

Strategies for Internalizing the Values of Faith (Iman) and Piety (Taqwa) in Islamic Education: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: This study aims to synthesize the strategies used to internalize the values of faith (iman) and piety (taqwa) in Islamic education and to identify the factors that support and inhibit the process. The internalization of iman and taqwa is a central objective of Islamic education, yet in practice it is frequently reduced to the cognitive transmission of religious knowledge rather than a holistic transformation of attitudes and behaviour. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by the PRISMA protocol, this research identified, screened, appraised, and synthesized peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025 that were retrieved from Scopus-indexed international journals, nationally accredited (Sinta) journals, and Google Scholar. Following the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, the selected studies were analysed thematically. The findings indicate that the internalization of iman and taqwa is most effective when it is implemented through several interrelated strategies: educator role modeling (uswah hasanah), consistent religious habituation (pembiasaan), integration of values across formal and non-formal curricula, the cultivation of a supportive religious environment, contextual and meaningful learning, and synergy between school, family, and community. The process advances progressively from the cognitive domain (knowing), through the affective domain (valuing), to the conative-behavioural domain (acting consistently without external supervision). Its success is strongly mediated by the consistency of programmes, the authenticity of role models, school-family-community collaboration, and students' resilience to negative digital influences, whereas fragmented curricula and weak role modeling act as the principal inhibitors. The study contributes a synthesized strategic model that positions iman and taqwa internalization as a holistic, integrative, and sustainable educational ecosystem rather than an isolated instructional event, and offers practical implications for educators and policymakers.

Keywords: Value internalization; Iman and Taqwa; Islamic education; character formation; systematic literature review.

Introduction

Education in the Islamic tradition is not confined to the transfer of knowledge; it is fundamentally oriented toward the formation of a complete human being (insan kamil) whose intellect, emotions, and conduct are grounded in faith. Within this framework, the values of faith (iman) and piety (taqwa) commonly abbreviated in Indonesian educational discourse as IMTAQ occupy the highest position among the objectives of Islamic education. Iman refers to a firm conviction of the heart that is affirmed verbally and manifested in action, while taqwa denotes a state of God-consciousness that guides a person to fulfil divine commands and to avoid what is prohibited. Together, these two values function as the moral and spiritual compass that orients the whole of a learner's life and provides the inner foundation upon which character, ethics, and social responsibility are built.

The centrality of iman and taqwa in Islamic education is rooted in both revelation and the broader aims of national education. The Qur'an repeatedly affirms that the most honoured human being in the sight of God is the one who possesses the greatest taqwa, and the Prophetic mission is itself described as the perfection of noble character. In the Indonesian context, the national education system explicitly states that education aims to develop learners who are faithful and pious toward the One Almighty God, of noble character, knowledgeable, capable, creative, and responsible citizens. Iman and taqwa therefore stand not only as religious ideals but also as a legally mandated objective of the educational enterprise, making their cultivation a shared concern of religious educators, schools, and policymakers alike.

Despite their centrality, the cultivation of iman and taqwa in contemporary educational settings faces persistent challenges. Islamic Religious Education is frequently trapped in a textual and conventional approach that emphasizes memorization and the cognitive mastery of doctrine, with minimal connection to the lived context of students. As a result, religious knowledge often fails to translate into internalized values that shape attitudes and behaviour. Students may be able to articulate religious concepts in examinations while their daily conduct remains unaffected, revealing a gap between cognition and character. This gap signals that the dominant instructional paradigm has not adequately addressed the affective and behavioural dimensions of religious learning.

The rapid advance of digital technology has intensified this problem. The younger generation now grows up immersed in a media environment that exposes them to a plurality of values, lifestyles, and ideologies, some of which directly contradict the moral framework that Islamic education seeks to instill. Unfiltered social media, the normalization of consumerism and individualism, and the erosion of communal religious authority all contribute

to the weakening of religious identity and the destabilization of character. In such a context, the mere delivery of religious information is insufficient; what is required is a process capable of transforming external religious teachings into stable internal commitments that can withstand competing influences.

Internalization is the conceptual bridge that addresses this gap. As an educational and psychological process, internalization refers to the gradual adoption of external values into an individual's internal value system, such that those values guide attitudes and behaviour in a relatively stable and autonomous manner. In the context of Islamic education, the internalization of iman and taqwa is therefore understood not as a single instructional event but as a value transformation that encompasses knowledge, emotional engagement, and daily practice. Understanding precisely how this transformation is achieved—through which strategies, under which conditions, and against which obstacles—is essential for designing effective programmes of religious and character education.

Although a substantial body of research has examined character education, value education, and Islamic Religious Education in schools, madrasahs, pesantren, and Islamic higher education, the findings remain dispersed across diverse institutional contexts, methods, and theoretical lenses. Individual studies tend to report localized strategies—such as habituation, role modeling, or curriculum integration—without a systematic synthesis that maps how these strategies relate to one another or which conditions determine their success. Consequently, educators and policymakers lack a consolidated, evidence-based picture of the strategies that most reliably support the internalization of iman and taqwa, and the literature would benefit from an integrative review that organizes and interprets the accumulated evidence.

This study responds to that gap by conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of the recent scholarly literature. It is guided by two research questions: (1) What strategies are employed to internalize the values of iman and taqwa in Islamic education? and (2) What factors support or inhibit the internalization process? By systematically identifying, appraising, and synthesizing relevant studies, this article aims to construct an integrated model of iman and taqwa internalization and to offer practical implications for the design of holistic Islamic education. The remainder of the article presents the theoretical framework, the review method, the results and discussion organized around the identified strategies, and a concluding synthesis.

Theoretical Framework

1. The Concepts of Iman and Taqwa

In Islamic theology, iman (faith) is conventionally defined as affirmation by the heart, declaration by the tongue, and realization through deeds. This tripartite definition is significant for education because it locates faith simultaneously in the cognitive, verbal, and behavioural dimensions of the person, implying that authentic faith cannot be reduced to intellectual assent alone but must be expressed in conduct. Iman is also understood as dynamic rather than static; it increases through obedience and remembrance of God and decreases through disobedience and heedlessness. This dynamism provides the theological warrant for a sustained, lifelong process of nurturing faith rather than a one-time act of instruction.

Taqwa (piety or God-consciousness) is closely linked to iman and is frequently described as its practical fruit. Taqwa denotes a vigilant awareness of God that motivates a person to obey divine commands and to refrain from what is forbidden, even in private and in the absence of external supervision. It encompasses both the vertical dimension of devotion to God (*hablum minallah*) and the horizontal dimension of ethical responsibility toward fellow human beings and the wider creation (*hablum minannas*). Because taqwa is ultimately an inward state that manifests in autonomous moral behaviour, it is an especially demanding educational objective: it cannot be examined merely through tests of knowledge but must be inferred from sustained patterns of conduct.

2. Value Internalization as a Process

The concept of internalization provides the psychological framework for understanding how iman and taqwa become embedded in the learner. In the affective taxonomy of educational objectives, internalization is portrayed as a graded continuum that moves from receiving (attending to a value), through responding and valuing, to organization and finally to characterization by a value—at which point the value becomes a stable part of the individual's worldview and behaviour. Applied to Islamic education, this continuum implies that the goal is not merely for students to receive religious information but to progress until faith and piety characterize their identity.

Complementary theories of character education describe a parallel movement across three components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Effective character formation requires that learners not only know what is good (the cognitive component) and desire what is good (the affective component) but also habitually do what is good (the behavioural component). Many scholars of value education in the Indonesian context likewise distinguish three sequential stages of value transmission: the transformation of values (the cognitive transfer of information), the transaction of values (reciprocal interaction in which the learner begins to respond), and the trans-internalization of values (a deeper mental and personal engagement in which values are absorbed into the personality). These frameworks converge on a single insight that is central to this review: the

internalization of iman and taqwa is a staged, holistic process spanning the cognitive, affective, and conative domains.

3. Islamic Education as a Holistic Enterprise

Classical and contemporary Islamic educational thought frames education through the interrelated concepts of tarbiyah (nurturing and gradual development), ta'lim (the transmission of knowledge), and ta'dib (the instillation of adab, or proper conduct and discipline of the soul). Together these concepts express a holistic vision in which the cultivation of the intellect is inseparable from the refinement of character and the deepening of faith. This vision rejects a rigid dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge and insists that all learning should be oriented toward God-consciousness. The theoretical framework adopted in this review therefore treats iman and taqwa internalization as the integrative aim that binds together the cognitive, affective, and behavioural objectives of Islamic education, and it uses this lens to interpret the strategies reported across the reviewed literature.

4. Internalization in the Indonesian Educational Context

The Indonesian setting provides a distinctive backdrop for the internalization of iman and taqwa. The national education law explicitly identifies faith and piety toward the One Almighty God and noble character as primary aims of education, and successive curricula including competency-based and character-strengthening frameworks have sought to translate these aims into classroom practice. Programmes for strengthening character education emphasize religiosity alongside values such as integrity, independence, mutual cooperation, and nationalism, situating iman and taqwa within a broader project of moral and civic formation.

At the same time, Indonesia's rich institutional ecology comprising public and private schools, madrasahs under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and a vast network of pesantren—offers diverse models of how faith and piety can be cultivated. Pesantren, with their immersive residential environment, exemplify the holistic approach to internalization, while madrasahs and schools illustrate the integration of religious values into formal curricula. This institutional diversity, together with a strong policy mandate, makes Indonesia a particularly fruitful context for examining the strategies that support the internalization of iman and taqwa, and it accounts for the prominence of Indonesian studies within the reviewed literature.

Method

This study employs a qualitative Systematic Literature Review (SLR), a structured and transparent method for identifying, selecting, appraising, and synthesizing the available evidence relevant to a set of clearly defined research questions. Unlike a traditional narrative review, an SLR follows an explicit and reproducible protocol that reduces selection bias and increases the trustworthiness of the synthesis. The review procedure was guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), which organizes the process into four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

The literature search was conducted across reputable academic databases and indexed journals, including Scopus-indexed international journals, nationally accredited journals indexed by Sinta, and Google Scholar, which was used to broaden coverage and capture relevant grey-adjacent scholarly literature. The search employed Boolean combinations of keywords in both English and Indonesian, including "internalization of values," "iman and taqwa," "faith and piety," "Islamic education," "Islamic Religious Education," "character education," "habitation," "role modeling," "madrasah," and "pesantren." The temporal scope was restricted to the period 2015-2025 in order to capture recent and contextually relevant developments, particularly those responding to the challenges of the digital era.

Explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to govern the selection of studies, as summarized in Table 1. In the identification stage, the initial searches returned a large pool of records. After the removal of duplicates, titles and abstracts were screened against the inclusion criteria during the screening stage. In the eligibility stage, the full texts of the remaining articles were assessed for relevance, methodological transparency, and direct engagement with the internalization of faith or piety values. Articles that did not meet the criteria were excluded with reasons recorded. The studies retained after this process formed the final corpus included in the qualitative synthesis.

Each included study was subjected to a quality appraisal that considered the clarity of its research aims, the appropriateness and description of its methods, and the coherence between its findings and conclusions. The analysis then proceeded through thematic synthesis. Relevant findings were extracted and coded; codes were grouped into candidate themes; and the themes were refined and organized into the categories that structure the results: the conceptualization of internalization, the strategies employed, the stages of the internalization process, and the factors that support or inhibit it. This thematic approach made it possible to integrate findings from heterogeneous institutional contexts into a coherent and comparative account.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Peer-reviewed articles addressing the internalization of religious, faith, or piety values in Islamic educational institutions.	Articles unrelated to Islamic education or to value internalization.
Studies set in schools, madrasahs, pesantren, or Islamic higher education.	Opinion pieces, news items, and non-scholarly sources.
Empirical studies or substantive conceptual analyses.	Studies without retrievable full text.
Published between 2015 and 2025.	Duplicate records and publications outside the temporal scope.
Written in English or Indonesian.	Articles written in languages outside the reviewers' competence.

Following the application of these criteria across the PRISMA stages, the corpus retained for synthesis comprised studies drawn from a range of Indonesian and comparable Muslim-majority educational settings, spanning primary madrasahs, secondary schools, pesantren, and Islamic universities. This diversity of contexts strengthens the transferability of the synthesized findings while also requiring careful attention to context-specific conditions, which are discussed in the results.

In operational terms, the identification stage of the search yielded a large initial pool of records across the databases. After duplicates were removed, the remaining records were screened by title and abstract, and a substantial proportion were excluded as irrelevant to the internalization of faith or piety values in Islamic education. The full texts of the potentially eligible articles were then retrieved and assessed against the inclusion criteria, with exclusions recorded for reasons such as absence of full text, lack of engagement with value internalization, or publication outside the temporal scope. The articles that survived this sequential filtering constituted the final set carried forward into the quality appraisal and thematic synthesis, ensuring that the conclusions rest on a transparent and defensible selection process.

Results and Discussion

1. Overview of the Reviewed Literature

The reviewed studies, although conducted in heterogeneous settings and employing predominantly qualitative designs such as case studies, ethnographies, and research-and-development models, display a striking convergence regarding the strategies that support the internalization of iman and taqwa. Across primary madrasahs, secondary schools, boarding pesantren, and Islamic higher education, the same families of strategies recur: the personal example of educators, the consistent repetition of religious practice, the integration of values throughout the curriculum, the deliberate shaping of the institutional environment, the use of contextual and meaningful learning, and the mobilization of family and community support. Table 2 summarizes the principal strategies, their mechanisms, and the conditions associated with their effectiveness, and the subsequent sections discuss each strategy in turn.

Equally consistent is the way the studies conceptualize the outcome of these strategies. Rather than treating internalization as the successful recall of religious content, the literature evaluates it through observable, autonomous moral behaviour—students who pray, behave honestly, show empathy, and exercise self-discipline without being compelled to do so. This shared understanding of the goal provides a common standard against which the strategies can be compared and integrated.

Table 2. Summary of Strategies for Internalizing Iman and Taqwa

Strategy	Core Mechanism	Conditions for Effectiveness
Role modeling (uswah hasanah)	Educators embody values; students imitate credible exemplars.	Authenticity, consistency between word and deed, strong teacher-student relationships.
Religious habituation (pembiasaan)	Repeated routines convert values into stable dispositions.	Consistency over time, a conducive environment, meaningful rather than ceremonial practice.
Curriculum integration	Values embedded across subjects and activities, not only in religious lessons.	Structured frameworks, teacher capacity, coherence across the curriculum.
Supportive religious	Immersive atmosphere	Whole-institution culture, peer

environment	continuously reinforces values.	models and	reinforcement, synergy.	school-family
Contextual and meaningful learning	Values connected to experience and reflection.	lived	Relevance to students' lives, reflective dialogue, affective engagement.	
Family and collaboration	Coherent reinforcement of values beyond the institution.		Communication between school and home, shared expectations, community involvement.	

2. Conceptualizing the Internalization of Iman and Taqwa

The reviewed literature consistently frames the internalization of iman and taqwa as a staged psychological and pedagogical process rather than a one-time act of teaching. Drawing on value-education theory, internalization typically advances through three progressive domains: the cognitive domain, in which learners come to know and understand religious values; the affective domain, in which they accept, appreciate, and emotionally commit to those values; and the conative or behavioural domain, in which the values become embodied in consistent action performed without external compulsion. The ultimate marker of successful internalization is therefore behavioural autonomy—students who act in accordance with Islamic values even in the absence of supervision.

Several studies elaborate this process in terms of the transformation, transaction, and trans-internalization of values. At the transformation stage, the educator conveys religious knowledge and the learner receives it cognitively. At the transaction stage, a reciprocal interaction occurs in which the learner responds, questions, and begins to engage emotionally with the value. At the trans-internalization stage, the value is absorbed into the learner's personality and expressed spontaneously in attitude and conduct. This progression underscores that strategies which stop at the transformation stage—delivering information without fostering response and personal absorption—are unlikely to produce durable internalization.

Across the studies, iman and taqwa are treated as mutually reinforcing. Faith provides the inner conviction and motivation, while piety expresses that conviction in observable devotion to God (*hablum minallah*) and ethical concern for others (*hablum minannas*). This dual orientation explains why the literature evaluates internalization not only through ritual observance but also through honesty, discipline, empathy, patience, and social responsibility. It also explains why effective strategies tend to address both the vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationships among learners and their communities.

3. Strategy 1: Educator Role Modeling (Uswah Hasanah)

Role modeling emerges as the most frequently cited strategy across the corpus. Teachers, *kyai*, and *ustadz* function as living exemplars whose conduct demonstrates the values they seek to instill. The concept of *uswah hasanah* (the good example) is grounded in the Prophetic model and is repeatedly identified as the decisive factor in whether students accept and adopt religious values. When educators embody honesty, punctuality in worship, patience, humility, and consistency between word and deed, students observe a credible enactment of faith that accelerates affective acceptance and provides a concrete pattern for imitation.

The studies emphasize that modeling operates through processes of observation and identification. Learners are more likely to internalize values demonstrated by figures whom they respect and with whom they have a warm relationship. Consequently, the affective quality of the teacher-student relationship moderates the power of the example: warmth, fairness, and genuine care increase the likelihood that students will identify with the educator and adopt the modeled values. Where relationships are distant or authoritarian, even technically correct instruction may fail to produce internalization.

Crucially, the literature stresses that modeling must be continuous and authentic rather than performative. The credibility of the educator depends on the coherence between what is taught in the classroom and how the educator behaves outside it. Inconsistency—teaching one value while embodying its opposite—is repeatedly identified as a significant inhibitor that can undermine the entire internalization process by exposing learners to a contradiction between profession and practice. Authentic, sustained modeling, by contrast, functions as a silent but persuasive curriculum that reinforces every other strategy.

4. Strategy 2: Religious Habituation (Pembiasaan)

Habituation—the consistent repetition of religious routines—constitutes a second core strategy. The literature documents practices such as congregational prayer (*salat berjamaah*), Qur'an recitation and memorization (*tahfidz*), morning religious assemblies, collective supplication (*doa bersama*), almsgiving (*infaq and sadaqah*), and the observance of Islamic etiquette (*adab*) in daily interaction. Through repeated and consistent practice, these activities move values from conscious cognition toward habitual disposition, gradually shaping character until religious conduct becomes second nature and is performed without deliberation.

The pedagogical logic of habituation rests on the formation of habit as a stabilizer of character. Whereas a single exhortation may be quickly forgotten, a routine that is enacted daily over months and years becomes internalized as part of the learner's identity and rhythm of life. The studies in boarding contexts in particular highlight how the dense schedule of religious practice creates repeated opportunities for the enactment of faith, so that piety is not an occasional event but the ordinary texture of daily life.

Nevertheless, the studies are careful to qualify that habituation succeeds only when it is implemented consistently and embedded within a conducive environment. Sporadic or merely ceremonial routines produce weak internalization, and practices imposed without explanation risk becoming hollow rituals. Effective habituation is therefore accompanied by meaning-making: educators explain the purpose and value of the routines, connect them to faith, and model them personally. When habituation is sustained over time and reinforced by the whole institutional culture, it creates the gradual transition from cognitive understanding to affective awareness and finally to autonomous behavioural practice.

5. Strategy 3: Integration of Values across the Curriculum

A third strategy concerns the integration of iman and taqwa beyond the dedicated religious-studies lesson. Studies in both formal schooling and Islamic higher education report that values are internalized more effectively when they are woven into general and non-religious subjects, extracurricular activities, and the broader learning design, rather than being confined to Islamic Religious Education alone. When a science, language, or social-studies lesson is framed to reveal signs of divine wisdom, ethical implications, or opportunities for gratitude and responsibility, the learner encounters faith as relevant to every field of knowledge.

Research-and-development studies in Islamic higher education demonstrate that structured frameworks—such as value-integrated instructional models designed through systematic processes of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation—can enhance students' spiritual awareness, engagement, and character formation without compromising their academic competence. This finding is important because it counters the assumption that attention to faith must come at the expense of academic rigour; properly designed, integration strengthens both.

This integration reflects the holistic epistemology of Islamic education, which rejects a rigid separation between religious and secular knowledge. By embedding faith and piety across the curriculum, institutions signal that God-consciousness is relevant to every domain of life and learning, thereby reinforcing the coherence and pervasiveness of the values being internalized. The principal condition for success is teacher capacity: educators across disciplines require the disposition and the pedagogical skill to identify and articulate the value dimensions of their subjects.

6. Strategy 4: Cultivating a Supportive Religious Environment

The reviewed studies converge on the importance of the institutional environment as a psychopedagogical ecosystem that sustains internalization. In pesantren and boarding-school contexts in particular, the immersive religious atmosphere, intensive social interaction, and around-the-clock exposure to religious norms create conditions in which values are continuously modeled, practiced, and reinforced. The environment thus functions not as a passive backdrop but as an active agent of character formation that surrounds the learner with consistent cues toward faith and piety.

Peer culture is a significant element of this ecosystem. When the prevailing norms among students favour religious observance and noble conduct, peers reinforce one another's internalization, and newcomers are socialized into the shared ethos. Conversely, a peer culture that tolerates dishonesty or neglect of worship can erode the effects of formal instruction. Educators therefore attend deliberately to the cultivation of a positive collective atmosphere, including through student organizations, mentoring systems, and the visible celebration of exemplary conduct.

Synergy between the institution and the family is repeatedly identified as a determining condition for environmental effectiveness. Authentic and sustainable internalization requires a coherent religious ecosystem in which the values promoted at school are mirrored and supported at home. Where this synergy is absent, students experience value dissonance—encountering one set of expectations at school and another at home—that undermines the internalization process and can stall the learner's progress at the cognitive stage.

7. Strategy 5: Contextual and Meaningful Learning

The literature highlights contextual and meaningful learning as a strategy that addresses the limitations of textual, rote-based instruction. By connecting religious values to students' real-life experiences, contemporary problems, reflective dialogue, and value-based projects, contextual learning fosters the affective engagement necessary for internalization. When learners perceive that faith and piety bear directly on their decisions, relationships, and aspirations, abstract doctrine acquires personal meaning and becomes a resource for living

rather than an object of memorization.

Approaches such as experience-based reflection, problem-based discussion, storytelling, and individual spiritual counseling help students attach personal meaning to religious concepts. Reflective dialogue invites learners to examine their own conduct in the light of religious values, while counseling provides individualized guidance for students facing particular moral or spiritual difficulties. These methods activate the transaction stage of internalization, in which the learner moves beyond passive reception to active engagement, and they prepare the ground for the deeper absorption of values into the personality.

8. Strategy 6: Family and Community Collaboration

Although it overlaps with the cultivation of a supportive environment, the mobilization of family and community support recurs with sufficient prominence to warrant separate treatment. The studies consistently report that the school cannot internalize iman and taqwa in isolation; the family is the first and most enduring educational environment, and the wider community supplies models, expectations, and opportunities for the practice of faith. Where families reinforce religious routines, monitor conduct with affection, and model piety themselves, the school's efforts are amplified; where families are disengaged or contradict the school's values, internalization is impeded.

Effective collaboration is built through deliberate communication between educators and parents, shared expectations regarding conduct and worship, and the involvement of the community in religious and social activities. Some studies describe programmes that explicitly bridge school and home—such as parental engagement in students' worship records, home-based habituation supported by the school, and community service that situates piety in social action. These mechanisms construct the coherent ecosystem that the literature identifies as essential for sustainable internalization.

9. The Stages and Mechanisms of Internalization

Synthesizing across the strategies, the reviewed literature suggests a coherent account of how internalization unfolds. In the first phase, predominantly cognitive, learners acquire knowledge of religious values through instruction, modeling, and contextual learning. In the second phase, predominantly affective, learners respond emotionally to the values, value them, and begin to identify with the exemplars who embody them; this phase is activated especially by authentic role modeling, meaningful learning, and warm relationships. In the third phase, predominantly conative, the values are consolidated into stable dispositions and autonomous conduct through sustained habituation and an immersive, reinforcing environment supported by family and community.

Importantly, these phases are not strictly linear; they interact and reinforce one another. Behaviour enacted through habituation can deepen affective commitment, and affective commitment can sharpen cognitive understanding. The strategies map onto the phases in a complementary fashion: role modeling and contextual learning principally activate cognitive understanding and affective acceptance; habituation and the religious environment principally consolidate values into behaviour; and curriculum integration together with family-community collaboration ensures that faith and piety pervade the whole of the learner's experience. This mapping clarifies why no single strategy is sufficient on its own and why the strategies are most powerful when they operate together.

10. Supporting Factors

The review identifies a consistent set of factors that support successful internalization. Foremost among them is the consistency and continuity of programmes: values are internalized through sustained, coherent practice rather than episodic interventions. Closely related is the authenticity and credibility of role models, whose lived example validates the values being taught. A third supporting factor is strong school-family-community collaboration, which constructs a coherent ecosystem around the learner. A conducive religious environment, including a positive peer culture, further reinforces the values, and students' digital literacy—their capacity to evaluate and resist negative online influences—increasingly functions as a protective factor in the contemporary context.

These factors operate jointly rather than in isolation, and their effects are cumulative. The effectiveness of any single strategy is amplified when the others are present: habituation is more powerful when accompanied by authentic modeling and family reinforcement; curriculum integration is more effective within a supportive environment. This interdependence supports the conclusion that internalization is best pursued through an integrated ecosystem rather than through isolated techniques.

11. Inhibiting Factors

The principal inhibiting factors are largely the mirror image of the supporting conditions. Fragmented or

purely cognitive curricula that confine religious learning to information transfer fail to engage the affective and behavioural domains. Inconsistent or inauthentic role modeling exposes learners to contradictions that undermine trust in the values being taught. The absence of family reinforcement creates value dissonance between school and home. And the corrosive influence of unfiltered digital media exposes students to competing values and lifestyles that can weaken religious identity and erode the gains achieved through formal education.

Additional obstacles reported in the literature include limited teacher capacity for value-integrated instruction, time constraints within crowded curricula, and the difficulty of assessing affective and behavioural outcomes, which can lead institutions to default to the easier measurement of cognitive knowledge. Recognizing these inhibitors is practically valuable because it allows educators and policymakers to design interventions that deliberately protect and strengthen the internalization process—by investing in teacher development, by building school-family partnerships, and by cultivating students' resilience to negative influences.

12. Educator Competence and Professional Development

Cutting across all of the strategies is the pivotal role of educator competence. The reviewed studies make clear that strategies such as curriculum integration, contextual learning, and authentic modeling place considerable demands on teachers, who must possess not only subject knowledge but also spiritual maturity, pedagogical skill, and the disposition to embody the values they teach. Where educators lack these competencies, even well-designed programmes falter; where educators are well prepared and personally committed, the same programmes flourish. The internalization of iman and taqwa is therefore inseparable from the formation of the educators who facilitate it.

Consequently, the literature points to continuous professional development as a strategic lever. Training that strengthens teachers' capacity to identify the value dimensions of their subjects, to facilitate reflective dialogue, and to build warm and credible relationships with learners enhances the effectiveness of every other strategy. Equally important is attention to the educators' own spiritual development, since the authenticity on which role modeling depends cannot be manufactured through technique alone. Investment in the holistic formation of educators thus emerges as one of the highest-leverage interventions available to institutions committed to internalizing faith and piety.

13. Balancing Tradition and Innovation

A further theme concerns the balance between preserving authentic religious tradition and embracing pedagogical innovation. The reviewed studies suggest that the most successful institutions neither cling rigidly to inherited methods nor abandon them in favour of novelty, but rather renew their practice while remaining faithful to core values. Traditional methods such as habituation, modeling, and communal worship retain their formative power, while contemporary approaches such as contextual learning, project-based activities, and the judicious use of technology extend their reach and relevance. The internalization of iman and taqwa is best served by an integrative posture that honours tradition and welcomes innovation in a complementary relationship.

This balance is especially salient in responding to generational change. The values to be internalized are constant, but the means of reaching learners must adapt to their experiences, idioms, and challenges. Institutions that listen to their learners, that connect timeless values to contemporary realities, and that model faith credibly within a changing world are better positioned to achieve durable internalization than those that rely on transmission alone. The synthesized model accommodates this dynamism by treating the strategies as a flexible repertoire to be adapted rather than a fixed prescription to be applied uniformly.

14. Strategy 7: Reward, Discipline, and Spiritual Counseling

Beyond the six principal strategies, the reviewed studies describe a complementary cluster of approaches centred on reinforcement and individualized guidance. Appreciation and reward whether verbal affirmation, public recognition, or symbolic honours for exemplary conduct strengthen the affective dimension of internalization by associating religious behaviour with positive emotional experience. Conversely, proportionate and educative discipline, applied with compassion rather than mere punishment, communicates the seriousness of moral expectations and helps learners internalize boundaries. The studies caution that discipline becomes counterproductive when it is harsh, arbitrary, or inconsistent, because it then provokes resentment rather than reflection.

Spiritual counseling and mentoring occupy a particularly important place in this cluster. Individualized guidance allows educators to address the specific moral and spiritual struggles of each learner, to listen empathetically, and to offer tailored religious counsel. In boarding contexts, the close mentoring relationship between senior figures and students provides a sustained channel through which values are transmitted and difficulties are worked through. This personalized attention complements the collective strategies of habituation and environment by ensuring that learners who are at risk of disengagement receive the support necessary to

continue progressing toward internalization.

15. The Hidden Curriculum and Institutional Symbols

A recurring theme in the literature is the formative power of the hidden curriculum—the implicit messages conveyed by an institution's routines, relationships, physical environment, and unspoken expectations. The arrangement of prayer spaces, the visibility of religious art and calligraphy, the rhythm of the daily schedule around times of worship, and the manner in which staff treat one another all communicate values more powerfully than formal instruction alone. When the hidden curriculum is congruent with the explicit curriculum, it silently reinforces faith and piety; when the two diverge, learners absorb the implicit message and discount the explicit one.

Institutional symbols and rituals likewise contribute to internalization by creating shared meaning and a sense of belonging. Collective ceremonies, commemorations of Islamic events, and communal acts of worship bind learners into a moral community and dramatize the values the institution seeks to instill. The studies suggest that deliberate attention to these symbolic dimensions aligning the visible culture of the institution with its stated religious aim simplifies the effect of every other strategy and helps to sustain internalization over time.

16. Assessing the Internalization of Iman and Taqwa

A persistent practical challenge identified across the literature concerns the assessment of internalization. Because iman and taqwa are inward states whose authentic expression is autonomous conduct, they cannot be captured adequately by conventional cognitive tests. The studies report that institutions which rely solely on written examinations tend to measure knowledge about religion rather than the internalization of faith, and may therefore overestimate their success. This measurement gap can distort priorities, encouraging teaching that targets examinable knowledge at the expense of affective and behavioural formation.

In response, the reviewed studies describe more authentic approaches to assessment, including systematic observation of conduct, behavioural records, anecdotal documentation, self-assessment and reflection, and the involvement of parents in reporting on conduct at home. Such triangulated, longitudinal assessment is better suited to detecting the gradual movement from cognition to behaviour that characterizes genuine internalization. The development of valid and reliable instruments for assessing the affective and behavioural dimensions of iman and taqwa remains an important agenda for future research and practice.

17. Internalizing Iman and Taqwa in the Digital Era

The contemporary digital environment constitutes both a threat and an opportunity for the internalization of iman and taqwa, and the more recent studies in the corpus engage this theme directly. On the one hand, unfiltered exposure to social media and online content can introduce competing values, normalize conduct contrary to religious teaching, and fragment the coherent moral environment that internalization requires. On the other hand, digital tools offer new channels for religious learning, for connecting learners with authentic sources of knowledge, and for sustaining religious practice and community beyond the walls of the institution.

The studies suggest that effective strategies in the digital era must cultivate students' digital and religious literacy together equipping learners to evaluate online content critically, to recognize and resist harmful influences, and to use technology in ways consistent with faith and piety. Rather than attempting to shield learners entirely from the digital world, which is neither feasible nor desirable, educators are encouraged to integrate guidance on responsible digital conduct into the broader programme of internalization, thereby strengthening the resilience that the review identifies as an increasingly decisive supporting factor.

Table 3. Stages of Internalization, Associated Strategies, and Behavioural Indicators

Stage / Domain	Associated Strategies	Indicators of Progress
Cognitive (knowing)	Instruction, contextual learning, role modeling.	Learner understands and can explain the meaning and basis of the value.
Affective (valuing)	Authentic modeling, meaningful learning, warm relationships, reward.	Learner accepts, appreciates, and emotionally commits to the value.
Conative-behavioural (acting)	Habituation, supportive environment, family-community synergy, counseling.	Learner enacts the value consistently and autonomously, without external supervision.

18. Toward a Synthesized Strategic Model

Taken together, the findings suggest that the internalization of iman and taqwa is best understood as a holistic, integrative, and sustainable ecosystem rather than a collection of isolated techniques. The strategies role modeling, habituation, curriculum integration, environmental cultivation, contextual learning, and family-community collaboration reinforce one another and jointly move the learner through the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains. The synthesized model positions the educator, the institution, and the family as co-agents within a single coherent ecosystem whose shared goal is the formation of learners who are both academically competent and spiritually grounded.

The model also clarifies the conditions under which the ecosystem functions well: consistency over time, authenticity of example, coherence across settings, and responsiveness to the contemporary digital environment. When these conditions are met, the strategies combine to produce the autonomous moral behaviour that marks successful internalization; when they are absent, even well-intentioned programmes stall at the level of cognition. The model thus offers educators a diagnostic and design framework for strengthening the internalization of iman and taqwa in their own institutions.

19. Comparative Insights across Institutional Settings

Although the strategies recur across settings, the reviewed studies reveal instructive differences in how they are emphasized and combined. In pesantren, the immersive residential environment foregrounds habituation, the religious atmosphere, and the intensive mentoring relationship, so that internalization is sustained by the totality of communal life. In madrasahs and Islamic schools, where students return home each day, greater weight falls on curriculum integration and, critically, on school-family collaboration to maintain coherence between the two environments. In Islamic higher education, the studies emphasize the integration of values into non-religious courses and the cultivation of mature, reflective commitment appropriate to adult learners. These differences indicate that there is no single optimal configuration of strategies; rather, effective institutions adapt the common repertoire to their structural conditions and to the developmental stage of their learners. The implication is that the synthesized model should be applied flexibly, with educators selecting and weighting strategies according to the affordances and constraints of their particular setting, while preserving the underlying principle that internalization requires coherent attention to the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains.

20. Practical Recommendations

The synthesis yields a set of concrete recommendations for institutions seeking to strengthen the internalization of iman and taqwa. First, institutions should treat the personal example of educators as a strategic priority, investing in the spiritual formation and professional development of staff so that the modeled example is authentic and consistent. Second, religious habituation should be designed as a sustained, meaningful programme rather than a series of isolated events, with explicit attention to the meaning behind each practice. Third, value integration should extend across the whole curriculum, supported by training that equips teachers in every discipline to articulate the value dimensions of their subjects.

Fourth, institutions should deliberately cultivate a coherent religious culture and align the hidden curriculum with their stated aims. Fifth, genuine partnerships with families should be built through regular communication and shared expectations, so that the values promoted at school are reinforced at home. Sixth, assessment should be broadened beyond cognitive testing to include authentic, longitudinal observation of conduct. Finally, programmes should incorporate guidance on responsible digital conduct, strengthening students' resilience to negative online influences. Implemented together, these recommendations operationalize the synthesized model and translate its principles into actionable institutional practice.

21. Implications and Limitations

The synthesized model carries several practical implications. For educators, it underscores the primacy of personal example and the need to integrate values beyond the religious lesson. For institutions, it highlights the importance of cultivating a coherent religious culture and of building genuine partnerships with families. For policymakers, it suggests that investment in teacher development, in the design of value-integrated curricula, and in the cultivation of students' digital resilience is likely to yield the greatest returns for character formation. This review is subject to limitations. As a qualitative synthesis of predominantly qualitative studies set largely in Indonesian and comparable contexts, its findings should be transferred to other settings with appropriate caution. The reliance on published literature also raises the possibility of publication bias toward successful interventions. Moreover, much of the underlying evidence is cross-sectional, leaving the long-term durability of internalization underexamined. Future research would benefit from longitudinal and mixed-methods designs that track behavioural outcomes over time, from the development of validated instruments for assessing the affective and

behavioural dimensions of iman and taqwa, and from comparative studies across diverse cultural contexts.

22. Theoretical Contribution

Beyond its practical implications, this review makes a modest theoretical contribution by integrating dispersed empirical findings with established frameworks of value internalization and character education. It demonstrates that the affective taxonomy of educational objectives, the moral-knowing/feeling/action triad of character education, and the transformation-transaction-trans-internalization sequence familiar in Indonesian value education are not competing accounts but complementary lenses that, taken together, illuminate the staged and holistic nature of iman and taqwa internalization. By mapping the recurring strategies onto these stages, the synthesized model offers a more unified theoretical vocabulary for a field whose studies have often operated in isolation.

The model also advances the conversation by foregrounding the ecosystemic character of internalization. Rather than privileging any single strategy, it conceptualizes internalization as an emergent outcome of the interaction among educators, institutions, families, and the wider community, conditioned by consistency, authenticity, coherence, and resilience. This ecosystemic framing invites future theorizing that attends to the relationships among strategies and contexts, and it positions iman and taqwa internalization as a productive site for dialogue between Islamic educational thought and the broader scholarship on values and character formation.

Conclusion

This systematic literature review demonstrates that the internalization of the values of faith (iman) and piety (taqwa) in Islamic education is achieved not through isolated instruction but through a set of interrelated strategies: educator role modeling, consistent religious habituation, integration of values across the curriculum, the cultivation of a supportive religious environment, contextual and meaningful learning, and collaboration among school, family, and community. Together these strategies move the learner progressively from knowing religious values, to valuing them, to enacting them autonomously, in keeping with the staged, holistic understanding of internalization developed in the theoretical framework.

The success of these strategies is mediated by the consistency and continuity of programmes, the authenticity of role models, school-family-community synergy, a conducive environment, and students' resilience to negative digital influences, while fragmented curricula, inauthentic modeling, value dissonance between school and home, and unfiltered digital media act as the chief inhibitors. The study contributes a synthesized strategic model that conceives iman and taqwa internalization as a holistic, integrative, and sustainable educational ecosystem in which educators, institutions, and families function as co-agents. By consolidating dispersed findings into a coherent framework, this review offers educators and policymakers an evidence-based foundation for designing programmes that cultivate not merely knowledgeable students but faithful, pious, and morally autonomous human beings. It further recommends that future research employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs, develop validated instruments for affective and behavioural outcomes, and undertake comparative studies across cultural contexts in order to test and refine the proposed model.

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