Evaluation of the Learning Implementation of Islamic Religion Education at The School Level in Makassar City Using the Cse-Ucla Model

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ABSTRACT:
The quality of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is determined not only by instructional practices but also by a comprehensive evaluation system capable of assessing program achievement across multiple dimensions. Although numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of IRE instruction, empirical research employing the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) evaluation model in a holistic manner remains limited. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of Islamic Religious Education in public junior high schools in Makassar, Indonesia, based on the five dimensions of the CSE-UCLA model: System Assessment, Program Planning, Program Implementation, Program Improvement, and Program Certification. A mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design was employed across five public junior high schools involving 24 participants consisting of school principals and Islamic Religious Education teachers. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and integrated thematic analysis. The findings indicate that the overall implementation of Islamic Religious Education achieved a very good level with an average score of 4.34. System Assessment recorded the highest mean score 4.54, followed by Program Planning 4.37, Program Implementation 4.37, and Program Improvement 4.33, whereas Program Certification obtained a score of 4.08, indicating a good level of achievement. Qualitative findings reveal that effective implementation is strongly supported by school leadership, teacher competence, and institutional management, although continuous improvement is still required in learning outcome documentation, follow-up evaluation, and program sustainability. This study concludes that the CSE-UCLA model provides a comprehensive and empirically grounded evaluation framework for assessing the quality of Islamic Religious Education implementation and offers practical implications for policymakers

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and educational stakeholders in strengthening sustainable quality improvement.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, CSE-UCLA, program evaluation, mixed methods, junior high school

Introduction.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a strategic subject in the national education system because it plays a role in shaping the character, morals, spirituality, and personality of students as a whole. The increasingly complex developments in science, technology, and social dynamics require that PAI learning not only focus on mastering cognitive aspects but also on internalizing Islamic values in students' attitudes and behavior. The implementation of the Independent Curriculum further emphasizes the importance of student-centered learning, strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile, and developing religious character through a quality learning process. In this context, the success of PAI learning cannot be measured solely by learning outcomes but must also be evaluated based on the integration of planning, implementation, program improvement, and the ongoing achievement of learning objectives. Therefore, evaluation of learning programs is an integral part of efforts to improve educational quality.

Although various policies have been directed at improving the quality of learning, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education in schools still faces several challenges. Differences in teacher competency, variations in learning strategies, limited use of learning media, and suboptimal follow-up on evaluation results have resulted in the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning not fully demonstrating the desired results. Evaluations conducted in schools are generally still oriented toward assessing student learning outcomes, while evaluating the overall quality of the learning program has relatively been a minor focus. This situation often results in weaknesses in the planning, implementation, and development processes of the program not being comprehensively identified, thus limiting opportunities for continuous improvement.

Various previous studies have examined the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning through the perspectives of teacher competency, curriculum effectiveness, student learning outcomes, and learning evaluation based on national education standards. These findings provide important contributions to the development of Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning, but most still focus on evaluating specific aspects and therefore fail to fully describe the interrelationships between program components. Furthermore, research applying the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) evaluation model to evaluate the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (ISE) learning at the junior high school level is still relatively limited. Consequently, empirical information on the quality of program implementation based on the entire evaluation cycle is not widely available to provide a basis for decision-making or policy development for improving learning quality.

The CSE-UCLA evaluation model offers a more comprehensive evaluation framework than learning evaluation models that focus solely on program outcomes. This model evaluates five interrelated dimensions: System Assessment, Program Planning, Program Implementation, Program Improvement, and Program Certification, providing a comprehensive overview of the quality of an educational program from the needs identification stage to the achievement of program outcomes. This approach enables evaluators not only to identify the success rate of learning implementation but also to identify factors that support and hinder

program success. This allows for more comprehensive recommendations that can be used as a basis for continuous program improvement.

This study is novel in its comprehensive application of the CSE-UCLA model to evaluate the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) through a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design in several public junior high schools in Makassar City. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data allows this study to not only describe the level of achievement of each evaluation dimension but also explain the reasons behind these achievements based on empirical conditions in the field. Thus, this study produces more comprehensive information on the quality of PAI learning implementation compared to previous studies that generally use a single approach or only evaluate part of the program components.

Based on the description, this study aims to evaluate the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in Public Junior High Schools in Makassar City using the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) evaluation model which includes the dimensions of System Assessment, Program Planning, Program Implementation, Program Improvement, and Program Certification. The results of the study are expected to provide theoretical contributions in strengthening the use of the CSE-UCLA model as a framework for evaluating educational programs and provide practical contributions for the government, principals, and teachers in formulating evidence-based policies to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning in a sustainable manner.

THEORETICAL STUDY

A. Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is an essential component of the education management cycle, providing empirical information for decision-making and continuous program quality improvement. Conceptually, evaluation is not only defined as a process of measuring the level of goal achievement, but also as a systematic activity to collect, analyze, and interpret information regarding the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of a program. In the educational context, evaluation serves as a quality assurance instrument that enables policymakers to identify strengths, weaknesses, development opportunities, and various factors that influence the success of program implementation. Thus, evaluation is no longer positioned as an administrative activity at the end of a program, but rather as an integral part of the entire education management process oriented towards continuous quality improvement. This view aligns with the description in the dissertation, which positions evaluation as a systematic process to generate relevant information for decision-making and improving the quality of education.

The development of the evaluation paradigm indicates a shift from a solely outcome-oriented approach to a comprehensive, decision-oriented evaluation. Modern evaluation not only assesses whether a program has achieved its stated objectives but also examines the alignment between needs, planning, implementation, resource utilization, and resulting impact. Therefore, information obtained from the evaluation process serves as the basis for policy formulation, program development, and increasing the accountability of educational institutions. From this perspective, evaluation has a formative function as a basis for improvements during the program's implementation and a summative function to assess the program's success after its implementation. This approach makes evaluation a strategic instrument in realizing effective, efficient, and accountable educational governance.

In its implementation, the success of a program evaluation is influenced by various interrelated components, including the evaluation objectives, assessment criteria, data collection instruments, evaluator competency, and mechanisms for follow-up on evaluation results. A quality evaluation requires the use of valid and reliable

instruments, supported by evaluators who possess methodological competence and the ability to understand the context of the program being evaluated. Furthermore, the selection of internal and external evaluators must consider the need for objectivity, independence, and program characteristics to ensure the evaluation results have a high level of credibility. Thus, the quality of an evaluation is determined not only by the method used, but also by the integrity of the evaluation process and the evaluator's ability to produce evidence-based recommendations.

Various evaluation models have been developed to address the evaluation needs of various types of educational programs, such as CIPP, Stake's Countenance, Goal-Oriented, Goal-Free, Kirkpatrick, Discrepancy, and CSE-UCLA, each of which has different characteristics, focuses, and advantages. These differences indicate that no single evaluation model can be universally applied to all educational contexts, so the selection must be tailored to the objectives, characteristics, and complexity of the program being evaluated. In this study, program evaluation is positioned as a conceptual foundation for assessing the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning comprehensively. Therefore, an evaluation model is needed that is not only able to measure the achievement of results, but also assesses the relationship between the system, planning, implementation, program improvement, and final results in an integrated manner. This consideration is the basis for selecting the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) model as the evaluation framework in this study, because the model is considered capable of producing more comprehensive information for improving the quality of learning.

B. Model Evaluasi Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA)

The Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) evaluation model is a program evaluation model developed to provide comprehensive information for decision-making in educational program management. Unlike conventional evaluation approaches that focus more on achieving final results, the CSE-UCLA model views evaluation as a systematic process that occurs from identifying program needs, through planning, implementation, improvement, and assessment of program outcomes. This approach positions evaluation as an integral part of the program management cycle, allowing evaluation results to serve not only as a measure of success but also as a basis for policy refinement and continuous program quality improvement. With these characteristics, the CSE-UCLA model is widely used in educational program evaluation because it is able to produce comprehensive, decision-oriented information.

Conceptually, the CSE-UCLA model consists of five interrelated evaluation dimensions: System Assessment, Program Planning, Program Implementation, Program Improvement, and Program Certification. System Assessment identifies program needs, conditions, and objectives as the basis for organizing educational activities. Program Planning evaluates the quality of program planning, including the formulation of objectives, strategies, resources, and readiness for program implementation. Furthermore, Program Implementation focuses on the alignment between plans and program implementation in the field, while Program Improvement assesses the effectiveness of quality control mechanisms and follow-up improvements made during the program. Program Certification aims to evaluate the level of achievement of program objectives and the resulting benefits for stakeholders. The interconnectedness of these five dimensions allows for comprehensive evaluation, allowing each stage of the program to be analyzed systematically and continuously.

Compared to other evaluation models, such as Goal-Oriented which focuses on goal achievement, Goal-Free which emphasizes program impact without being influenced by initial goals, Stake's Countenance which emphasizes description and consideration aspects, and CIPP (Context, Input, Process,

Product) which evaluates context, input, process, and product, the CSE-UCLA model has the advantage of providing more integrated information to support the decision-making process. This model not only evaluates program results, but also pays attention to program sustainability through improvement mechanisms (program improvement) and final assessment (program certification). Thus, the CSE-UCLA model is better able to identify the relationship between planning, implementation, improvement, and program achievement so that the resulting recommendations are more comprehensive and applicable for the development of educational quality.

In this study, the CSE-UCLA model was chosen because it has characteristics that align with the research objective, namely to comprehensively evaluate the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning at the public junior high school level in Makassar City. Islamic Religious Education learning is an educational program that involves various components, ranging from school policies, learning planning, teacher competencies, learning processes, to student competency achievement. This complexity requires an evaluation model that is able to integrate all program components within a complete analytical framework. Therefore, the application of the CSE-UCLA model is expected to not only produce information regarding the level of success of Islamic Religious Education learning implementation, but also identify factors that support and hinder program implementation and provide evidence-based recommendations for continuous improvement of learning quality. Thus, this model serves as a relevant theoretical and operational framework to explain the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning implementation in this study.

C. Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Learning

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is an educational process designed to develop students' potential to have faith, piety, noble morals, and the ability to practice Islamic teachings in everyday life. PAI learning is not only oriented towards mastering religious knowledge (knowing), but also on developing attitudes (being) and skills in implementing Islamic values (doing). Therefore, the success of PAI learning cannot be measured solely through students' academic achievements, but also through changes in attitudes, character, and behavior that reflect the internalization of Islamic values. This perspective shows that PAI learning has more complex characteristics than other subjects because it combines cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in an integrated manner.

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is influenced by various interacting components within the education system, including school policies, teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies, student characteristics, curriculum, learning strategies, learning media, facilities and infrastructure, and a school environment that supports the formation of a religious culture. The success of learning implementation is determined not only by the teacher's ability to deliver the material, but also by the effectiveness of learning planning, classroom management, the use of innovative methods, the implementation of assessments, and follow-up on learning evaluation results. Thus, the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning implementation is the result of the interaction between various components that form an education system that are interrelated and cannot be separated from one another.

From a program evaluation perspective, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) implementation is viewed as an educational program that requires comprehensive evaluation so that the resulting information not only reflects the level of learning success but also identifies factors that support and hinder the achievement of educational goals. Evaluations that focus solely on student learning outcomes tend to provide a partial picture because they fail to explain the quality of the support system, implementation process, improvement mechanisms, and sustainability of the learning program. Therefore, a

comprehensive evaluation approach is essential to produce more objective information as a basis for continuous improvement in learning quality. This approach aligns with the continuous quality improvement paradigm, which positions evaluation as an instrument for systematically increasing program effectiveness, rather than simply measuring final success.

Based on these characteristics, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning has a level of complexity that requires an evaluation model capable of integrating all program components within a complete analytical framework. This study considers the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) model to be a relevant approach because it is able to evaluate the implementation of learning starting from the identification of program needs (System Assessment), planning quality (Program Planning), implementation effectiveness (Program Implementation), improvement mechanisms (Program Improvement), to the achievement of program results (Program Certification). Through this framework, the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education learning implementation not only produces information on the level of program success, but also provides evidence-based recommendations that can be utilized by schools, teachers, and policymakers in improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning in a sustainable manner.

Methods

This study used a mixed methods approach with a sequential explanatory design, which integrates quantitative and qualitative data sequentially to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This approach was chosen because it is able to combine the advantages of quantitative methods in measuring the level of achievement of evaluation indicators with qualitative methods in explaining in depth the factors that influence evaluation results. The study was conducted at five public junior high schools in Makassar City, namely SMP Negeri 3 Makassar, SMP Negeri 6 Makassar, SMP Negeri 13 Makassar, SMP Negeri 24 Makassar, and SMP Negeri 40 Makassar. The selection of research locations was carried out purposively by considering the characteristics of the schools and their relevance to the research objectives.

The research subjects in the quantitative stage consisted of 24 respondents, namely 5 principals and 19 Islamic Religious Education teachers, while in the qualitative stage, informants were selected purposively based on their involvement and understanding of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning. Quantitative data were collected through the distribution of questionnaires using a Likert scale arranged based on the five dimensions of the Center for the Study of Evaluation–University of California, Los Angeles (CSE-UCLA) evaluation model, namely System Assessment, Program Planning, Program Implementation, Program Improvement, and Program Certification. Meanwhile, qualitative data were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies to strengthen and explain the results of the quantitative analysis.

The research instrument was developed based on indicators in each dimension of the CSE-UCLA model and underwent expert validation before being used in data collection. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to obtain average scores, percentages, and achievement categories for each evaluation dimension. Next, qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing according to the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The integration of both types of data was carried out at the interpretation stage to generate a more comprehensive understanding of the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning implementation.

Data validity was ensured through the application of validity and reliability tests on quantitative instruments as well as source triangulation, technical triangulation, and member checking techniques on qualitative data. The integration of quantitative and qualitative analysis results was

carried out through connecting and merging techniques, so that quantitative findings could be explained more deeply through qualitative data. This approach enabled the research to produce information that not only describes the level of achievement of Islamic Religious Education learning implementation based on the five dimensions of the CSE-UCLA model, but also identifies factors that support and hinder program implementation as a basis for developing recommendations for continuous improvement of learning quality.

Results

System Readiness and Islamic Education Learning Planning Support Program Implementation

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in *the System Assessment* and *Program Planning aspects* achieved the highest achievement compared to other dimensions. The System Assessment dimension obtained an average score of 4.54, while *Program Planning* obtained a score of 4.37, both of which are in the **very good category** . These findings indicate that the majority of public junior high schools in Makassar City have the support of school policies, religious culture, and learning plans aligned with the Independent Curriculum. Clarity of Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objective Flow (ATP), teaching modules, and support from the principal are the main factors that strengthen the implementation of PAI learning. In addition, MGMP activities contribute to improving the quality of learning materials through the development of teaching modules and the sharing of good practices among teachers.

These findings indicate that the success of learning implementation is not only determined by teacher competence but also influenced by the readiness of the systems that support the learning process. A school environment with a religious culture, supportive principal leadership, and systematic planning documents create conditions conducive to achieving Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning objectives. However, observations indicate that some schools still face limitations in supporting facilities, such as inadequate prayer room capacity, limited digital learning media, and uneven distribution of religious practice facilities. These conditions indicate that administrative readiness has been well-understood, but it needs to be followed by strengthening the facility aspect to optimize the quality of learning implementation.

The results of this study align with the CSE-UCLA evaluation model, which places System Assessment and Program Planning as the primary foundations for a successful educational program. These findings also support Divayana's research, which states that successful program implementation is strongly influenced by system readiness, organizational support, and the quality of program planning prior to the learning process. However, this study offers a novel contribution, demonstrating that, in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in Makassar City's junior high schools, system readiness does not automatically guarantee optimal implementation if it is not supported by the availability of adequate learning resources. Therefore, this study expands the application of the CSE-UCLA model through empirical evidence that policy readiness, school culture, and facilities must work synergistically to support the successful implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

B. The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is running effectively through teacher role models, but active learning is not yet optimal.

The results of the study indicate that *the Program Implementation dimension* obtained an average score of 4.37, categorized as **very good** . Based on the results of classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires, Islamic Religious Education teachers have demonstrated good role models in the spiritual aspects, discipline, and the habituation of religious values in the school environment. Teachers consistently begin learning with prayer, provide examples of religious behavior, and guide students in various religious activities. This role model is one of the

main strengths of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning because it is able to build a positive relationship between teachers and students so that the process of internalizing Islamic values takes place naturally.

On the other hand, data triangulation results indicate a discrepancy between teachers' perceptions and students' learning experiences. While most teachers stated they had implemented active learning in accordance with the Independent Curriculum, observations indicate that the lecture method remains the most dominant approach in the learning process. Group discussions, project-based learning, case studies, and contextual learning have not been consistently implemented across all schools. This situation indicates that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning remains more oriented toward delivering material rather than providing learning experiences that can develop students' critical, collaborative, and reflective thinking skills.

These findings reinforce the view that successful learning implementation is measured not only by the implementation of teaching and learning activities, but also by the quality of interactions that foster active student engagement. These findings align with those of Shah et al., who stated that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) still requires strengthening participatory learning methods. However, this study provides a new contribution by demonstrating that teacher role models are the most dominant factor in the successful implementation of PAI learning, even though innovative learning methods have not yet been fully developed. Therefore, improving teacher pedagogical competence through active learning training is a crucial strategy for enhancing the effectiveness of PAI learning implementation in schools.

C. Sustainability of Character Recognition Programs and Systems Becomes a Challenge for the Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Learning

The results of the study showed that *the Program Improvement dimension* obtained an average score of 4.33, while *the Certification Program* obtained a score of 4.08, which is the lowest score compared to other dimensions. Although both are still in the very good category, the results of observations and documentation indicate that most schools do not have a formal reward system or a systematically documented student character portfolio. Character assessment is still carried out through teacher observation and has not been integrated into the school's ongoing evaluation system. In contrast, SMP Negeri 5 Makassar has demonstrated better practices through the implementation of routine evaluations and documentation of student character development.

These findings indicate that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning still focuses on the learning process rather than strengthening the evaluation system for affective learning outcomes. In fact, character building is the primary goal of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, which requires an objective, ongoing, and well-documented evaluation mechanism. The absence of a recognition system results in various student character achievements not receiving formal recognition from the school, making it difficult to use as a basis for decision-making or program improvements. Therefore, the development of a character portfolio system, student awards, and ongoing monitoring are crucial for improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning implementation.

The results of this study support the CSE-UCLA evaluation concept, which places *Program Improvement* and *Program Certification* as the final stages to ensure the sustainability of educational program quality. These findings also align with Putri's research, which emphasizes the importance of feedback mechanisms in program refinement. However, this study offers novelty by showing that in the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in Makassar City's public junior high schools, the main weakness lies not in the implementation of

learning, but rather in the lack of a structured certification and character recognition system for students. This finding implies that improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is not sufficient only through improving the learning process, but also requires the development of an integrated character evaluation system as part of the school's quality culture.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in public junior high schools in Makassar City, based on the CSE-UCLA evaluation model, is generally categorized as **very good** . This success is primarily supported by the readiness of the school system and the quality of program planning, which achieved the highest achievement. Support from school policies, religious culture, principal leadership, and learning planning aligned with the Independent Curriculum are the main factors strengthening the implementation of PAI learning. This condition indicates that the foundation of program implementation has been well established, thus supporting the achievement of learning objectives oriented towards strengthening student character.

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning has also demonstrated high effectiveness through teachers' exemplary role in building a religious culture within the school environment. Teachers play a role not only as transmitters of material but also as role models in shaping students' attitudes, behaviors, and character. However, triangulation results revealed that the implementation of active and contextual learning has not been optimal because lecture methods still dominate the learning process in some schools. This finding suggests that strengthening teachers' pedagogical competencies, particularly in the application of participatory and student-centered learning strategies, is still necessary to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning implementation.

On the other hand, this study found that the sustainability aspect of the program still requires attention, particularly in the dimensions of *Program Improvement* and *Program Certification* . Although the mechanisms of supervision, learning reflection, and coordination through MGMP have been running well, most schools do not yet have a systematically documented character recognition system, student portfolio, or reward mechanism. As a result, the achievements of student character development cannot be fully measured, monitored, and used as a basis for continuous improvement of the learning program.

This study provides an empirical contribution to the development of the CSE-UCLA evaluation model in the context of Islamic Religious Education learning at the junior high school level through a multi-site evaluation approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative data. The research findings confirm that the successful implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning is not only determined by system readiness and the quality of learning implementation, but also requires strengthening a continuous and integrated character evaluation system. Therefore, schools need to develop more active and contextual learning and build a portfolio system and student character recognition as part of a strategy to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning that is oriented towards continuous character formation.

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