased awareness of religious character values, such as honesty,

devotion, and virtue. Additionally, participants expressed heightened motivation to improve their obedience in worship, perform good deeds, and engage in acts of kindness, such as helping others and practicing patience. These results demonstrate that the instrument effectively supports the internalization of religious values taught in the Qur'an and aligns with the principles of *muhasabah*, fostering spiritual growth and moral development.

**Table 3.** Results of Instrument Effectiveness Based on Participant Responses.

Aspects of Effectiveness	Number of Participants	Participants who Agreed (%)	Examples of Religious Character Values
Increased awareness of faith and piety	71	90	Faith, piety, prayer on time
Reflection and honesty in <i>muhasabah</i>	71	87	Honesty, self-evaluation
Internalization of the value of charity	71	85	Honesty, patience, good deeds
Motivation to do good deeds	71	88	Helping the elderly, neighbors, and the poor
Increased social awareness	71	86	Infak, almsgiving, caring for the environment

The effectiveness of the Qur'an-based self-assessment instrument was evaluated through self-reflection conducted by 71 participants after its use. The findings revealed that 88% of participants experienced increased awareness of religious character values, including honesty, devotion, and virtue. Participants reported heightened motivation to enhance obedience in worship, perform good deeds, and engage in acts of kindness, such as helping others and practicing patience. These results indicate that the instrument effectively supports the internalization of religious values as taught in the Qur'an, aligning with the principles of *muhasabah*.

The findings of this study are consistent with the Islamic concept of *muhasabah* (self-assessment), as emphasized in Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18, which underscores the importance of self-evaluation before facing the judgment of the hereafter. The validation of the instrument demonstrates that religious values such as faith, prayer,

*zakat*, and righteous deeds (*shaleh*) can be systematically measured using indicators derived from the Qur'an. This aligns with previous research (Syihabuddin, 2013; Sauri, 2010), which highlights the role of reflective practices in fostering religious character.

Moreover, the effectiveness of this instrument demonstrates that the structured self-assessment process significantly aids in the internalization of religious values. These findings contribute to the advancement of effective character education models, particularly in the modern era, where challenges such as technological distractions and materialism often undermine spiritual values. By utilizing this instrument, educators can guide students in reflecting on their behavior and reinforcing spirituality, integrating religious reflection into holistic learning approaches.

### Implications of the Results

This study has significant practical implications for the field of education.

The developed Qur'an-based self-assessment instrument can be utilized by educators at various levels to foster routine reflections on religious behavior. At the primary and secondary school levels, teachers can guide students in self-assessment practices that enhance their understanding of values such as honesty, patience, and responsibility. In higher education, lecturers can integrate the instrument into Islamic Studies courses, providing students with a structured approach to evaluate and improve their spiritual character. Furthermore, in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), the instrument can be incorporated into daily *muhasabah* activities to strengthen the internalization of religious values. Across these educational settings, this instrument facilitates more effective and systematic *muhasabah*, encouraging holistic character development.

The theoretical implications of this research lie in its contribution to the development of character assessment methods grounded in Qur'anic values, an area that has not been extensively explored. By offering a structured and validated approach, this study enhances the understanding and application of religious self-assessment in educational and spiritual contexts.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

While the findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of the instrument, several limitations warrant consideration. First, the study participants were limited to lecturers, teachers, and students with religious education backgrounds, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other populations. Second, the study did not assess the long-term sustainability of the instrument's impact on the internalization of character values.

Future research should address these limitations by involving

participants from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds to evaluate the instrument's applicability across different contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies are recommended to measure the long-term effectiveness of the instrument in fostering sustainable character development and religious reflection. Such research would further validate and expand the utility of this instrument in a broader range of educational and spiritual settings.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study successfully developed a Qur'an-based self-assessment instrument that meets the criteria of validity, practicality, and effectiveness in measuring and internalizing religious character values. The instrument incorporates five key aspects—faith and *taqwa* (Q.S. Al-Baqarah/2:177), sincere faith (Q.S. Al-Anfal/8:2-4), faith and luck (Q.S. Al-Mu'minun/23:1-11), faith and charity (Q.S. Al-Ahzab/33:35), and faith and virtue (Q.S. An-Nisa'/4:36)—and emphasizes the principle of *muhasabah* (self-reflection) as outlined in Q.S. Al-Hasyr/59:18. With its practical applications, this instrument serves as a valuable tool for educators across various settings, from schools and madrasahs to pesantren and universities, guiding students to reflect on their religious behavior, internalize values such as honesty, patience, and responsibility, and enhance spiritual awareness. It can also be integrated into extracurricular and religious activities to foster social awareness and integrity, aligning with the objectives of holistic education. To further strengthen its robustness, future research should include participants from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds and conduct longitudinal studies to assess the instrument's long-term impact on character development.



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