Qur'anic Pedagogical Methods in Islamic Child Education

Nurul Farida ✉, Zuhairi Zuhairi ✉

Abstract: The weakening of character education in contemporary settings has prompted a renewed search for pedagogical models rooted in divine guidance. Amid the growing need for values-based child development, the Qur'an offers comprehensive educational principles often underutilized in modern practice. This study explores Qur'anic methods of Islamic child education, focusing on Surah Al-Ahzab and Surah Luqman, using qualitative content analysis through library research. The analysis identified four core educational methods: exemplary conduct (uswah ḥasanah, QS. 33:21), wise counsel (mau'izhah ḥasanah, QS. 31:13–15), constructive dialogue (mujādalah, QS. 16:125), and measured discipline (al-'iqāb, QS. 16:126). These methods were examined through classical and contemporary tafsir, including works by Quraish Shihab, Hamka, and Ibn Kathir. The findings show that each approach plays a distinct role in moral and spiritual formation, where advice and role modeling are primary, and discipline is reserved as a last resort. This study concludes that Qur'anic pedagogical models offer a holistic and ethical foundation for Islamic child education and are highly relevant to modern educational challenges. Furthermore, the findings contribute to the development of early childhood education knowledge by highlighting the importance of integrating spiritual values, ethical guidance, and character formation into early learning frameworks, ensuring a balanced growth of cognitive, emotional, and moral dimensions.

Introduction

The educational process is a cornerstone of societal development, with childhood recognized as the most critical period for foundational learning and character building (1-3). In the Islamic worldview, a child is regarded as a divine trust (*amānah*) born upon *fitrah*, a natural disposition oriented toward goodness and faith. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Every child is born in a state of *fitrah*; it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian." This hadith underscores the decisive role of education in nurturing the moral and spiritual dimensions of children from their earliest stages. (4, 5). Yet, contemporary conditions reveal signs of moral decline, weakening of family guidance, and detachment from ethical instruction within educational systems, symptoms that reflect a broader crisis of character among the youth (6). These challenges necessitate a renewed educational model rooted in the Qur'an's moral and pedagogical vision.

Classical Muslim scholars such as al-Ghazali, Ibn Jama'ah, and Abdullah Nashih Ulwan had already articulated comprehensive principles of Islamic pedagogy. Their works emphasized *adab*, spiritual refinement, and moral discipline as the heart of education. However, these classical frameworks primarily address general ethical instruction rather than specific pedagogical methods for children as

depicted in the Qur'an (7, 8). More recent studies, such as Sabki and Hardaker (2013) and Alkouatli (2018), have discussed Islamic pedagogy in epistemological and conceptual terms but have not developed a Qur'an-based pedagogical framework explicitly aligned with child development. Consequently, there remains both a theoretical and practical gap in the articulation of Qur'anic pedagogy for child education (9, 10). In Islam, *tarbiyah al-aṭfāl* (child education) is holistic: it integrates spiritual, moral, emotional, and intellectual growth. Education is not merely the transmission of knowledge but the cultivation of character through affection, guidance, and exemplary conduct. The Qur'an consistently promotes pedagogical values such as wisdom (*ḥikmah*), gentle counsel (*mau'izhah ḥasanah*), and moral discipline (*al-'iqāb*), which together form a balanced approach to developing children's virtues and emotional maturity (11, 12). Understanding these principles directly from the Qur'an is crucial to restoring Islamic education's integrative function as both ethical formation and spiritual development.

This study focuses on Surah Al-Ahzab and Surah Luqman, two chapters that encapsulate key Qur'anic principles of child education. Surah Al-Ahzab *(33:21)* presents the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the supreme exemplar (*uswah ḥasanah*)

of moral education, while Surah Luqman *(31:13–15)* depicts parental pedagogy through wise counsel, dialogue, and moral guidance. These surahs were purposely selected because they represent complementary dimensions of Qur'anic pedagogy, prophetic modeling, and parental instruction, forming a coherent foundation for moral and spiritual education in the family context. By delimiting the study to these chapters, the research maintains analytical focus while ensuring textual depth.

Although several studies have explored Qur'anic educational values, many remain descriptive, thematic, or fragmented, lacking integration with theories of child development or educational psychology. This research addresses that gap by synthesizing classical and contemporary *tafsīr* (including those by Ibn Kathir, al-Qurtubi, Hamka, and Quraish Shihab) to derive a holistic pedagogical model rooted in Qur'anic teachings. The study aims to connect normative Islamic principles with modern educational realities, offering a framework that is ethically grounded, spiritually enriching, and pedagogically relevant. Accordingly, this study aims to identify and analyze Qur'anic pedagogical methods found in Surah Al-Ahzab and Surah Luqman, and to evaluate their relevance to contemporary Islamic education of children. Employing a qualitative library-based design, the research aspires to contribute conceptually and practically to the development of Islamic pedagogy, providing a Qur'an-centered paradigm for nurturing children's moral, emotional, and spiritual character in the modern world.

Methodology

Study Design and Rationale
This study employed a qualitative design grounded in a library research methodology. The rationale for this approach lies in its suitability for exploring normative and textual data from primary Islamic sources, particularly the Qur'an, to construct a pedagogical framework based on divine guidance. A qualitative library method enables in-depth interpretation and comparison of religious texts through the lens of classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir).

Data Sources and Selection Criteria
The primary data sources were selected verses from the Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Ahzab (33:21), Surah Luqman (31:13–15), and Surah An-Nahl (16:125-125), identified for their direct relevance to Islamic child education. Classical tafsir works, such as Tafsir al-Qurtubi and Tafsir Ibn Kathir, were used to understand the linguistic, contextual, and theological dimensions of these verses, while contemporary tafsir, such as Quraish Shihab's Tafsir Al-Mishbah, provided modern interpretative perspectives aligned with current educational contexts. These exegeses were selected purposively to ensure a balanced representation of historical and modern insights. Secondary sources included scholarly books and peer-reviewed journals on Islamic pedagogy, child psychology, and educational philosophy, chosen based on credibility, thematic relevance, and citation strength.

Selection of Qur'anic Sources
The selection of Qur'anic verses was carried out through purposive sampling. The researcher initially conducted a broad textual survey of Qur'anic passages that explicitly address educational or pedagogical values. From this survey, *Surah Al-Ahzab*, *Surah Luqman*, and *Surah An-Nahl* were

identified as the most thematically relevant chapters. *Al-Ahzab* illustrates prophetic role modeling (*uswah ḥasanah*), *Luqman* presents direct parental instruction and moral advice to children, while *An-Nahl* (verses 125–126) articulates core educational principles (*ḥikmah, mau'izhah, mujādalah,* and *'iqāb*). These surahs were therefore selected as primary textual data for qualitative thematic analysis.

Tools and Analytical Techniques
Data collection was conducted through document and textual analysis. Qur'anic verses and tafsir interpretations were systematically coded and categorized into thematic units representing pedagogical principles such as exemplary modeling (*uswah ḥasanah*), wise counsel (*mau'izhah ḥasanah*), dialogic engagement (*mujādalah*), and measured discipline (*al-'iqāb*). Thematic coding was carried out manually, emphasizing convergence and divergence among tafsir interpretations to extract consistent pedagogical insights.

Procedures
The analytical procedure in this study was carried out through four structured and interconnected stages. First, relevant Qur'anic verses related to child education were identified using thematic concordance tools and supported by previous research to ensure a comprehensive selection of textual data. Next, each verse was interpreted through triangulation of tafsir sources: *Ibn Kathir* and *Al-Qurtubi* provided classical exegetical insights grounded in linguistic precision and contextual understanding, while *Quraish Shihab* offered a contemporary interpretive bridge that connected Qur'anic teachings to modern pedagogical contexts. The interpretations derived from these sources were then compared and synthesized to formulate pedagogical concepts that were consistent across tafsir traditions. Finally, the synthesized concepts were integrated with modern educational theories to evaluate their relevance and applicability within contemporary Islamic child education frameworks.

Data analysis
All data were analyzed qualitatively through thematic comparison rather than statistical testing. Each tafsir source served as an analytical lens to validate and deepen the understanding of Qur'anic pedagogical principles. This process ensured that the final model of Islamic child education was both textually grounded and pedagogically coherent.

Results and Discussion
The analysis of the Qur'anic verses, particularly from Surah Al-Ahzab, Surah Luqman, and Surah An-Nahl, identified four fundamental educational methods in Islamic pedagogy for children. These methods are firmly rooted in Qur'anic teachings and demonstrate a comprehensive spiritual and educational model.

The verses analyzed in this study were purposively selected based on their explicit pedagogical relevance to child education as identified through thematic concordance and prior literature review. The choice of Surah Al-Ahzab, Surah Luqman, and Surah An-Nahl was made due to their clear pedagogical orientation: Al-Ahzab illustrates prophetic role modeling (*uswah ḥasanah*), Luqman presents parental instruction and moral counsel directed toward children, while An-Nahl articulates core Qur'anic educational principles,

ḥikmah (wisdom), *mau'izhah* (gentle counsel), *mujādalah* (dialogue), and *'iqāb* (measured discipline), which serve as the thematic foundation of this study.

Thematic analysis of the selected verses and tafsir revealed four dominant pedagogical themes relevant to Islamic child education. During the coding process, repeated concepts and keywords such as *uswah* (exemplary model), *mau'izhah* (counsel), *mujādalah* (dialogue), and *'iqāb* (discipline) consistently appeared across both classical and contemporary tafsir. These recurring ideas were grouped into four major categories representing Qur'anic pedagogical methods: [1] exemplary conduct, [2] moral counsel, [3] constructive dialogue, and [4] measured discipline. The following sections present these themes with supporting textual evidence and interpretive synthesis.

The Method of Exemplary Conduct

The importance of exemplary conduct in Islamic education has long been emphasized by Muslim scholars. Al-Ghazali, for instance, viewed education as a process of moral and spiritual refinement, where the teacher serves as both a guide and a role model for the soul's purification and moral formation [13].

In interpreting Surah An-Nahl verse 125, Quraish Shihab defines ḥikmah (حِكْمَــة) as "that which is most excellent" in both knowledge and action. It denotes wisdom that brings about significant benefit and prevents harm, signifying pedagogical guidance that is intelligent, measured, and impactful. Hamka similarly describes ḥikmah as noble reason and integrity, which draws hearts to religious truth through calmness, clarity, and example [14].

This conception of ḥikmah directly aligns with the Islamic educational method rooted in wisdom and exemplarity. When applied in child education, it refers to the educator, whether parent or teacher, serving as a moral exemplar whose actions can be observed and emulated. This is reinforced in Surah Al-Ahzab (33:21):

$$\text{لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللّٰهَ}$$
$$\text{وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًاۗ ٢١}$$

Meaning: "Indeed, in the (person of) the Messenger of Allah there is truly an excellent example for you, (for) those who hope for the mercy of Allah and the coming of the Day of Judgment, and who remember Allah often" (Surah Al-Ahzab [33]: 21).

According to Ibn Kathir, this verse establishes the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the supreme moral and behavioral model for the believers [15]. He emphasizes that the phrase *uswah ḥasanah* encompasses complete imitation, both in outward behavior and inward intention, especially in matters of patience, sincerity, and devotion. Al-Qurtubi expands on this by asserting that the Prophet's example serves as a living embodiment of Qur'anic ethics, showing that education begins through character rather than instruction [16]. Hamka, in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, interprets this concept pedagogically: a child learns moral values not from lectures, but from observing sincerity, consistency, and integrity in their parents and teachers [17]. Quraish Shihab notes that role modeling (uswah) in modern education parallels the concept of experiential learning, where students internalize virtues through lived experiences [18].

According to Abuddin Nata, the Qur'anic term *uswah* (أُسْــوَة) connotes a moral exemplar, further qualified by

ḥasanah (حَسَــنَة), goodness. The behavioral nature of prophetic education, as reflected in various Qur'anic verses, emphasizes character (khuluq) as the primary domain of religious pedagogy [19]. As Ulwan notes, role modeling is one of the most effective educational tools, influencing the child's moral, spiritual, and social development [20]. Children naturally imitate authority figures; thus, a teacher's or parent's honesty, courage, and piety, or conversely, deceit, cowardice, and dishonor, leave a lasting imprint on the child's ethical framework. This dynamic is captured in the well-known ḥadīth:

$$\text{كُلُّ مَوْلُوْدٍ يُوْلَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ}$$

Meaning: "Every child is born in a state of fitrah (natural purity); it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian." (HR. Bukhari dan Muslim)

Classical Muslim scholars also emphasized the centrality of moral exemplarity in education. Ibn Jama'ah, in *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, described the teacher as a living model whose conduct shapes the student's character more deeply than verbal instruction. He argued that knowledge without ethical embodiment loses its transformative power, reaffirming that the essence of learning lies in imitation of virtuous behavior [21].

Hence, moral modeling is not merely corrective but foundational. It cultivates noble conduct, social grace, and spiritual excellence by embedding within the child the virtues displayed by their caregivers and educators [22]. Islamic pedagogy thus places exemplary conduct (*uswah*) and wisdom (*ḥikmah*) at the heart of its moral and educational system.

The Method of Counsel (Mau'izhah)

Surah An-Nahl (16:125) outlines a foundational Islamic educational method, mau'izhah ḥasanah (مَوْعِظَــةً حَسَــنَةً), translated as "good advice" or "heart-touching exhortation," which states:

$$\text{اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ}$$
$$\text{بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ}$$
$$\text{بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ١٢٥}$$

Meaning: "Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best manner. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is guided." (Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl [16]: 125)

Quraish Shihab interprets *mau'izhah* as guidance that moves the heart and directs the individual toward righteousness. Scholars agree that the Qur'an frequently uses emotionally resonant language to awaken spiritual consciousness and moral awareness, particularly in the context of da'wah and education [23].

According to Abuddin Nata, the Qur'an explicitly presents *nasīḥah* (advice) as a valid and effective pedagogical approach. It defines the advisor, the recipient, the content, and the context of advice. This underscores *mau'izhah* as an instructional strategy rooted in empathy, clarity, and relevance. The Qur'an itself states:

$$\text{اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَذِكْرٰى لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهٗ قَلْبٌ اَوْ اَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ}$$

شَهِيْدٌ ٣٧ ۝
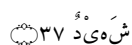
Meaning: "Indeed in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or who listens while he is present [in mind]." (Qur'an, Surah Qāf [50]: 37)

In *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, *mau'izhah ḥasanah* is defined as gentle speech that touches the heart and guides toward goodness, highlighting the importance of emotional connection in moral instruction (15). Al-Qurtubi complements this by explaining that effective counsel combines wisdom (*ḥikmah*) with tenderness, making it persuasive yet compassionate (16). Quraish Shihab, meanwhile, interprets *mau'izhah* as ethical communication that awakens the conscience, an approach deeply relevant to modern child education (18). Hamka, in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, underscores that true advice should be adapted to the listener's emotional and intellectual readiness, ensuring that correction is done with empathy rather than authority (17). This synthesis across tafsir shows that Qur'anic advice functions as both moral persuasion and emotional education.

Abdullah Nashih Ulwan highlights three key features of Qur'anic advice: (a) gentle and pleasant invitation, (b) stories and parables rich with moral lessons, and (c) wisdom conveyed through sincere counsel (24, 25). This method is especially effective in child education, as sincere advice, when offered with compassion and relevance, can deeply influence a child's behavior, morality, and spiritual outlook.

In his seminal work *Tarbiyat al-Awlad fi al-Islam*, Ulwan (2002) emphasizes that moral instruction should be delivered with compassion and emotional sensitivity. He explains that effective advice (*mau'izhah*) requires understanding the child's psychological state and using affection as a pedagogical tool. According to Ulwan, guidance given with empathy and patience nurtures love for moral values and strengthens the parent–child relationship (26).

The Qur'an, rich with exhortations, positions *mau'izhah* not only as a tool for da'wah but as a path to individual moral refinement and social guidance. Educators and parents are therefore urged to implement this method, especially in nurturing young children in both faith (*'aqīdah*) and character development. Qur'anic advice, when properly understood and applied, shapes children into morally upright and spiritually grounded individuals (27, 28).

The Method of Dialogue (Al-Mujādalah)

Surah An-Nahl (16:125) highlights a key pedagogical strategy in Islamic education: engaging in respectful dialogue. This directive promotes discourse that is reasoned, ethical, and rooted in empathy. Abuddin Nata affirms that this verse instructs the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to employ discussion and intellectual exchange as part of da'wah methodology. Hamka interprets it as a call to conduct polemics or argumentation, when necessary, in a dignified and objective manner, distinguishing between the content of the discussion and personal sentiments toward one's interlocutor (29).

Ibn Kathir explains that the command "wa jādilhum billatī hiya aḥsan" instructs believers to engage opponents or learners with fairness and reason, never through hostility or ridicule (15). Al-Qurtubi notes that this principle also extends to education, where teachers should encourage open conversation while maintaining humility and respect (16). Hamka, in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, links *mujādalah* to the concept of *musyawarah* (consultative dialogue), where mutual respect fosters trust and learning (17). Quraish Shihab reinforces this by stating that dialogue in Islamic education nurtures reasoning, empathy, and ethical independence (18). Collectively, these tafsir sources present *mujādalah* as a Qur'anic method that integrates intellectual and moral growth through communication.

The Qur'an repeatedly underscores the role of dialogue in education. The term *mujādalah* (discussion), as explained in Surah Luqman, verses 13–15:

وَاِذْ قَالَ لُقْمٰنُ لِابْنِهٖ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهٗ يٰبُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِۗ اِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيْمٌ ١٣ ۝

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِۚ حَمَلَتْهُ اُمُّهٗ وَهْنًا عَلٰى وَهْنٍ وَّفِصَالُهٗ فِيْ عَامَيْنِ اَنِ اشْكُرْ لِيْ وَلِوَالِدَيْكَۗ اِلَيَّ الْمَصِيْرُ ١٤ ۝

وَاِنْ جَاهَدٰكَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِيْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِى الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوْفًا وَّاتَّبِعْ سَبِيْلَ مَنْ اَنَابَ اِلَيَّۚ ثُمَّ اِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَاُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ١٥ ۝

Meaning: (Remember) when Luqman said to his son while advising him, "O my son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, associating others with Allah is truly a great injustice" [13]. And we have enjoined upon man to be good to his parents. His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness and weaned him in two years. (We commanded him,) "Be grateful to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final return" [14]. But if they strive to make you associate with Me that of which you do not know, then do not obey them. Yet, accompany them in this world with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn to Me. Then to Me is your return, and I will inform you of what you used to do [15] (Qur'an, Surah Luqman 31:13–15).

These verses from Surah Luqman exemplify the Qur'anic model of educational dialogue within the family. Luqman's counsel to his son represents a compassionate and reasoned exchange grounded in wisdom (*ḥikmah*) and moral reasoning. Rather than imposing authority, Luqman engages his son through calm persuasion, using logical and spiritual reflection to instill faith, gratitude, and ethical consciousness. Classical exegetes such as Ibn Kathir and Al-Qurtubi interpret this passage as a demonstration of parental pedagogy that integrates instruction with emotional intelligence. Hamka and Quraish Shihab further emphasize that Luqman's approach embodies *mujādalah bi al-latī hiya aḥsan*, dialogue conducted in the best and most respectful manner. This interaction thus reinforces that the Qur'an views dialogue not merely as a means of debate but as a method of nurturing intellect, empathy, and spiritual awareness in education.

The example of Luqman illustrates that *mujādalah* operates at multiple levels of human interaction, from intimate family conversations to broader social and interfaith contexts. While the dialogue between Luqman and his son reflects a micro-level of moral education within the household, the Qur'an also presents *mujādalah* as a macro-level approach to engaging with others in society. Both share the same ethical foundation: communication that is truthful, compassionate, and guided by wisdom.

Both share the same ethical foundation: communication that is truthful, compassionate, and guided by wisdom. This

dialogical principle appears in at least 29 verses, including:

<div dir="rtl">

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

</div>

Meaning: "And do not argue with the People of the Book except in the best manner…" (Qur'an, Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 46).

Such verses legitimize discussion as a valid instructional method in Islam, provided it adheres to ethical norms. These include active listening, mutual respect, emotional maturity, and openness to alternative viewpoints. Within the educational context, discussion fosters critical thinking, communication skills, and character development. Whether between students and teachers, or children and parents, this dialogical method enhances problem-solving abilities and supports the child's holistic growth.

The Method of Discipline (Al-'Iqāb)

Surah An-Nahl (16:126) introduces a balanced Qur'anic perspective on administering punishment within educational and social contexts. The verse states:

<div dir="rtl">

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِۦ وَلَىِٕن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّـٰبِرِينَ ١٢٦

</div>

Meaning: "And if you punish, then punish with an equivalent to that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient, it is better for those who are patient." (Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl [16]: 126)

This verse suggests that while punishment is permissible, it must be proportionate, just, and only applied when necessary. Bustami A. Gani notes two permissible responses: either a just retaliation limited to the extent of the offense, or choosing patience and forgiveness, especially if such restraint contributes positively to the aims of moral guidance and da'wah.

Punishment in Islamic pedagogy is not retributive, but corrective. Ibn Kathir interprets this verse in harmony with others encouraging justice ('*adl*) and moral excellence (*iḥsān*). Abdullah Nashih Ulwan emphasizes that discipline must be exercised gradually, beginning with gentleness and progressing, if necessary, to stronger measures. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrated compassion as the foundation of his interaction with children, showing that emotional nuance is essential in correction.

The following are several methods proposed by Dr. Abdullah Nashih Ulwan that are used in Islam for disciplining children.

- Begin with affection and gentleness as the default mode of correction.
- Tailor disciplinary approaches to the child's temperament and cognitive development.
- Escalate only when milder methods fail, ensuring that discipline serves as moral reform, not punishment for its own sake.

Among theories of punishment in education, the reformative theory is considered the most constructive, in contrast to revenge-based or fear-inducing approaches, which can damage a child's dignity. Thus, Islamic education acknowledges punishment as a last resort, to be implemented with wisdom, proportionality, and ethical integrity (30).

In *Tarbiyat al-Awlad fi al-Islam*, Ulwan (2002) explains that the purpose of discipline (*ta'dīb*) is moral reform (*islah*), not retribution. He warns that harsh or excessive punishment can weaken a child's sense of dignity and security, leading to fear rather than understanding. Instead, Ulwan advocates a gradual, compassionate approach in which correction begins with love and advice before any form of discipline is applied. This pedagogical view aligns with the Qur'anic emphasis on mercy and proportionality in guiding children toward moral awareness and self-control (31).

This principle is consistent with Ibn Khaldun's perspective in *Al-Muqaddimah*, where he emphasizes that excessive severity in disciplining children leads to fear, hypocrisy, and the destruction of creativity. According to him, education must balance firmness with compassion, ensuring that correction fosters moral refinement rather than suppression of the child's potential (32).

According to Ibn Kathir, the verse (QS. An-Nahl [16]:126) emphasizes justice and proportionality in correction; punishment must correspond exactly to the wrongdoing and must never exceed it (15). Al-Qurtubi supports this interpretation, adding that moral excellence (*iḥsān*) is achieved when restraint and forgiveness are chosen over retaliation (16). Hamka, through *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, elaborates that patience (*ṣabr*) in discipline reflects emotional maturity and is more effective in moral correction than harsh measures (17). Quraish Shihab similarly asserts that discipline in education must be reformative and nurturing, not punitive, guiding children toward self-awareness and repentance (18). Together, these interpretations demonstrate that Qur'anic discipline is both ethically balanced and emotionally intelligent, with a spiritual orientation.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the Qur'an emphasizes four main pedagogical methods in Islamic child education: exemplary conduct, wise counsel, constructive dialogue, and measured discipline. These Qur'anic principles, interpreted through classical and contemporary tafsir, form a holistic framework for moral and spiritual development. However, the study is limited to a qualitative library analysis of Surah Al-Ahzab and Surah Luqman. Future research should broaden its scope to include other chapters and employ empirical or interdisciplinary approaches to validate and expand the application of Qur'anic pedagogy in modern educational contexts.

Declarations

Author Informations

Nurul Farida ✉
Corresponding Author
Affiliation: Department of Islamic Religious Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Metro, Indonesia.
Contribution: Data Curation, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing.

Zuhairi Zuhairi ✉
Corresponding Author
Affiliation: Department of Islamic Religious Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Metro, Indonesia.
Contribution: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition,

Methodology, Resources, Supervision, Writing - Review & Editing.

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