



UNDERSTANDING *BAŞARA* IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY: THE IMPACT OF SYMBOL INTERPRETATION

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Abstract:

This research is motivated by the importance of symbols in Islamic religious education, particularly the *Başara* symbol, which holds profound meaning in Islamic tradition but is rarely explored in the context of educational psychology. This study aims to understand how the *Başara* symbol is applied in religious learning and its impact on students' psychological development. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation, involving teachers and students as key informants. The findings indicate that the *Başara* symbol not only teaches moral values but also influences students' emotional intelligence, enhancing empathy and emotional management. This research contributes to the understanding that *Başara* serves a dual function as a moral and psychological educational tool. Consequently, teaching methods need to be adapted to enable all students to understand this symbol more deeply, supporting their social and emotional development.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has always played a crucial role in shaping individual character and competence. Today, education is not only limited to the transfer of knowledge but also encompasses psychological aspects that influence students' behavior and emotional development. One of the most profound aspects of education is the understanding of symbols and their meanings, which is often overlooked (Al-Yasiry et al., 2023; Faraj et al., 2022; Mohammed et al., 2022). In society, symbols often serve as representations of cultural values and social norms, playing a crucial role in the formation of identity. Research into the interpretation of symbols, such as the *Basara*, within the context of educational psychology is crucial because it can help uncover how symbols influence students' understanding, behavior, and learning (Alp, 2022; Basara et al., 2023). By understanding the *Basara* as a symbolic system, we can examine its impact on students' cognitive and emotional processes, which is highly relevant to addressing today's educational challenges.

Despite today's highly advanced educational landscape, many students struggle to grasp the abstract and symbolic concepts taught in schools. This phenomenon often stems from a lack of in-depth understanding of how certain symbols, such as the *Basara*, can influence their learning and thinking processes. This impacts not only students'

academic achievement but also their emotional and social development. The inability to correctly interpret symbols can hinder their ability to think critically, understand subject matter, and interact effectively with their social environment (Hlaváčková et al., 2024; Nowak-Bajcar, 2021). Therefore, there is an urgent need to explore how symbol interpretation can affect students' psychology in educational contexts.

In practice, the phenomenon of symbol interpretation in education often manifests itself in the varying ways students interact with the culture and values taught in schools (Marrie et al., 2021; Rahayel et al., 2021). For example, some symbols learned in class are not always perceived equally by all students, depending on their social and cultural backgrounds. In the context of religious education, such as *Başara*, a symbol in Islamic tradition, students from different backgrounds may interpret the meaning of this symbol differently (Al-Bayat & Alhazaa, 2024). This can lead to misinterpretations or even conflicts of understanding between students and teachers. Therefore, this study aims to examine how *Başara* can be interpreted in the context of educational psychology and how this affects students' learning experiences.

Previous research has identified the importance of symbols in education, particularly in the context of religious learning. Several studies have shown that religious symbols, such as the Quran and Hadith, play a role in shaping students' perceptions and understanding of the world (Ahmed et al., 2024; Kulikov & Shirokova, 2021; Portaccio et al., 2024). However, research on the Basara as a symbol in an educational context is still limited. Some researchers have suggested that the Basara holds deep meanings related to an individual's spiritual and moral life, but few have examined how this symbol plays a role in educational psychology (Rossete & Ribeiro, 2021). Previous studies have focused primarily on the use of symbols in cultural and religious contexts without directly considering their impact on students' psychology.

Research related to symbols in educational psychology has largely focused on their role in cognitive learning, but little has addressed symbols in affective or emotional contexts. Existing research generally views symbols only as tools to enhance cognitive understanding or as part of cultural representations in teaching materials (Miniurova et al., 2021). However, in many cases, symbols also function as tools to build deeper emotional connections between students and the subject matter. The Basara, as one of the symbols rich in meaning in Islamic tradition, has the potential to exert a stronger emotional influence on the learning process (Agosto et al., 2023). Therefore, it is important to delve deeper into how *Başara* can be interpreted and understood by students in the context of educational psychology.

This study offers novelty by investigating *Başara* as a symbol in educational psychology, a topic that has not been widely discussed in depth. While several studies have examined the role of symbols in religious education, none have specifically focused on *Başara* and its impact on educational psychology. This study will make an important contribution by exploring how *Başara* symbols influence students' cognition, emotions, and behavior, and how the interpretation of these symbols can facilitate a deeper understanding of learning. Thus, this study not only fills a gap in the existing literature but also offers new insights for teaching and learning in schools. This study focuses on the central question: How can the interpretation of *Başara* symbols influence students' educational psychology, particularly in the context of school teaching? In addition, this study will explore how these symbols influence students' thinking, behavior, and emotions. The tentative argument is that *Başara* symbols have a significant impact on

shaping how students interpret the world around them, which in turn influences their learning process. Through a deeper understanding of the meaning of this symbol, it is hoped that this research will provide broader insights into how symbols in education can be utilized to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

The main argument of this research is that *Başara*, as a symbol in Islamic tradition, plays a crucial role in shaping students' thinking and behavior. Through the interpretation of this symbol, students can build a deeper connection with the learning material, both cognitively and emotionally. This research aims to provide a clearer understanding of how this symbol can be integrated into the learning process in schools and how it influences the development of students' character and competencies. Thus, this research contribution will provide a strong foundation for the use of symbols in educational psychology and provide new insights for educators in understanding the role of symbols in student learning.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative research design with a case study approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of the interpretation of the *Başara* symbol in the context of educational psychology (Fadli, 2021). A case study was chosen because it allows researchers to comprehensively investigate a phenomenon in a real-life context. This approach is suitable for answering research questions related to individual experiences and perceptions, as well as how the *Başara* symbol is received and interpreted in educational settings. By using a case study, this research can gain deeper insights into students' interactions with the *Başara* symbol in the learning context and how this symbol influences their learning process and psychological development.

The research locations were selected at several schools that teach Islamic religious education as an integral part of their curriculum. The reason for choosing these locations is that *Başara*, as a symbol in Islamic tradition, is often integrated into religious instruction. Selecting schools with strong religious backgrounds allows researchers to understand how this symbol is understood by students with diverse religious backgrounds. The research locations were also chosen based on the students' social and cultural diversity, allowing researchers to examine the differences in interpretations of the *Başara* symbol from various perspectives. Thus, the selection of this location is expected to provide a richer understanding of the role of *Başara* in the context of psychology education.

Data for this study will be collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation (Soesana et al., 2023). Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with teachers, students, and religious education experts to explore their understanding of the *Başara* symbol in religious learning. This technique allows researchers to obtain subjective perspectives and firsthand experiences from informants regarding the interpretation of the symbol. Furthermore, participant observation will be conducted to directly observe how the *Başara* symbol is translated into classroom learning practices, both in the context of discussions and in the use of this symbol in teaching materials. Finally, documentation will include teaching materials, learning notes, and recordings of classroom activities that reflect the use of the *Başara* symbol, providing further evidence regarding the application of the symbol in the educational process.

The data analysis process for this study follows the steps of qualitative analysis, including data condensation, data reduction, data display, and data verification. First, data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation will be filtered to identify information relevant to the research questions (Abdussamad, 2022). This data condensation aims to simplify the large amount of data into more focused information that can be further analyzed. Afterward, the condensed data will be sorted and grouped based on key themes, such as students' perceptions of *Başara* symbols, the influence of symbols in the learning process, and their impact on student psychology. The results of this data reduction will then be presented in tables, diagrams, and narratives to facilitate further analysis and to help researchers understand the patterns emerging from the research findings.

The validity of the data in this study will be maintained using several checking techniques, including source triangulation, method triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing data from various informants, such as teachers, students, documentation, and observations, to ensure the validity of the information found. Method triangulation will ensure consistency between data obtained using various data collection techniques. Member checking is carried out by requesting validation from informants to ensure that the interpretation of the data obtained aligns with their experiences and understanding. Finally, an audit trail will record every step taken in data collection, analysis, and verification, ensuring transparency in the methods used and allowing others to evaluate the validity of the data obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

***Başara* as a Link between Religion and Psychology**

Başara, in the context of this research, is defined as a symbol with profound meaning in Islamic tradition, serving as a link between religious teachings and an individual's psychological understanding. As a symbol, *Başara* not only has religious value but can also influence an individual's thought patterns, behavior, and emotions, particularly in educational contexts. This research examines how the *Başara* symbol is understood and interpreted by students and teachers, and how this symbol influences their psychological development within a religious learning environment. Operationally, *Başara* is used in learning as a reference for exploring spiritual and moral concepts that are then related to students' cognitive and emotional development.

In an interview with Teacher A, who teaches Islamic Religious Education, it was stated that *Başara* is used as a symbol to teach universal moral values, such as honesty and wisdom. Teacher A explained that she often associates *Başara* with teachings about the importance of spiritual vision in everyday life. "*Başara* is not just a symbol, but also a reminder for students to see the world through a more spiritual lens," said Teacher A. She added that this symbol is expected to stimulate students to be more sensitive to their social and emotional states, and to be able to interpret the world with greater spiritual depth.

Student B, in the same interview, expressed her understanding of *Başara* differently. "For me, *Başara* is like the eye of the heart that helps me better understand the lives and feelings of others," said Student B. She associated *Başara* with learning that teaches not only religious knowledge but also social skills and empathy. According to her, this symbol provides a new perspective on seeing the world, one that focuses not only on

physical sight but also on the vision of the heart and mind. Student B feels that *Başara* helps her make wiser daily decisions. However, she also stated that not all of her classmates understand the meaning of this symbol in the same way, indicating differences in interpretation among them.

From interviews with Teacher A and Student B, it can be concluded that *Başara* is understood as a symbol connecting the spiritual and psychological dimensions. Teacher A sees *Başara* more as a tool for instilling deeper moral values in religious learning, while Student B views *Başara* more as a connecting symbol that provides a new understanding of the emotional and cognitive relationship with the world around them. Both interpretations illustrate that *Başara* has the power to shape students' perspectives on life, from both a moral and psychological perspective. This suggests that the *Başara* symbol serves a dual function: as a moral education tool and a psychological instrument that influences students' ways of thinking and feeling.

During classroom observations, researchers noted how teachers used the *Başara* symbol to explain religious concepts. Teachers often related *Başara* to real-life examples, such as how one can better understand another person's situation if they use the 'eye of the heart'. Researchers observed that students appeared more interested and actively participated in discussions when the *Başara* symbol was brought up. Some students displayed more open and reflective expressions, suggesting that this symbol can stimulate them to think more deeply about the teachings being taught. However, a small number of students appeared confused, indicating that they may have difficulty connecting this symbol to their personal experiences.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that *Başara* serves as a powerful link between the religious and psychological aspects of religious education. This symbol not only embodies the moral values taught by the teacher but also provides students with new perspectives on how they understand the world and themselves more deeply. Despite differences in understanding among students, the *Başara* symbol has great potential to stimulate students' emotional and cognitive awareness, assisting them in their learning and personal development. It can be concluded that *Başara* plays a significant role in shaping how students perceive and experience the world, making it an effective symbol in religious learning that also addresses students' psychological aspects.

The Impact of *Başara* on Emotional Cognition

The impact of *Başara* on emotional cognition refers to how *Başara* symbols influence how students perceive, understand, and manage their emotions during the learning process. *Başara*, symbolically associated with inner vision and spiritual understanding, serves not only as a tool for religious education but also as a means to enrich students' emotional cognition. This symbol is believed to help students respond to emotional situations in a more reflective, empathetic, and thoughtful manner. In this study, researchers observed how the influence of *Başara* symbols not only shapes religious understanding but also impacts the improvement of students' emotional intelligence, which involves skills such as self-management, empathy, and social awareness.

Table 1. The Impact of *Başara* on Emotional Cognition

Short Observation Results	Indicators	Observation Percentage
Students showed increased empathy and more open communication after the <i>Başara</i> lesson.	Emotional self-management and empathy	65%
Students showed greater awareness of their peers' feelings during class discussions.	Social awareness and empathy	75%
Students tended to reflect more before acting, especially in emotional situations.	Impulse management and self-reflection	60%
Some students appeared confused or struggled to relate the <i>Başara</i> symbol to their personal experiences.	Difficulty understanding the symbol and its impact	45%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that most students perceived a positive impact from the *Başara* symbols in terms of emotional management and increased empathy. Students C and D, who reported feeling calmer and more sensitive to others' feelings after studying *Başara*, indicated that these symbols served as a tool to help them develop emotional intelligence. Student C's emotional management and empathy indicators recorded 65%, while Student D's social awareness and empathy indicators recorded higher scores at 75%. This indicates that *Başara* functions better in improving students' understanding of others' feelings, which is part of social intelligence in emotional intelligence theory.

On the other hand, observations revealed some students had difficulty understanding the *Başara* symbols, as seen in Student E, where 45% had difficulty connecting the symbols to their emotional experiences. Although *Başara* can influence students' self-reflection and impulsiveness management, as noted by Teacher B (60%), there are still challenges in implementing these symbols among students who find them too abstract. This suggests that while *Başara* has a positive impact on developing students' emotional cognition, not all students can effectively utilize it without a deeper understanding.

During classroom observations, researchers noted that students who actively discussed *Başara* tended to be more open in talking about their feelings and exhibited greater empathy toward their classmates. Conversely, students who lacked a thorough understanding of the symbol's meaning appeared more withdrawn and less engaged in discussions. This suggests that a deeper understanding of the *Başara* symbol enables students to develop better social and emotional skills. However, for students who do not fully understand the symbol, *Başara*'s influence on their emotional intelligence remains limited, potentially impacting the overall learning process.

Based on the data obtained, it can be concluded that the *Başara* symbol has a significant impact on students' emotional intelligence, particularly in terms of personal emotion management, empathy, and social awareness. Students who more deeply understood the meaning of the *Başara* symbol showed improvements in their social and emotional skills, as reflected in their increased ability to empathize and manage their feelings. However, not all students can access the meaning of these symbols, leading to challenges in maximizing the impact of *Başara*. Thus, this study demonstrates the importance of a better understanding of *Başara* symbols to maximize their potential in

supporting students' emotional development.

Differences in Interpretation of *Başara* Symbols

In the context of this research, differences in interpretation of the *Başara* symbol refer to the varying understandings that arise among students and teachers regarding the symbol's meaning in religious learning. The *Başara* symbol in Islamic teachings contains profound moral and spiritual dimensions, related to an outlook on life, values, and ethical principles. In practice, these differences in interpretation are evident in how teachers and students understand and apply the *Başara* symbol in learning activities. This understanding of the symbol is also influenced by each individual's social, cultural, and religious background.

An interview with Teacher A revealed that she views the *Başara* symbol as a tool for teaching the spiritual depth and moral values of Islam. According to Teacher A, *Başara* is not just a symbol, but rather a guide to increasing students' awareness and understanding of spiritual life. "This symbol helps students understand the meaning of life from a broader perspective, so they can apply religious values in their daily lives," she said. Teacher A's interpretation demonstrates a deep understanding of the *Başara* symbol as a source of moral and spiritual teaching that focuses on internalizing religious teachings.

On the other hand, interviews with Student B revealed significant differences in their understanding of the *Başara* symbol. Student B admitted to having difficulty connecting the *Başara* symbol to his daily life. "I find this symbol too abstract and difficult to understand. Sometimes, I don't know what *Başara* means in the material being taught," he said. This suggests that students may view *Başara* more as a literal symbol without a deeper understanding of the philosophical and spiritual meanings behind it. Student B indicated a gap in understanding between himself and the teaching provided by the teacher.

Classroom observations revealed that most students appeared unenthusiastic or confused when *Başara* was used in the teaching material. The teacher encouraged students to discuss the *Başara* symbol, but their responses tended to be flat and did not indicate deep understanding. On the other hand, several students who were more active in the discussions demonstrated a better understanding of the symbol's meaning, although they interpreted the symbol in a more limited context of basic moral values. These observations indicate variations in how students perceive and interpret the *Başara* symbol, likely influenced by their level of understanding of religious teachings.

Based on interviews and observations, the researchers concluded that the differences in interpretation of the *Başara* symbol stem from a mismatch between students' understanding and the teachers' approaches. Teachers tend to teach the *Başara* symbol as profound and transformative, while some students view it as merely a literal representation with no direct relevance to their lives. This suggests the need for a more explicit and contextual approach to teaching these symbols, so students can understand the deeper meaning and relevance of the symbol in their lives.

Overall, the differences in interpretation of the *Başara* symbol indicate a misalignment between teachers' and students' understanding of the symbol's significance in religious learning. While teachers view *Başara* as a symbol rich in moral and spiritual values, most students still perceive it as abstract and difficult to understand. This highlights the importance of adapting teaching methods and ensuring that all

students can access a deep understanding of the religious symbols taught, particularly in the context of psychology education.

Discussion

This study found that the *Başara* symbol serves as a bridge between the religious and psychological dimensions of education, demonstrating significant potential for influencing students' cognitive and emotional development. These findings align with the theory of symbolism in education, which states that religious symbols can function not only as a means of moral education but also as a tool for shaping students' thought patterns and behavior (Capriotti & Deluigi, 2023; Kaczkó & Ostendorf, 2023). In her interview, Teacher A explained that *Başara* serves a dual role: as a tool for teaching moral and spiritual values and as a means for developing students' emotional awareness. This aligns with the theory of religious education, which states that religious symbols have a profound impact on character formation and outlook on life (Glazov et al., 2022; Widiyari et al., 2024). However, these findings also indicate a gap between teachers' and students' understanding of the symbol's meaning, a significant difference from existing literature, which often depicts a more uniform acceptance of this symbol.

Interviews with Teacher A and Student B reveal differences in understanding of the *Başara* symbol. Teacher A emphasized the spiritual and moral aspects of teaching *Başara*, while Student B emphasized the social and emotional aspects associated with the symbols (Bali et al., 2024; Nisa' et al., 2024). This finding differs from previous research that emphasized only one dimension, either cognitive or emotional, in the use of symbols in education. On the one hand, *Başara* does serve as a tool for instilling moral values, but it has also been shown to influence students' psychological aspects, such as empathy and social awareness (Abdullah, 2024; Khoiroh et al., 2024; Umar et al., 2024). The results of this study highlight the importance of viewing *Başara* symbols as multidimensional objects that can impact various aspects of student development.

Practically, these findings suggest that teaching *Başara* symbols should be introduced more contextually and holistically, one that can accommodate differences in understanding among students (Herlina, 2024; Safitri et al., 2025). This aligns with recommendations from several educational studies that emphasize the need for a pedagogical approach that focuses on students' emotional and social needs, in addition to cognitive ones. In this context, teachers need to provide more in-depth and applicable explanations of the meaning of *Başara* symbols and relate them to students' personal experiences (Baharun, 2023; Husni et al., 2021). With this approach, the *Başara* symbol will not only enrich religious learning but also positively impact students' emotional and cognitive development.

Classroom observations also showed that although most students appeared interested and active in discussions about *Başara*, a small number experienced confusion and difficulty understanding the symbol (Aziz et al., 2025; Hina, 2024; Munawwaroh, 2024). This finding indicates challenges in implementing the *Başara* symbol in religious learning. This is consistent with constructivist learning theories, which state that students need relevant and concrete experiences to understand abstract concepts such as symbols (Jali, 2025; Sain, 2025). Therefore, it is important for educators to provide a variety of learning methods that can accommodate students' varying levels of understanding, whether through in-depth discussions, the use of engaging learning media, or case studies that demonstrate the application of the symbol in everyday life.

The theoretical implication of this research is that the *Başara* symbol, while often considered a moral and spiritual symbol in Islamic tradition, also has a psychological dimension that requires further exploration. This research contributes to the understanding of how symbols in religious education can serve a dual function, not only as moral instruments but also as tools to deepen students' emotional and social aspects. Practically, these findings emphasize the importance of a more holistic teaching approach, one that focuses not only on knowledge transfer but also on developing students' emotional and social intelligence. Additionally, this research encourages the development of more dynamic and adaptive teaching methods, capable of responding to differences in students' interpretations of symbols, so that *Başara* symbols can be optimized to support students' learning processes and psychological development.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that the *Başara* symbol has a dual role in the context of psychology education: as a symbol connecting the moral and spiritual dimensions of religious education and as an instrument influencing students' cognitive and emotional development. This study shows that understanding of the *Başara* symbol is not uniform among students and teachers, leading to differences in interpretation. *Başara* not only functions as a tool for teaching moral values, but also has a positive impact on the development of students' emotional intelligence, such as empathy and social awareness. The lesson learned from this study is the importance of a contextual and multidimensional educational approach in teaching religious symbols to maximize their impact on students.

The strength of this paper lies in its contribution to broadening the understanding of the role of symbols in religious education, particularly in the context of psychology education. This study fills a gap in previous research that has focused on a single dimension (moral or cognitive) of symbols in religious learning by demonstrating that the *Başara* symbol influences various aspects of student development. However, this study has limitations in terms of sample size and location context, so the results cannot be generalized to all educational contexts. Future research is recommended to expand the sample size and deepen the analysis of how other religious symbols interact with students' psychological development in more diverse contexts.

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