Students' Moral Development at State Middle School 2 Padang Bolak Julu, North Padang Lawas Regency

Dina Mariana Hasibuan[1], Nursri Hayati[2], Yunaldi[3]
[1,2,3]Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia
Email: dinaahsb09@gmail.com; nursri@uinsyahada.ac.id; yunaldi@uinsyahada.ac.id

Abstract

This study describes the forms of students' moral development and analyzes the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu, North Padang Lawas Regency. It uses a descriptive qualitative approach involving the principal, PAI teacher, homeroom teacher, and eighth-grade students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and analyzed through data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that moral development is supported by religious activities and positive habits, including congregational prayer, short religious talks, Qur'an reading, prayers before and after lessons, greetings, cleanliness, discipline, and respect for teachers and peers. The PAI teacher acts as educator, mentor, role model, motivator, and supervisor. Challenges include peer and social-media influences, limited instructional time, and uneven parental support. Consistent cooperation between school and family is therefore needed.

Keywords: *Moral Development; Student; PAI Teacher; Habituation; Role Modeling.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan bentuk pembinaan akhlak siswa dan menganalisis peran guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu, Kabupaten Padang Lawas Utara. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan informan kepala sekolah, guru PAI, wali kelas, dan siswa kelas VIII. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi serta dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pembinaan dilakukan melalui kegiatan keagamaan dan pembiasaan perilaku positif, seperti salat berjamaah, kultum, membaca Al-Qur'an, doa sebelum dan sesudah pembelajaran, mengucapkan salam, menjaga kebersihan, disiplin, serta menghormati guru dan teman. Guru PAI berperan sebagai pendidik, pembimbing, teladan, motivator, dan pengawas. Kendala meliputi pengaruh pergaulan dan media sosial, keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran, serta dukungan orang tua yang belum merata. Pembinaan perlu dilakukan secara konsisten melalui kerja sama sekolah dan keluarga.

Kata kunci*: Pembinaan Akhlak; Siswa; Guru PAI; Pembiasaan; Keteladanan.*

Introduction

Education is not only aimed at developing students' knowledge and skills, but also at shaping their personality and noble morals. In the context of Islamic education, morals are a crucial element because they form the basis of a person's

behavior in their relationships with Allah SWT, fellow human beings, and the environment. Schools have a responsibility to instill these values through consistent learning and school culture. Character education also requires the involvement of educators, families, and the social environment so that the values learned are not merely understood but are realized in daily actions.(Sari & Ambayani, 2021)

Moral development in junior high school is crucial because students are in a developmental period influenced by peers, family, and digital media. During this period, students require guidance, concrete examples, reinforcement of habits, and fair implementation of rules. Guidance is not sufficient through momentary advice; values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and caring need to be practiced through repeated activities. A study of moral development methods in schools also places habituation, role modeling, and behavioral reinforcement as complementary strategies. SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu implements moral development through religious activities and habituation in the school environment. Activities found in the study included congregational prayer, short sermons, reading the Quran, praying before and after lessons, greetings, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting teachers and friends. Although the program has been implemented, behaviors that require guidance are still found, for example, some students are not consistent in participating in activities and sometimes use impolite words when joking with friends. This condition indicates that moral development needs to be carried out continuously, not only during Islamic Religious Education lessons.(Husaini, 2018)

Islamic Religious Education teachers hold a strategic position because they impart religious knowledge while also helping students connect teachings with real-life behavior. Teachers are expected to be role models, guiding students when they encounter behavioral issues, reminding them of rules, and collaborating with homeroom teachers and parents. Therefore, moral development is not solely the responsibility of one teacher, but rather a shared responsibility of the entire school community and family.

Based on this background, this study focuses on two questions: (1) what is the form of moral development of students at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu; and (2) what is the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in developing morals of students at the school. The study aims to describe the form of development implemented and analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers based on field findings. Morals can be understood as traits or tendencies embedded in a person and reflected through their behavior. From an Islamic educational perspective, morals are not only related to visible politeness, but also concern inner habits that encourage a person to do good. Good morals are manifested through honesty, trustworthiness, patience, responsibility, respect, and concern for others. discusses the relationship between morals, Sufism, and character education, while outlining the study of morals as an important part in the formation of Muslim personality.

In the school environment, students' morals can be observed through their daily behavior. Indicators include adherence to rules, discipline in attending lessons, politeness in speaking, respect for teachers, respect for peers, responsibility for tasks, cleanliness, and involvement in religious activities. These indicators should be understood as observable behavioral indicators, not as absolute measures of a student's overall personality. Guidance must continue to pay attention to the student's development process and provide opportunities for behavioral improvement. Moral education is closely related to character education. places character education from an Islamic perspective while explaining the concept and implementation of character education. In educational practice, moral values are more easily understood by students when accompanied by concrete examples and a supportive environment. Therefore, teacher behavior and school culture can strengthen or weaken the messages conveyed in learning.

Moral development means a planned effort to guide, habituate, direct, and reinforce good behavior. This development is carried out through a repetitive process, educational communication, role modeling, clear rules, and behavioral evaluation. The goal is not simply to make students obedient when supervised, but to foster awareness so they can apply good morals in various situations, including

outside of school. Development also needs to consider internal and external factors. Internal factors include student awareness, motivation, and habits. External factors include family parenting styles, social interactions, school culture, and exposure to social media. Therefore, schools cannot work alone. Consistency between the values instilled in school and habits at home is a crucial element in supporting moral development.(Aly, 2023)

Habituation is one way to foster moral development through the regular implementation of positive behaviors. Students are guided to perform the same activities repeatedly, such as praying, greeting, maintaining cleanliness, attending worship services together, and speaking politely. Repetition provides students with the opportunity to build habits and understand that morality is not just talked about but needs to be practiced. discusses methods and strategies for fostering student morality in schools, which are relevant to understanding the need for a consistent approach.

Modeling is a method where teachers and school staff demonstrate expected behavior from students. Teachers who are disciplined, honest, fair, patient, and polite provide concrete examples for students. Modeling needs to be aligned with advice and rules; if teacher behavior does not align with the values being taught, the message of guidance can lose its power. In addition to modeling, advice and motivation are provided to help students understand the moral reasoning behind a rule. Advice delivered in a personal manner that does not embarrass students can encourage reflection and behavioral improvement. Supervision and enforcement of rules are also part of guidance. Rules provide clear boundaries for expected behavior. If violations occur, teachers need to provide proportionate and educational reprimands. Rewards can be used to reinforce positive behavior, while sanctions are aimed at educating and improving, not demeaning, students. Communication with homeroom teachers and parents is necessary, especially when student behavior is repeated or requires more extensive support.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers perform several interrelated roles. As educators, they convey Islamic knowledge and values. As mentors, they

help students understand and improve their behavior. As role models, they demonstrate the application of moral values in everyday actions. As motivators, they encourage students to continuously improve themselves. As supervisors, they observe student behavior and address violations educationally. These roles also require collaboration with the principal, homeroom teachers, other subject teachers, and families. Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study views moral development as a process involving school programs, habituation, role modeling, advice, reinforcement of rules, and collaboration. Its effectiveness is determined not only by the existence of activities but also by the consistency of implementation and the school's ability to adapt its approach to students' needs.

Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because the research aims to describe the forms of moral development and the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers as they occur in the school context, rather than to statistically test the relationship between variables. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand the practices, experiences, and perspectives of informants based on the situations encountered in the field. An explanation of the qualitative approach serves as the basis for collecting and interpreting data contextually.(Rangkuti, 2016)

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu, North Padang Lawas Regency. Primary data sources included the principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, homeroom teachers, and eighth-grade students. Secondary data were obtained from documents, archives, and supporting materials relevant to the moral development program. Informants were selected because of their experience or direct involvement in the implementation of the development program at the school.

Data collection was conducted using three techniques. First, observation to observe student development activities and behavior in school settings, such as religious activities, discipline, and social interactions. Second, interviews to obtain explanations from the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, homeroom

teachers, and students regarding the program, implementation, obstacles, and the role of teachers. Third, documentation to supplement the observation and interview data with documents or archives related to the school and development activities. The use of several techniques helped researchers obtain a more comprehensive picture.

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In the reduction stage, relevant information was selected and grouped based on the research focus. In the presentation stage, the data was organized into a narrative description to facilitate understanding of the coaching patterns and teachers' roles. Next, the researcher drew conclusions by reviewing the consistency between observation, interview, and documentation data.

Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation, which involved comparing statements from the principal, Islamic Religious Education teacher, homeroom teacher, and students. Consistent information between informants was used to strengthen interpretations, while discrepancies in information needed to be understood in context. This study has limitations, including the inability to fully verify the level of openness of all informants, and the limited time and resources available to describe the results. Therefore, the results describe coaching practices at the research site and are not intended to be statistically generalized to all schools.

Education is not only aimed at developing students' knowledge and skills, but also at shaping their personality and noble morals. In the context of Islamic education, morals are a crucial element because they form the basis of a person's behavior in their relationships with Allah SWT, fellow human beings, and the environment. Schools have a responsibility to instill these values through consistent learning and school culture. Character education also requires the involvement of educators, families, and the social environment so that the values learned are not merely understood but are manifested in daily actions.

Moral development in students becomes crucial at the junior high school level because students are in a developmental period influenced by peers, family

environment, and digital media. During this period, students need guidance, concrete examples, reinforcement of habits, and fair implementation of rules. Guidance is not sufficient through momentary advice; values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, and caring need to be practiced through repeated activities. Studies on moral development methods in schools also place habituation, role modeling, and behavioral reinforcement as complementary strategies.(Sarah Ayu Ramadhani & Fitri Sari, 2022)

SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu implements moral development through religious activities and habituation in the school environment. Activities found in the study include congregational prayer, short sermons, reading the Quran, praying before and after lessons, greetings, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting teachers and friends. Although the program has been implemented, there are still behaviors that require guidance, for example, some students have not consistently participated in activities and sometimes use impolite words when joking with friends. This condition indicates that moral development needs to be carried out continuously, not only during Islamic Religious Education lessons.

Islamic Religious Education teachers hold a strategic position because they impart religious knowledge while also helping students connect teachings with real-life behavior. Teachers are expected to be role models, guiding students when they encounter behavioral issues, reminding them of rules, and collaborating with homeroom teachers and parents. Therefore, moral development is not solely the responsibility of one teacher, but rather a shared responsibility of the entire school community and family.

Based on this background, this study focuses on two questions: (1) what forms of moral development are implemented in students at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu; and (2) what is the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in developing students' morals at the school. The study aims to describe the forms of development implemented and analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers based on field findings.

Morals can be understood as traits or tendencies ingrained in a person and reflected through their behavior. From an Islamic educational perspective, morals relate not only to outward manners but also to inner habits that motivate one to do good. Good morals are manifested through honesty, trustworthiness, patience, responsibility, respect, and concern for others. This article discusses the relationship between morals, Sufism, and character education, while also outlining the study of morals as a crucial component in shaping the Muslim personality.(Maulidah, 2022)

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Moral education is closely related to character education. This article places character education within an Islamic perspective and explains the concept and implementation of character education. In educational practice, moral values are more easily understood by students when accompanied by concrete examples and a supportive environment. Therefore, teacher behavior and school culture can either strengthen or weaken the messages conveyed in learning.

Moral development involves planned efforts to guide, cultivate, direct, and reinforce good behavior. This development is carried out through a repetitive process, educational communication, role modeling, clear rules, and behavioral evaluation. The goal is not simply to ensure students' compliance under supervision, but to foster awareness so they can apply good morals in various situations, including outside of school.

Guidance also needs to consider internal and external factors. Internal factors include student awareness, motivation, and habits. External factors include family parenting styles, social interactions, school culture, and exposure to social

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Supervision and enforcement of rules are also part of coaching. Rules and regulations establish clear boundaries for expected behavior. If violations occur, teachers should provide appropriate and educational reprimands. Rewards can be used to reinforce positive behavior, while sanctions are aimed at educating and improving, not degrading, students. Communication with homeroom teachers and parents is essential, especially when student behavior is recurrent or requires more extensive support.

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students to continuously improve themselves. As supervisors, they observe student behavior and address violations educationally. These roles also require collaboration with the principal, homeroom teachers, other subject teachers, and families.

Thus, the conceptual framework of this study views moral development as a process involving school programs, habituation, role modeling, advice, rule reinforcement, and collaboration. Its effectiveness is determined not only by the existence of activities but also by the consistency of implementation and the school's ability to adapt its approach to students' needs.

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Result and Discussion

The research results show that moral development of students at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu is carried out through religious activities, positive behavioral habits, role models, advice, and enforcement of discipline. The program is designed to make moral values part of the school routine. Development takes place not only in the classroom but also through joint activities and daily interactions between students and teachers.

One form of guidance is congregational prayer, particularly the midday prayer (Dhuhr) in the school prayer room. This activity provides a space for students to practice time discipline, follow prayer procedures, and fulfill communal obligations. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers accompany students so that

the activity is not only instructional but also hands-on practice. The school also conducts the Duha prayer, as documented in the research findings. These routine worship activities are expected to foster spiritual responsibility and behavioral discipline.

The next activity is a short religious lecture and Quranic recitation. The religious lecture provides an opportunity to remind students of good values, while Quranic recitation reinforces religious habits within the school environment. Prayers before and after lessons are also held to foster an orderly learning atmosphere and connect academic activities with spiritual values. At the end of the activity, a prayer of expiation is recited as part of a communal practice.

Moral development is also evident in social etiquette, such as greeting teachers, respecting elders, appreciating friends, maintaining cleanliness, and using polite language. Schools enforce rules regarding student attendance, neatness, and behavior. These rules serve as a reminder that morality is also demonstrated through responsibility for the community.

Interviews with the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, homeroom teachers, and students confirmed that the guidance program is implemented through religious activities and daily habits. However, its implementation still requires reinforcement, as not all students consistently demonstrate the same level of practice. For example, students were still found using regional slang when joking with peers. This finding does not negate the program's benefits, but rather demonstrates the need for repeated guidance and an approach tailored to the student's situation.

The habituation method is the primary approach in developing students' morals. Students are encouraged to regularly engage in positive activities, such as greeting, praying before and after class, attending congregational prayers, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting teachers and peers. Habituation allows values that initially come from teacher instructions to become familiar practices within the school. However, positive habits need to be maintained consistently so that they are not only practiced when the teacher is supervising.(Alfazri et al., 2025)

The role model method is implemented through teachers' attitudes in daily life. Islamic Religious Education teachers strive to demonstrate discipline, courtesy, honesty, patience, and respect. Modeling is important because students can see the connection between religious material and real-life actions. When teachers are punctual, speak politely, and treat students fairly, these values are concretely exemplified. The principal and homeroom teachers also contribute by supporting an orderly school culture.

The counseling method is used when students need guidance or commit an offense. Based on interview findings, teachers don't always reprimand students publicly, but may call them privately to provide religious counseling. This personal approach helps maintain students' self-esteem and provides an opportunity to understand mistakes. This method demonstrates that guidance requires more than just obedience, but also fosters awareness and responsibility.

Motivation and behavioral reinforcement are provided to encourage students to maintain good habits. Schools also implement rewards and sanctions aimed at educating students. Sanctions can take the form of rewarding assignments or calling parents if necessary. Their implementation should take into account the type of violation, the student's condition, and the goal of improvement. Consistent, proportionate, and non-degrading sanctions are more in line with educational goals than punishments that merely instill fear.(Anastasya et al., 2025)

Supervision is carried out by teachers and homeroom teachers through observations of student discipline and behavior. When issues requiring follow-up arise, coordination between teachers and communication with parents is crucial. Therefore, school coaching methods combine habituation, role modeling, advice, motivation, supervision, and reinforcement of rules. Success depends on consistent implementation and the appropriateness of the approach to students' needs.

Research findings show that moral development has become an integral part of school activities and provides a space for students to practice positive behavior. Students reported that they regularly participate in communal prayers, congregational prayers, greetings, and respecting teachers. This information aligns

with the homeroom teacher's explanation regarding disciplinary supervision and student behavioral guidance. The similarity of statements from several informants suggests that moral development activities are indeed part of the school routine.

However, students' morals cannot be considered uniform. Some positive behaviors are evident, but some still require further guidance. One example cited in the research findings is the use of profanity when joking with friends. This behavior demonstrates that students still need guidance in choosing language and controlling their behavior when interacting with peers. Guidance must be provided without labeling students negatively, as behavior can be improved through consistent guidance and habits.

Discipline is also a crucial aspect. Worship activities and discipline train students to follow schedules, respect rules, and be responsible for shared activities. However, the success of this training program cannot be measured solely by student attendance at formal activities. It's also important to consider whether the values instilled are beginning to manifest in communication, responsibility, and how students treat others. Therefore, ongoing behavioral observations are necessary across various school settings.

Environmental factors also influence moral development. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers have stated that social interactions and social media can sometimes exert a stronger influence than guidance provided solely at school. Furthermore, limited time for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) classes limits teachers' ability to address all behavioral issues in depth. Parental support is also not always evenly distributed, even though habit formation requires continuity between school and home.(Zamroni et al., 2017)

Thus, students' moral development can be understood as a continuously evolving process. School programs provide activities and guidance that support positive behavior, but consistency and continuity of support for students still need to be strengthened. Schools need to develop simple evaluation methods, such as behavioral development records, student reflections, and regular communication

with homeroom teachers and parents. These evaluations should be used to guide improvement, not simply label students as good or bad.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a crucial role in fostering students' morals at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu. Interviews revealed that PAI teachers not only deliver religious instruction but also strive to instill the values of honesty, discipline, responsibility, courtesy, and mutual respect. These roles are realized through role modeling, fostering habits, guidance, advice, motivation, and monitoring student behavior.

First, Islamic Religious Education teachers act as educators. During lessons, they explain religious teachings and connect them to real-life actions at school. Knowledge of morals is expected to help students understand the importance of behaving honestly, respecting others, and obeying rules. Integrating moral values into the subject matter ensures that development is inseparable from the learning process.

Second, Islamic Religious Education teachers act as role models or good examples. Teachers strive to demonstrate disciplined, polite, patient, and honest behavior so that students have an example to observe. Accounts from Islamic Religious Education teachers, homeroom teachers, and students all point to the same finding: that students are often reminded through examples and direct guidance. Modeling is effective when it is carried out consistently, even when teachers encounter violations or differences of opinion.

Third, Islamic Religious Education teachers act as guides and counselors. When students make mistakes, teachers provide guidance so they understand the impact of their behavior and avoid repeating the mistake. One student explained that teachers frequently remind them to be kind, disciplined, honest, and respectful of others. Another student reported that teachers take them to the prayer room and accompany them during the Dhuhr prayer and provide personal counseling for inappropriate behavior.

Fourth, Islamic Religious Education teachers act as motivators and supervisors. They encourage students to participate in coaching activities and

monitor the implementation of rules. They also coordinate with the principal, homeroom teachers, and other teachers to address behaviors that require attention. This collaborative role is crucial because student behaviors emerge in many situations, not just during Islamic Religious Education lessons.(Sahnan, 2019)

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers face several challenges, including the influence of the outside environment, the use of social media, time constraints, and uneven parental support. Efforts include strengthening role models, integrating moral values into learning, increasing religious activities outside of class hours, and communicating with homeroom teachers and parents. These findings indicate that the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers is strengthened when supported by the school system and family collaboration.

The research results show that moral development at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu is implemented through a combination of religious programs and behavioral habits. Congregational prayer, religious sermons, Quran reading, group prayers, greetings, and discipline provide opportunities for students to practice values directly. This pattern aligns with the idea that moral education needs to be present in habits and the educational environment, not just delivered as knowledge (Nata, 2017; Majid and Andayani, 2012).

Habituation is the primary method because positive behavior requires repetition. However, habituation becomes more meaningful when students understand the reasons behind the activities. For example, attending congregational prayers is not only aimed at ensuring students adhere to the schedule but also fosters discipline, responsibility, and togetherness. Similarly, greeting and maintaining cleanliness need to be explained as forms of respect and care. Thus, school routines can connect the dimensions of worship and social morals.(Suhayib, 2016)

Teacher role models are a crucial element in this process. Research findings show that students observe teacher behavior and receive direct instruction. This reinforces the understanding that teachers play a role not merely as transmitters of material, but as figures who demonstrate the application of values. In line with Gunawan's (2014) discussion of character education, character formation requires

E-ISSN: 2986-4658
*DOI:*10.62086/al-murabbi.v4i2.1370

consistency between the values taught and practices within the educational environment. Role models need to be supported by a school culture so that students receive relatively consistent messages from various educators.

A personalized counseling approach also seems relevant to students' circumstances. When students commit violations, non-shaming reprimands can maintain the teacher-student relationship while also providing an opportunity for reflection. Rewards and sanctions need to be placed within an educational framework, with the goal of helping students take responsibility and improve their behavior. Therefore, rule enforcement should not be a standalone approach, but should be accompanied by explanation, guidance, and follow-up.

The findings also show that moral development faces challenges outside of school. Social interactions and social media can shape students' speech and habits, while limited time and family support impact the continuity of development. This situation underscores the importance of collaboration between school and home. Parents can help maintain the consistency of the values instilled by teachers, while schools need to provide easy communication channels that are not used only when problems arise.(Achmad Ghiyats Setiawan et al., 2024)

Overall, coaching at the research site has been implemented through concrete activities and support from various school elements. However, long-term success is not solely measured by program implementation, but rather by the consistency of student behavior across various situations. Because this research is qualitative and descriptive and conducted at a single school, the findings should be read as a contextual overview. Further research could examine student experiences in more depth or observe behavioral development over a longer period.

Conclusion

Moral development of students at SMP Negeri 2 Padang Bolak Julu is implemented through religious programs and positive behavioral habits. Forms of activities found include congregational prayer, Duha prayer, short sermons, reading the Qur'an, prayers before and after learning, greetings, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting teachers and friends. Development is also reinforced through school

regulations and behavioral supervision. The development methods used include habituation, role modeling, advice, motivation, supervision, and educational rewards and sanctions. Habituation provides opportunities for students to practice good behavior repeatedly, while teacher role models provide direct examples. Personal advice helps students understand mistakes without being embarrassed in front of their friends.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers act as educators, mentors, role models, motivators, and supervisors of student behavior. They integrate moral values into learning, assist with religious activities, remind students of commendable behavior, and collaborate with the principal and homeroom teachers. Although the program is well underway, the development still faces challenges such as the influence of social media and peer groups, limited learning time, and uneven family support. Therefore, moral development needs to be carried out consistently and collaboratively.

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E-ISSN: 2986-4658

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