# Parent's Expectation on the Islamic-based School (Multi-Side Study in Senior High School)

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**Abstract:** The majority of the Surabaya people are Muslim, so the phenomenon that occurs is that parents prefer to send their children to Islamic-based schools. Prestigious Islamic schools offer a good quality for their students, which includes producing graduates with good morals. This research aims to uncover parent's expectations of the Islamic-based school. This research uses a multi-site design and a qualitative approach. The subject of this research is parents, principals, vice principals, and students at Khadijah Senior High School, Al Hikmah Senior High School, and Muhammadiyah Senior High School in Surabaya. The researcher uses purposeful sampling and snowball techniques to select the informants of this research. The researcher conducts in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentary studies to obtain the data. This research uses a modified analytic method to analyze the data. Moreover, the data validity is used to reveal credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The findings of this research explain that the parents' expectations of Islamic-based schools are the children possess a strong foundation of Islam and good morality, which elevates their faith in Allah and its prophet. The children are also expected to grow a sense and awareness to pray independently, including the obligatory and *sunnah*. The conclusion of this research is the parents' expectation of their children possessing devout faith is fulfilled. This research is expected to generate an innovation of Vroom's school management theory.

**Keyword:** student, parent

## INTRODUCTION

Education is meant to help its students to develop their potencies to face their future problems. Therefore, educators must be able to overcome any challenge that might come in the future. On the other side, education means an investment for the future for the parent and their children. School knowledges are expected to be a tool to overcome future challenges.

The required potencies in the future are critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication (4C) (Tang, T., Vezzani, V., & Eriksson, V., 2020). However, some people, especially Muslims, believe that education must provide a good foundation for Islam. It is also emphasized in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 that the purpose of national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God, possess good morals, healthy, smart, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

Islam teaches that parents have the responsibility to educate their children with religious knowledge as a life's provision in this world and *akhirat*. A Muslim, besides the education for the future, also needs to prepare for religious education for eternal life. Therefore, the most basic thing to introduce to children is to grow *aqidah* as a foundation for living a religious life. This is in line with Husna. A (2017), which states that Islamic education needs to develop and strengthen the ability of the student to recognize God and apply Islamic *aqidah* as their way of life, both for their personal and social life.

Parents expect the school to be able to give provisions for their children to face the challenges in this world and *in Akhirat*. Therefore, parents in Surabaya, especially Moslem, are very selective in choosing the school for their children. A well-educated and wealthy parent chooses a prestigious Islamic school that belongs to a private institution over a public school for their children. This is in line with Embong et al. (2020), which states that good families form a good community, and a good family is formed by good individuals. Therefore, parents have a

great expectation of their children's religious education so that the children can develop their faith and devoutness and become a religious person who contributes to society.

However, not all private institution Islamic-based schools possess good quality and achievement, and quality gaps are still found between them (maulana et al., 2019). Each private institution school has a different vision and mission from others. In Surabaya, there are three senior high schools that being a choice between parents; they are Al Hikmah, Khodijah, and Muhammadiyah. Although those three schools are considered expensive private institutions school, the interest of the parents in sending their children to study there is very high. Even new students have to book the registration form before the registration opens. Although they are both Islamic-based, the three schools are different: Khadijah Senior High School is an Islamic school based on *ahlusunnah wal jamaah* (aswaja). Most students who enter the school are *nahdliyyin*. SMA 2 Muhammadiyah is an Islamic school that grew and developed from the Muhammadiyah Islamic organization. The majority of parents who enroll in the school are from the Muhammadiyah community. Meanwhile, Al Hikmah High School is an Islamic school that has grown and developed on the basis of modern thinking, not based on Nahdliyyin or Muhammadiyah. Most who enroll are Muslims who have more moderate thinking.

On the other hand, as a private school, funding is dependent on parents' participation. This is different from public schools that have received financial support from the government. Therefore, people's trust toward the education quality must be constantly maintained. In order to foster community trust, those three schools offer specific outputs and outcomes as a guarantee of their education quality. Parents are willing to pay high tuition fees for their children because they feel confident and believe that the outputs and outcomes offered by the school are in line with parents' expectations. They will get the results that match what they have worked for. Attanasio et al. (2019) state that parents have the belief that sending their children to higher-quality schools is a more productive investment than material investment.

Vroom (2005) suggests that the greater the individual's belief in something that can satisfy their desires, the greater the individual's expectations. Thus, how hard a person tries depends on their expectations (Lawler, 2003). If parents have high expectations, it will have a positive impact on the welfare of their children, so the effort made will be harder (Long & Pang, 2016). Thus, parents' expectations are a hope that parents hold. These expectations are influenced by strong desires and beliefs about outcomes, so they are motivated to make a high level of effort. The higher one's expectations of educational institutions, the more motivation parents have to send their children to that institution.

The theoretical perspective used in this research is Vroom's expectancy theory. Vroom (2005) proposes that expectancy is the force that motivates a person to do something to achieve their goals. If they believe that what they are doing is towards the achievement of the goal, their motivation will be stronger. The expectancy theory is based on the following:

1. Expectancy, which is the fulfilment of expectations because parents have paid for education. So, parents believe that if they have paid education tuition fees, they will get the results/performance as expected.
2. Value (Valence), which means that the results obtained are as expected because parents have made certain efforts.
3. Linkage (Instrumentally) is the parents' perception that the results of an expectation exist because of the desire to obtain results in accordance with the belief that what they have done will be rewarded.

The theory shows that the thing that can motivate a person to make maximum effort in a mutual relationship is one that is desired. Expectation is a person's desired level of performance that has been estimated in advance based on the information they receive, thus causing perceptions.

Parents' decision in choosing a school is for their children to get the education they expect. The satisfaction of parents' expectations cannot be separated from the effect of school management. Therefore, this research resulted in the renewal of Vromm's theory, which was originally a theory for individuals, but it is adapted to school management in this study. Parents' expectations are influenced by the experiences of others who have used services in the past, the opinions of friends and relatives, as well as the promises of the school and competitors. In this case, Kotler and Keller (2012) suggest that social, personal, and cultural factors influence parents in making school selection decisions to meet their expectations

Parents' expectations of Islamic schools lie not only in the quality of the school or teachers but also in the Islamic school environment (Islam et al. Haidoub, I., and Md. Tarique, K., 2019). There is an expectation on the school (Baum, 2012) to protect against the occurrence of moral decay (Merry, 2018), to have knowledge about Islam in interpretation, and to apply Islamic teachings in daily life. (Ahmed, Julia Marie, 2018), having a strong religious foundation, intelligence, and everything related to school conveniences (Askar, N., 2016). Parents' expectations are diverse because they are influenced by the parents' socio-demographic status. Parents with low socioeconomic conditions expect their children's academic grades to be good. Parents with middle socioeconomic conditions expect to have self-confidence, and parents with high socioeconomics expect their children to develop talents (Vebrina Rezania, 2019).

However, in those studies, few have explained in detail the form of parents' expectations of their children's graduates related to religion. In this study, parents' expectations in the context of religion are explained in detail,

which include having a strong aqidah and religious principles that can increase devotion to Allah and His Messenger. Children also have independence and awareness of worship, both sunnah and compulsory worship. It shows that there is a novelty in this research. The purpose of this research is to discover whether the expectations of parents have been fulfilled by the school.

The satisfaction of parents' expectations is one of the indicators that the education in the school is of good quality. Therefore, schools try to guarantee the fulfillment of graduates who match expectations because the guarantee of graduate quality can provide feedback for schools (Arbangi et al., 2016; Lu & Sousa-Poza, 2019). Parents, as consumers of education services, have a role and responsibility to the success of education implementation. Therefore, communication between parents, students, and teachers is very important so that parents can understand school policies better (Hakim, 2019). High achievement is influenced by high expectations because high expectations are the most important predictor of future educational behavior (Khattab, N, 2015).

Islamic-based schools that are the favored schools in Surabaya and its surrounding areas are Khadijah High School, Muhammadiyah 2 High School, and Al Hikmah High School. However, the community segmentation of these three schools is different. Each of these schools has an advantage that becomes the school's personal value. Although all of them are Islamic-based schools, the implementation of religious education has its own characteristics. Muhammadiyah 2 High School is characterized by Muhammadiyah, Khadijah High School is characterized by ahlusunnah wal jammah (aswaja), and Al Hikmah High School is characterized by moderate Islam that has no tendency towards certain groups. These three schools provide assurance to parents regarding the output and outcome, especially in the religious context. School quality can be seen from the outputs and outcomes they offer. As stated by Kompri (2015), the quality of graduates is a comprehensive characteristic of the school that includes inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes that demonstrate its ability to satisfy expected needs.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a multi-site design, as the research subjects are assumed to share similar characteristics, specifically being private Islamic schools. The research is designed to gather both written and oral descriptive data. The research design utilizes a modified analytical induction method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The study is conducted at three private Islamic high schools located in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia: SMA Al Hikmah, SMA Khadijah, and SMA 2 Muhammadiyah. The subjects of this research include parents, principals, vice principals, teachers, and students. Informant selection in this study employs purposeful sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Creswell, 2017).

The data collection techniques used in this study include unstructured in-depth interviews to explore parents' expectations of the schools, participant observation to determine whether those expectations have been met, and document analysis to confirm that the schools have implemented various programs to fulfil parents' hopes. The first informants interviewed were parents who chose these three schools. Parents were selected as key informants because they provide valuable information regarding their expectations of the school's outputs and outcomes. Participant observation and document analysis were conducted to gather detailed data by carefully observing and engaging in the focus of the study. This involvement allowed for a deeper understanding of the context and the effectiveness of the schools in meeting parents' expectations.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research on parents' expectations of outputs and outcomes in the religious context at Al Hikmah High School are not far from the outputs and outcomes offered by the school, which the school guarantees. In terms of output, it includes (1) parents having expectations that their children have a clean aqidah and strong religious principles, and (2) their children have obedience and self-awareness in worship. In terms of outcomes, parents expect their children to have the ability to become prayer leaders for a group in society. Due to the similarity of parents' backgrounds in religion, the most important expectation of parents is that their children have a strong religion, so parents choose Islamic-based schools. Meanwhile, what is offered by the school that is not a parental expectation is the school outcome where, after graduating, students can become Quran teachers. Al-Hikmah High School is able to provide graduates who have a religious character that characterizes the school. This character is not only beneficial for the student personally but also for the community.

The results of the research at Khadijah High School related to parents' expectations of school graduates include (1) recognizing and practicing nahdiyyin practices, (2) diligently praying, reciting the Koran correctly, and practicing according to Islamic law, (3) having the habit of sunnah practices. School outcomes include (1) children having the ability to lead tahlil in the community whose prayers are believed to reach the deceased; this expectation is very thick with the character of nahdliyyin because the background of parents who send their children to school is the nahdliyyin community. There are four things offered by the school that are not the parents' expectations, namely (1) students who have strong principles in religion, especially the character of nahdliyyin, (2) students who have the habit of praying (output), (3) being able to read wirid after prayer, and (4) becoming

prayer imam and bilal in the community (outcome). As the oldest Islamic school in the city of Surabaya, Khadijah High School is able to produce graduates who have a very strong religious character. This is due to the characteristics of the school that have been known by all Surabaya people, which is that SMA Khadijah is a school based on ahlusunnah wal jamaah (aswaja).

The findings of the research at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 related to parents' expectations of outputs and outcomes include (1) having a strong religion and practicing sunnah practices, (2) children having awareness of worshiping according to Islamic law. The student outcomes include (1) being able to practice the religious knowledge obtained at school in life, both individually and in society. There are three things offered by the school that are not parents' expectations, namely (1) having memorized at least juz 30 of the Quran, (2) carrying out the conditions of the Hajj manasik (output), and (3) having the ability to carry out fardlu kifayah related to the treatment of the deceased (outcome). SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Surabaya, although this school is a school of the Muhammadiyah organization, not all parents who enroll their children in the school have a Muhammadiyah background. Nevertheless, the customs in the school are very nuanced, as are the characteristics and character of Muhammadiyah.

## Parents' Expectations of Outputs and Outcomes in a Religious Context

In selecting a school for their children, parents are very concerned about the environment in the school so that it matches the background environment of the family. A Muslim prefers an Islamic school because it provides an environment that can foster awareness for children to pray appropriately. Awareness in conducting prayers is evidence of one's faith. This is in accordance with Clauss, K., Ahmed, S., & Salvaterra, M. (2013), who stated that Islamic schools provide Muslims with an environment that supports the growth of Islamic identity and beliefs so that they have strong faith principles.

Parents have an obligation to raise their children to be religious people, so they have special concern for religion-based schools (Swift, A., 2020). This is the main reason why parents choose to send their children to Islamic-based schools so that they have strong beliefs and principles in religion. Islamic school seeks to shape the character of children who uphold Islamic values. People choose Islamic-based schools so that their children have obedience and awareness in carrying out correct religious teachings. However, the role of the family is very important because character education is not only practiced at school. To increase students' devotion and awareness in praying, there are things that need to be done, such as providing insight into religious values, providing guidance, and setting an example. These three things are not only conducted at school but also at home with the guidance of parents (Ikhwan et al., 2019). Family background and environment have a significant impact on student character, especially in the context of religious education. (Biantoro, O. F., 2019). Therefore, parents hope that the school environment can assist their children to increase their awareness of praying correctly through habituation in prayer. The integration of religious values into school culture is carried out through the curriculum, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities, such as habituation to congregational prayer, commemoration of the prophet's maulid, dhuha prayer, and Islamic-based education (Bahiroh et al., 2020).

Islamic schools have a culture that reflects the belief in Islamic teachings. This culture is the expectation of parents to shape their children's character. The habituation of sunnah worship is carried out at school, such as sunnah prayers, praying in congregation, fasting, sharing activities, and others. Parents hope that the habituation of worship is not only practiced at school but also reflected in daily life at home. Conditioning in the school environment, such as the habituation of routine worship, both mandatory and sunnah, learning the Qur'an, maintaining cleanliness, exemplary, the value of independence and responsibility, honesty, and discipline (Yuniar et al., 2020). The habituation of dhuha prayer and the habit of praying at school are examples of sunnah worship. The habituation of dhuha prayer will have no benefit if it is not practiced routinely and sincerely (Haedar, F., 2019). Performing congregational prayers, internalizing the value of aqidah, understanding the value of sharia, and applying values/morals can create educational characters that give birth to superior generations (Nahar, S., 2020 & Suriadi, M., 2019).

Parents' expectations regarding outcomes are how students can be useful in society. In living their life, Muslims must maintain a relationship with Allah, a relationship with humans, and a relationship with the surrounding nature. These three things are part of the value of the worship. Parents really hope that their children get enough knowledge from school to be implemented in their social lives. Activities or habits of students while at school that can be implemented in the community are being involved in the care of the deceased, leading prayers, teaching the Qur'an in a mosque or musholla, and participating in religious activities in society. Therefore, it is very important for schools to provide life skills education that meets the expectations of parents, especially regarding the practice of worship in the community. Amirudin, A., & Muzaki, I. A. (2019) stated that life skills that must be provided in schools are Quran reading education, Quran recitation practice, preacher regeneration, and basic leadership development of Islam as a religion that is rahmatan lil alamin and highly values diversity as a form of tolerance. Social responsibility is part of Islamic values and beliefs (Zain et al., 2014).

**Outputs and Outcomes offered by Schools in a Religious Context**

A solid religious character is characteristic of Islamic schools. Religious character is the responsibility of stakeholders. Intellectual intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and emotional intelligence simultaneously and holistically are needed; this is the responsibility of stakeholders (Umami et al., 2019) who develop graduate profiles (outputs and outcomes) to respond to the needs of parents as consumers in schools (Juran & Godfrey, 1999). The higher the quality of educational products and services in schools, the more they contribute to students' knowledge, attitudes, values, and behaviors (Adams, 1993). If the three aspects mentioned above have reached quality standards that are carried out consistently to meet the needs of parents, then parents' expectations will be met (Karahan & Mete, 2014). Islamic schools must constantly upgrade the quality of graduates and educational services. Quality improvement is the most important part of the marketing of educational services. Therefore, Islamic schools must have outputs and outcomes, especially in religious aspects, because religious aspects characterize Islamic-based schools.

A person's belief is the foundation of religious life. Therefore, students must have a strong religious foundation in order to be able to be a filter in life in society. The three schools equip their students with strong religious knowledge so that students have strong principles and cannot be vulnerable to misleading teachings. Religious attitudes can be seen in the way students behave and obey when implementing religious teachings (Abdurrahman, 2016). Habituation of religious teachings at school, such as praying before and after learning, praying in congregation, and other activities.

One of the indicators that a person has a strong principle in religion is having a high awareness of carrying out religious teachings because a person already has a strong relationship with the Creator. Students' religious awareness can be measured by three aspects, which are students' relationship with God (prayer and fasting), students' relationship with other students (social interaction), the relationship between students and themselves (food, drink, clothing, and morals) (Mansur et al., 2018). Religious awareness refers to an integral part and integration that takes place in a complex manner regarding religious experiences, feelings, and everything related to religious actions in a person (Stark et al., 1968). A religious attitude is a form of a person's consistency in practicing the religion he adheres to or practicing something he believes in both mandatory and sunnah practices.

In Islam, sunnah practices are actions that earn rewards when performed and do not incur sin when left undone. These sunnah practices add value for every Muslim. Incorporating sunnah practices in schools is a key characteristic of Islamic education, involving teachers, students, school leaders, and all stakeholders. This habituation is carried out by all teachers and plays a significant role in fostering a religious attitude among students. A religious attitude is a tendency toward behaviors that reflect noble character and good ethics (Lisnawati, 2016). The habituation of sunnah practices can be achieved through motivation, modeling, and the application of discipline (Haedar, F., 2019). Providing motivation is an effort made by teachers in schools to encourage all students to regularly practice sunnah worship. Modeling involves teachers demonstrating behaviors and attitudes for students to imitate in their daily lives. Habituation trains students to engage in sunnah practices, such as performing the dhuha prayer and maintaining discipline while waiting for their turn to perform wudhu (ablution). Lastly, discipline involves administering consequences to deter students from negative behavior, leading to behavioral change. As stated by Khaidir and Suud (2020), the process of character development occurs through Islamic spiritual activities. Character education is also fostered through obligatory (fardhu) and sunnah worship, interactions with the Qur'an, and Islamic knowledge programs that encompass aspects of faith (iman), morals (akhlak), and proper conduct.

Islamic schools must have a strong foundation in religious education. The Quran and Hadith are the cornerstones of Islamic education, serving as guides for every Muslim in practicing their faith. Therefore, students' understanding of Islamic law (sharia) should be a priority for schools. To enhance students' religious attitudes, character education is necessary, which, according to Khaidir and Suud (2020), includes aspects of faith (iman), morals (akhlak), obligatory (fardhu) and sunnah worship, Quran education, and Islamic programs. As Muslims, it is not enough to have knowledge of Islam and an understanding of its teachings; one must genuinely practice their beliefs and knowledge. Understanding and knowledge about Islam do not guarantee that a person will have the awareness to implement the tenets of their faith.

Islamic educational institutions always provide Quran education. Traditionally, Quran education has been delivered in a conventional manner. However, with the rise of modern educational experiences and curricula, Quran education must adapt by incorporating information analysis and providing training for Quran teachers. The teaching methods for the Quran should adopt innovative educational approaches. Quran teachers should not limit their focus only to students who memorize the text; rather, they should aim to produce quality hafiz (memorizers) who are socially committed to teaching the Qur'an (Ramadane & Souad, 2017). Teaching the Quran is a primary focus in Islamic education, making it essential to pay attention to the components of Quranic instruction in teachers' practices. Therefore, training and courses related to Quran teaching should be prioritized by those in charge (Noh et al., 2013).

To become an imam in prayer, it is essential to understand a person's background, particularly their religious upbringing. In Islamic schools in Indonesia, students are taught to take on roles as imams and khatibs during

prayer. The background of an imam and khatib contributes to their recognition as respected religious leaders. The religious training in schools provides students with the opportunity to understand and practice various acts of worship.

Schools must provide students with the skills needed for living in society. Amirudin and Muzaki (2019) point out that the life skills most sought after by students in Islamic studies programs include reading the Quran, practicing recitation, worship practices, leadership education, and regenerating preachers. These life skills are a guarantee of the output that Islamic schools provide to parents, catering to the needs of students in their religious and social lives. Islam places great value on diversity and teaches its followers to be tolerant of other religions. Religious activities should not be limited to worshiping Allah but should also prioritize human values (Islam, 2020). Therefore, students should be equipped with a broader understanding of religion, enabling them to fulfill their roles as social beings who contribute positively to the community. Students should grasp the principles and legal provisions of Islam related to worship and matters of goodness for the common good. This way, when they engage in society—whether in business or social contexts—they can formulate a conceptual framework for social responsibility based on Islamic values (Zain et al., 2014).

The outputs and outcomes provided by schools often exceed parents' expectations. This indicates alignment between parents' hopes and the results offered by the school. This finding contrasts with previous studies that identified a gap in quality regarding students' expectations and perceptions of their school experience. Such a gap indicates student dissatisfaction with the services provided by the school (Sadia, 2020). In the community, it appears that schools tend to focus more on short-term outputs, while long-term outcomes are equally important, as they contribute to future societal well-being (Dal Mas et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that parents' expectations are met, particularly regarding their children's development of strong religious character. There is a notable alignment between what parents hope for and what the schools offer. This includes students' outputs, such as having a strong faith (aqidah), awareness and obedience in practicing religious teachings, and the habituation of sunnah practices. The outcomes reflect students applying religious teachings in their community, taking on roles such as imams in prayer and leading religious activities.

To enhance school quality, strategies should be based on parents' expectations. Therefore, to gain a competitive edge in the market, schools should use parents' expectations as a foundation for building their image. Meeting these expectations translates into parental satisfaction as consumers of educational services. When parents are satisfied with both the processes and outcomes of education, they are more likely to recommend the school to others, enhancing the school's reputation. Consequently, this leads to increased recognition and growing interest from the community.

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