



Actualization of the Values of Gratitude and Moderation of Consumption through the Free Nutritious Meal Program

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Abstract

Keywords:

Free Nutritious Meal Program;
Islamic Education;
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The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) aims to improve students' nutritional quality and has the potential to serve as a medium for instilling Islamic educational values, particularly gratitude and consumption moderation. This study aims to analyze the actualization of these values through the MBG Program based on Surah Al-A'raf verse 31 and Surah An-Nahl verse 114. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study method in an early childhood education institution. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The findings show that the MBG Program actualizes gratitude through praying, appreciating food, and recognizing food as a blessing from Allah SWT. Consumption moderation is actualized through eating sufficiently, finishing meals, and avoiding food waste. Teachers and parents play an important role in strengthening these habits. The study concludes that the MBG Program not only supports children's nutritional needs but also serves as a medium for Islamic character education.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

Program Makan Bergizi Gratis;
Pendidikan Islam;
Anak Usia Dini;

Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) bertujuan meningkatkan kualitas gizi peserta didik dan berpotensi menjadi sarana penanaman nilai pendidikan Islam, khususnya nilai syukur dan moderasi konsumsi. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis aktualisasi kedua nilai tersebut melalui Program MBG berdasarkan perspektif Surah Al-A'raf ayat 31 dan Surah An-Nahl ayat 114. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus pada lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Program MBG mengaktualisasikan nilai syukur melalui kebiasaan berdoa, menghargai makanan, dan menyadari

makanan sebagai nikmat Allah SWT. Nilai moderasi konsumsi diwujudkan melalui kebiasaan makan secukupnya, menghabiskan makanan, dan menghindari pemborosan. Guru dan orang tua berperan penting dalam memperkuat kebiasaan tersebut. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa Program MBG tidak hanya mendukung pemenuhan kebutuhan gizi anak, tetapi juga menjadi sarana pendidikan karakter Islam.

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1. Introduction

Islamic education is not only oriented towards developing cognitive aspects, but also emphasizes the formation of character and morals of students (Aghnaita et al., 2024). From an Islamic perspective, education is directed at forming people who are faithful, pious, and have noble morals through the process of internalizing values derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah (Nisa & Jasiah, 2026). Therefore, character education becomes an integral part of the educational process, including at the early childhood education level (Khatimah & Zulkarnain, 2025). Early childhood is a very important period in the formation of habits and character because in this phase children more easily accept values through habituation, role models, and direct experience in everyday life (Hamdi & Hidayati, 2025).

Amidst current social developments, uncontrolled consumption behavior poses a challenge in children's education. Easy access to food and a wide variety of consumption options often lead to excessive consumption, a lack of appreciation for food, and a low awareness of gratitude for the blessings received (De Ridder & Gillebaart, 2022). The phenomenon of food waste, excessive pickiness, and a lack of understanding of the importance of wise food consumption can be seen even from an early age. This situation demonstrates the importance of instilling gratitude and moderate consumption as part of character education based on Islamic teachings.

In an effort to improve the nutritional quality of students, the Indonesian government launched the Free Nutritious Meal Program (Yelvianti, 2025). This program aims to support students' nutritional needs to support optimal growth, development, and readiness to learn. However, the MBG program encompasses more than just health; it also has the potential to be a valuable educational tool. Through this program, children can learn to appreciate food, consume healthily and proportionately, and cultivate a sense of gratitude for the blessings they receive. Thus, the MBG program can be positioned as a contextual learning medium that integrates health and character education.

From a Quranic perspective, the values of gratitude and moderation in consumption are firmly grounded. Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31, commands humans to eat and drink and prohibits excess (israf), as

Allah does not love those who transgress. This verse demonstrates the importance of balance and self-control in consumption activities (Mohd et al., 2023). In addition, Surah An-Nahl verse 114 commands humans to consume halal and good sustenance and to be grateful for the blessings that Allah SWT has given (Arwani et al., 2022). These two verses contain relevant educational values to be instilled from an early age, particularly in developing healthy, responsible, and spiritual consumption habits.

The concept of gratitude in Islamic education is understood as an attitude of acknowledging, accepting, and properly utilizing the blessings of Allah SWT, manifested through words, feelings, and actions (Herman et al., 2024). Gratitude is not only interpreted as a verbal expression, but also reflected in the behavior of appreciating blessings and using them for good purposes. Meanwhile, consumption moderation refers to the behavior of consuming something proportionally, not excessively, and not wasting the blessings that Allah SWT has given (Raihanun & Martiana, 2025). These two values are strongly relevant in developing children's character because they foster a sense of responsibility, discipline, and concern for their resources.

In the context of early childhood education, the inculcation of values is more effectively achieved through real-life activities that are closely related to children's everyday experiences. Eating is a routine activity that can be utilized as a meaningful medium for value education. Therefore, the Free Nutritious Meal Program has significant potential to serve as a means of actualizing the values of gratitude and consumption moderation through habituation and role modeling provided by teachers and parents. The program not only supports children's health and nutritional needs but also provides an opportunity to integrate character education with Islamic values into children's daily lives.

Several previous studies have shown that nutritional programs in educational institutions contribute to improving students' health, nutritional status, and concentration. Other studies have also demonstrated that character formation in early childhood is more effectively developed through continuous habituation and role modeling. However, studies specifically examining the Free Nutritious Meal Program as a medium for actualizing Islamic educational values remain relatively limited. Existing research has predominantly emphasized the health, nutritional, and academic benefits of meal programs, while the spiritual and character-building dimensions, particularly those grounded in Qur'anic values, have received comparatively limited attention.

Based on these conditions, a research gap exists regarding the use of the Free Nutritious Meal Program not merely as an intervention to fulfill children's nutritional needs, but also as an educational medium for developing Islamic character in early childhood. Previous studies have generally examined nutritional programs and character education as separate domains. Research on meal programs has primarily focused on children's health, nutritional status, and concentration, whereas research on character education has tended to emphasize habituation and role modeling without specifically connecting them to nutritional programs. This study addresses this gap by examining mealtime as part

of the educational process through which the values of gratitude and consumption moderation can be actualized. These two values are analyzed based on Surah Al-A'raf verse 31 and Surah An-Nahl verse 114 and examined through the practices of habituation and role modeling carried out by teachers and parents in an Islamic early childhood education setting. Through this approach, the Free Nutritious Meal Program is viewed not merely as an effort to fulfill children's nutritional needs, but also as part of an educational process that integrates nutritional fulfillment, character development, and the practice of Qur'anic values in children's everyday activities.

The values of gratitude and consumption moderation are highly relevant to character formation in early childhood. Gratitude can be cultivated by developing children's awareness that food is a blessing and provision from Allah, which can be expressed through appropriate eating behavior, appreciation of food, and thankfulness for the food they receive. Meanwhile, consumption moderation can be developed by encouraging children to consume food appropriately and proportionately, avoid excessive consumption, refrain from wasting food, and develop responsible eating habits. These two values can be naturally integrated into children's daily mealtime activities through consistent habituation and role modeling by teachers and parents.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the actualization of the values of gratitude and consumption moderation through the Free Nutritious Meal Program from the perspectives of Surah Al-A'raf verse 31 and Surah An-Nahl verse 114. The study employs a case study approach at RA Hidayaturrahman in Palangka Raya City, an Islamic educational institution implementing the Free Nutritious Meal Program. By focusing on the relationship between nutritional fulfillment programs, everyday educational practices, and Qur'anic values, this study seeks to provide a perspective that has received limited attention in previous research. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of Islamic education studies, particularly by demonstrating how nutritional fulfillment programs can be utilized as practical media for cultivating Islamic character and Qur'anic values in early childhood.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of how the values of gratitude and moderation in consumption are actualized through the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program within an early childhood education context. The research was conducted at RA Hidayaturrahman, Palangka Raya City, from January to February 2026. The site was purposively selected because it is an Islamic-based early childhood education institution that implements the Free Nutritious Meal Program and aligns with the research focus.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their involvement in the program's implementation and the reinforcement of values through it. The participants consisted of 29 children from Group B, two teachers, and five parents. All children in Group B were observed during mealtime activities to identify behaviors

reflecting gratitude and moderation in consumption. Teachers were selected due to their roles in implementation, habituation, and modeling, while parents were chosen to provide information regarding the reinforcement of these values within the family environment. The head of the RA was also included as an informant to provide information on policies and program implementation at the institutional level.

Data collection was carried out through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations took place during mealtime activities to monitor program implementation and children's behavior—specifically regarding gratitude, appreciation for food, proportionate consumption, and efforts to avoid waste. Interviews were conducted with the head of the RA, the two teachers, and the five parents to explore strategies for habituation and modeling, as well as the factors supporting or hindering the actualization of these values. Documentation was used to supplement the data, utilizing program documents, activity logs, photographs, and relevant archives. Research procedures included obtaining permits and coordinating with the institution, conducting preliminary observations, collecting data through observation and interviews, gathering documentation, and performing data analysis and verification.

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data credibility was maintained through source and technique triangulation by comparing information from the RA (Islamic kindergarten) principal, teachers, parents, child observations, and documentary data. Ethical considerations were prioritized given that the study involved young children; the researcher obtained institutional permission and consent from the children's parents or guardians. Observations focused on routine activities without introducing interventions that might disrupt the children's engagement. The confidentiality of all participants was protected, and documentation involving children was used solely for research purposes and with appropriate consent.

3. Result and Discussion

Free Nutritious Meal Program as a Medium for Values Education in Early Childhood

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrehman in Palangka Raya City is implemented on a schedule, involving various parties, including the school, teachers, students, and parents. During the program, the food provided to students not only serves to meet nutritional needs but also serves as a learning tool integrated with character development.

Observations indicate that teachers utilize MBG activities as part of the daily learning process. Before receiving food, children are encouraged to pray and listen to the teacher's instructions on the importance of being grateful for the blessings given by Allah SWT. Teachers also provide simple explanations about the importance of maintaining health through consuming nutritious food.

Parental involvement is evident through their support for the program and reinforcement of habits established at school. Based on interviews, several parents stated that they continue the habits instilled by teachers, such as teaching their children to finish their meals, avoid excessive pickiness, and practice expressing gratitude when receiving food.

Throughout the program, several habits are consistently practiced, including praying before and after meals, maintaining hygiene before eating, respecting the food received, and avoiding wasting food. These habits are repeated so that they become part of the children's daily lives.



Figure 1
Implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program at RA Hidayatullahman, Palangka Raya City

Research findings indicate that the Free Nutritious Meal Program not only fulfills nutritional needs but also serves as a medium for character education for early childhood. Activities related to eating provide concrete experiences that are close to children's lives, making them easy to use as a means of instilling Islamic values. Through these activities, children have the opportunity to learn to appreciate God's blessings, maintain their health, and develop responsible consumption behaviors.

From an Islamic education perspective, the process of character formation in early childhood is more effectively achieved through habituation (*ta'widiyah*) and role modeling (*uswah hasanah*) (Islam et al., 2023). Program MBG menyediakan ruang bagi guru untuk menerapkan Both methods are implemented directly in daily activities. When teachers model respect for food and encourage children to follow established rules, the internalization of values occurs naturally and sustainably.

Furthermore, the implementation of MBG reflects the principles of experiential learning. Children not only receive explanations about the importance of gratitude and avoiding excessive behavior, but also practice these values through real-life activities. This direct experience allows children to understand the meaning of a value through repeated actions in their daily lives (Hadi, 2025). Thus, the Free Nutritious Meal Program can be seen as an educational medium that integrates health aspects, positive behavioral habits, and instilling Islamic educational values in early childhood.

Actualizing the Value of Gratitude through the Free Nutritious Meal Program

Research results indicate that the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrahman in Palangka Raya City is an effective medium for instilling the value of gratitude in early childhood. The actualization of this value is evident through various habits implemented consistently throughout the program.

One form of habit identified is praying before and after meals. Based on observations, teachers guide children to recite a prayer before receiving and consuming food. After the meal, the children are also accustomed to reciting a prayer as a form of gratitude for the blessings God has given them. This activity is repeated so that it becomes part of the students' daily routine.

Furthermore, the value of gratitude is also reflected in the children's attitude of appreciating the food they receive. Teachers continually remind them that the food they receive is a blessing that must be cared for and not wasted. Through this guidance, most children demonstrate positive behaviors such as accepting food enthusiastically, trying to finish what they receive, and not handling food carelessly.

Children's responses to food also demonstrate the development of gratitude. Interviews with teachers and parents revealed that children appear happy when receiving food and are becoming accustomed to expressing gratitude to those who provide it. Several parents also reported that their children are beginning to show appreciation for food at home and are better understanding the importance of not throwing away food that is still edible.

From the perspective of Islamic Education, gratitude is one of the fundamental values that needs to be instilled from an early age (Risnawati & Priyantoro, 2024). Gratitude is not only manifested through words, but also through an attitude of accepting, appreciating and utilizing the blessings of Allah SWT responsibly (Lestari et al., 2025). Therefore, teaching gratitude to young children needs to be done through concrete and repeated practices in daily life.

The findings of this study can be analyzed based on Surah An-Nahl verse 114:

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

"So eat from what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and be grateful for Allah's blessings, if it is Him that you worship." (Surah An-Nahl, 16:114)

This verse contains two main messages: the command to consume lawful and good sustenance and the obligation to be grateful for the blessings of Allah SWT. In the context of the Free Nutritious Meal Program, the food provided to students not only serves to fulfill nutritional needs but also serves as a means of spiritual education, teaching children to recognize that food is a gift from Allah that must be appreciated (Setiawan et al., 2025). The attitude of appreciating food, finishing the food received, and avoiding wasting food is a form of implementing gratitude that is in accordance with the message of the verse (Rofiq & Khusnudin, 2025).

Furthermore, the commentators explain that gratitude is not only expressed through words (*syukr bi al-lisan*), but also through belief in the heart (*syukr bi al-qalb*) and real actions (*syukr bi al-'amal*) (Hajar & Aji, 2021). Research findings indicate that these three dimensions of gratitude are introduced to children through the habituation process carried out during the MBG program. Children are not only encouraged to recite prayers as a verbal expression of gratitude, but are also taught to appreciate food through concrete actions, such as finishing food and not wasting it.

Thus, the Free Nutritious Meal Program not only contributes to meeting students' nutritional needs but also serves as a medium for actualizing the value of gratitude, grounded in the teachings of the Quran. Through ongoing habituation, the value of gratitude can be instilled from an early age as part of Islamic character development, reflected in appreciating and responsibly using Allah's blessings.

Actualizing the Value of Moderate Consumption through the Free Nutritious Meal Program

Research results show that the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrahman, Palangka Raya City, contributes to instilling the value of moderate consumption in early childhood. This value is evident through various habits implemented during the program, both by teachers and through parental support within the family.

One example of actualizing the value of moderate consumption is seen in children's habit of not wasting food. Based on observations, teachers routinely remind students to value food and not to waste or intentionally throw it away. Children are also guided to understand that the food they receive is a blessing that must be cared for and utilized wisely. These habits gradually shape children's awareness of being more responsible for the food they receive.

Furthermore, children are taught to consume only enough food according to their needs. Teachers provide guidance so that students do not overdo it. In practice, children are encouraged to recognize their own ability to finish food to avoid waste. This habit helps children understand the importance of balanced eating from an early age. Other findings indicate efforts to control children's eating behavior. Through teacher guidance, children are guided to avoid excessive pickiness and encouraged to try a variety of nutritious foods. Several parents also reported that after participating in the program, their children began to exhibit behavioral changes, such as a greater appreciation for food, reduced excessive requests for specific foods, and greater acceptance of the variety of foods served at home.

From the perspective of Islamic Education, moderation in consumption is an important value that teaches balance in fulfilling life's needs (Sadeh, 2024). This concept emphasizes that consumption activities must be carried out proportionally, not excessively, and not lead to waste (De et al., 2025). Instilling the value of moderation from an early age is important so that children are able to develop healthy, responsible lifestyle habits that are in line with Islamic teachings (Hulu & Sahyan, 2025).

The Free Nutritious Meal Program provides real-life experiences for children to practice moderate consumption behavior. By practicing finishing food, not wasting it, and consuming enough, children learn to control their desires and appreciate the resources they have (Amini et al., 2026). This direct experience is an effective learning tool because children not only receive verbal advice but also practice the values taught in their daily lives.

The findings of this study can be analyzed based on Allah SWT's words in Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا اٰدَمُ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تَسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ
"O children of Adam, dress yourselves properly whenever you are at a place of worship. Eat and drink, but do not be excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who are excessive." (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:31).

This verse contains the basic principle of moderation in consumption. Islam does not prohibit humans from enjoying food and drink as part of fulfilling life's necessities, but emphasizes the importance of self-control to avoid falling into excessive behavior (israf) (Amini et al., 2026). In the interpretation of the scholars, the prohibition of israf is not only related to the amount of food consumed, but also includes the behavior of wasting food and using Allah's blessings disproportionately (Rohmana, 2022).

In the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program, the value of moderate consumption is reflected in various habituation practices that teach children to take food according to their needs, finish the food they receive, and avoid wasteful behavior. These practices represent a concrete application of the message of Surah Al-A'raf verse 31, adapted to the developmental stage of early childhood. Through repeated activities, children gradually learn that food should be appreciated, consumed in moderation, and not wasted.

Field findings indicate that these habits are developed through teachers' guidance, supervision, and role modeling during mealtimes. Teachers not only remind children to finish their food but also encourage them to take portions according to their ability and needs. One teacher explained, "We always remind the children to take only as much food as they need. If they are still hungry, they can take more, but they should not take too much and then leave it unfinished." Another teacher added, "The children are also taught not to waste food. We tell them that food is a blessing from Allah, so it should be appreciated and finished."

Observations during the meal activities also showed the implementation of these habituation practices. Children were guided to take appropriate portions, finish the food they had taken, and avoid throwing food away. The consistent application of these practices encouraged children to develop more responsible behavior toward food. In this context, mealtime becomes part of the character education process that takes place naturally through children's everyday activities.

Thus, the Free Nutritious Meal Program serves not only to fulfill children's nutritional needs but also as a medium for character education through the habituation of proportional and responsible consumption. Developing these habits from an early age can foster discipline, responsibility, appreciation for food, and gratitude for Allah's blessings

by encouraging children to avoid excessive consumption and unnecessary waste.

The Role of Teachers and Parents in Actualizing Values

Research results indicate that the successful actualization of the values of gratitude and moderate consumption through the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrahman in Palangka Raya City is inseparable from the roles of teachers and parents. Both parties are key actors in the process of instilling these values through role models, habituation, and ongoing mentoring.

The role of teachers is evident through the role models demonstrated during the program's implementation. Based on observations, teachers not only provide instructions to children but also directly demonstrate behaviors that reflect the values of gratitude and moderate consumption. Teachers guide children in prayer before and after meals, remind them of the importance of appreciating food, and set an example of not wasting food. These teachers' attitudes and behaviors serve as models that children easily imitate in their daily lives.

In addition to teachers, parents also play a crucial role in reinforcing the values instilled in school. Interviews indicate that most parents strive to continue the habits taught by teachers, such as guiding children to pray before meals, finishing the food served, and reminding children not to waste food. Parental guidance helps children gain consistent experiences between the school and family environments.

Furthermore, research has found that values reinforcement occurs in an integrated manner at home and school. Communication between teachers and parents regarding children's development and the habits they need to develop is a supporting factor in the process of actualizing values (Latifa et al., 2024). The continuity of habituation in both environments allows children to gain repeated learning experiences, thereby ingraining the values of gratitude and moderate consumption into their daily behavior.

From an Islamic educational perspective, role modeling (*uswah hasanah*) is one of the most effective educational methods in shaping a child's character (Khakleri et al., 2025). Early childhood children tend to learn through imitation, or copying the behavior of those around them. Therefore, teachers and parents have a responsibility to be role models in implementing the values they wish to instill in their children (Jadidah et al., 2024). This concept of exemplary behavior is in line with the word of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow, for anyone who hopes for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often.

This verse explains that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is the best example (*uswah hasanah*) for mankind (Wagola et al., 2025). This value contains the meaning that the educational process is not only carried out through advice, but also through real examples that can be observed and imitated by students (Anwar & Tiodara, 2021).

In addition to exemplary behavior, the actualization of values is also supported by the habituation method (*ta'widiyah*). In Islamic

education, habituation is understood as an educational process carried out continuously so that a behavior develops into a habit and character (Nurizah & Amrullah, 2024). Through repeated activities, such as praying before and after meals, finishing the food they receive, and maintaining a healthy attitude toward food, children have the opportunity to gradually internalize the values of gratitude and moderate consumption. Consistently practicing these habits allows these values to become part of children's daily behavior.

Research findings indicate that a combination of role modeling and habituation is an effective strategy for instilling the values of gratitude and moderate consumption in early childhood. Teachers act as role models in the school environment, while parents reinforce these habits within the family. The synergy between these two educational environments allows for a more optimal process of value actualization because children gain consistent experiences in various daily life situations.

Therefore, the success of the Free Nutritious Meal Program as a medium for values education is determined not only by the program's implementation but also by the active involvement of teachers and parents in implementing the model modeling and habituation methods. Both methods are relevant approaches in Islamic education for developing grateful, responsible, and moderate consumption behavior in children from an early age.

The Relevance of Surah Al-A'raf and An-Nahl to Consumption Education in Early Childhood

Research results indicate that various practices implemented in the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrahman in Palangka Raya City reflect Quranic values related to gratitude and moderation in consumption. Field findings indicate that children are becoming accustomed to praying before and after meals, appreciating the food they receive, and striving to finish their food without wasting it. Furthermore, children are showing a more open attitude toward the food provided and are less likely to overeat.

Other findings indicate the involvement of teachers and parents in guiding children's consumption behaviors to align with the values taught in Islam. Teachers reinforce the importance of preserving food as a blessing from Allah SWT, while parents continue these practices at home. This ongoing pattern of habituation results in behaviors that reflect an appreciation for food and an awareness of wise consumption.

In general, the behaviors that emerged during the program demonstrate a congruence between the educational practices implemented and the values contained in the Quran. The value of gratitude is reflected in appreciating food and recognizing it as a blessing from Allah SWT. Meanwhile, the value of moderation in consumption is evident in the habit of consuming food in moderation and avoiding wasteful behavior.

The findings of this study can be analyzed through the perspective of Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31. This verse emphasizes the principle of balance in consumption. Islam does not prohibit the fulfillment of physical needs, but rather sets limits to prevent humans from falling into

excessive behavior (*israf*), which can lead to waste and a loss of responsibility for the blessings bestowed by Allah SWT (Penelitian et al., 2023). In the context of early childhood education, this message can be translated into the habit of consuming food according to needs, avoiding the behavior of throwing away food, and building awareness to use resources wisely (Campbell & Speldewinde, 2022). These practices are evident in the implementation of the MBG Program, which teaches children to finish their meals and avoid overeating.

On the other hand, Surah An-Nahl, verse 114, provides a spiritual dimension to consumption education. This verse demonstrates that eating is not only about fulfilling physical needs but also a means of fostering spiritual awareness through gratitude to Allah SWT. In this study, the value of gratitude is reflected in the habit of praying before and after meals, appreciating the food received, and children's awareness of not wasting food. These habits help children understand that food is a gift from God that should be accepted and utilized wisely.

An analysis of these two verses shows that consumption education in Islam has a holistic dimension. Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31, emphasizes self-control and moderation in consumption, while Surah An-Nahl, verse 114, emphasizes gratitude and spiritual awareness. These two values complement each other in shaping healthy, responsible, and faith-based consumption behavior. A grateful person will more deeply appreciate the blessings received, while moderation in consumption is a concrete manifestation of that gratitude. In the context of early childhood education, these two verses provide a strong normative foundation for the development of Qur'an-based character education. The value of gratitude helps children develop spiritual awareness and an attitude of appreciation for the blessings of Allah SWT, while the value of moderate consumption forms healthy, disciplined, and responsible living habits. Through the Free Nutritious Meal Program, these two values can be actualized concretely through repeated habits in daily life. Thus, the MBG Program not only contributes to meeting students' nutritional needs but also serves as a means of implementing Islamic character education oriented towards shaping consumption behavior in accordance with Qur'anic values.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) at RA Hidayaturrahman, Palangka Raya City, not only functions as a program to fulfill nutritional needs, but also serves as a medium for actualizing Islamic Education values in early childhood. Through various habituation activities integrated into the program's implementation, the values of gratitude and consumption moderation can be instilled concretely through the daily experiences of students. The value of gratitude is reflected in the habit of praying before and after meals, appreciating the food received, and realizing that food is a blessing from Allah SWT. Meanwhile, the value of consumption moderation is seen in the behavior of consuming food in moderation, avoiding waste, and not wasting food. The actualization of these two values is supported by the role of teachers and parents through role models (*uswah hasanah*) and

habituation (ta'widiyah) carried out continuously in the school and family environment. The research findings also show that Surah Al-A'raf verse 31 and Surah An-Nahl verse 114 have strong relevance as a normative basis for consumption education in early childhood. These two verses integrate the dimensions of health, self-control, and spiritual awareness which are reflected in healthy, responsible, and Islamic-based consumption behavior. Therefore, the Free Nutritious Meal Program can be positioned not only as a nutritional fulfillment policy, but also as a means of Islamic character education that supports the formation of a grateful, disciplined, and wise generation in utilizing the blessings of Allah SWT. This study recommends that the implementation of the MBG Program in early childhood education institutions be integrated more systematically with Islamic values habituation programs so that the benefits of the program can be felt not only in the health aspect, but also in the character formation of students.

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