



THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING IN FORMING THE CHARACTER OF STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how teachers play an important role in learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in elementary schools in shaping students' characters. The purpose of this study is to discover the problems faced by educators when conveying Islamic religious values. In addition, this study will also investigate effective learning strategies to achieve these goals. The results show that teacher exemplary is the main key in shaping learners' character; teachers not only teach but also act as moral role models. In addition, it is evident that active learning approaches successfully increase students' participation and their understanding of Islamic religious concepts. In addition, this study emphasizes the importance of school, parent and community collaboration in supporting character education. With this collaboration, it is expected that learners can develop good character and become individuals who are ready to face future challenges.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Character Building, Teacher Exemplification.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana guru memainkan peran penting dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di sekolah dasar dalam membentuk karakter siswa. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan masalah yang dihadapi oleh pendidik saat menyampaikan nilai-nilai agama Islam. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga akan menyelidiki strategi pembelajaran yang efektif untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keteladanan guru merupakan kunci utama dalam pembentukan karakter peserta didik; guru tidak hanya mengajar tetapi juga bertindak sebagai panutan moral. Selain itu, terbukti bahwa pendekatan pembelajaran aktif berhasil meningkatkan partisipasi siswa dan pemahaman mereka tentang konsep agama Islam. Selain itu, penelitian ini menekankan betapa pentingnya kerja sama sekolah, orang tua, dan masyarakat dalam mendukung pendidikan karakter. Dengan adanya kolaborasi ini, diharapkan peserta didik dapat mengembangkan karakter

yang baik dan menjadi individu yang siap menghadapi tantangan di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pembentukan Karakter, Keteladanan Guru

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the subjects that must be taught in elementary schools in Indonesia is Islamic religious education. Because Islamic teachings contain ethical and moral values that can shape good personalities in the younger generation, Islamic religious education has a very crucial task in shaping students' personalities. According to Zakiyah Darajat (1987:87) in (Akip, M.: 2024) Islamic religious education aims to develop and educate students so that they can understand Islamic teachings universally in the future. Then pay attention to the objectives, which will ultimately be applied to learning. Thus, Islam becomes a way of life. However, the role of educators in learning Islamic Religious Education in real life is often not optimal. Many educators do not understand effective teaching methods in creating student character, so that the purpose of Islamic religious education is not achieved properly. One of the main challenges in the process of learning Islamic Religious Education in elementary schools is the lack of understanding of educators regarding Islamic religious values and the lack of skills in realizing the contents of Islamic religion in the real lives of students. This can result in low student interest in Islamic Religious Education, so that the learning objectives to shape student character are not achieved. According to Abdul Majid (2017) Because Islamic teachings contain ethics and morals that can shape a person's good personality in the younger generation, Islamic religious education has a very important role in shaping students' character. Therefore, it is important to conduct in-depth research on the role of educators in learning Islamic Religious Education in elementary schools to improve the effectiveness of learning and shape good student character.

In addition to the challenge of understanding, the teaching methods used by educators also greatly determine the success of Islamic Religious Education learning. A more interactive and experience-based approach can increase student participation and help them understand religious teachings better. For example, using group discussion methods, educational games, or community projects can be effective ways to link religious values to everyday reality. Thus, educators need to be trained to develop these skills so that they can teach Islamic Religious Education in a more interesting and relevant way.

The importance of parental involvement also cannot be ignored in the context of religious education. Communication between schools and families can strengthen the learning received in the classroom. When parents support the dignity taught in schools and integrate it into everyday life, students will be more

connected to religious teachings. Therefore, educators need to create a bridge between schools and families, and encourage parental involvement in their children's religious education. In addition, in today's digital era, the use of technology in Islamic Religious Education learning is also very relevant. Learning resources available online can be used to enrich teaching materials and provide new perspectives for students. By utilizing social media, videos, and educational applications, educators can present more varied and interesting teaching materials. However, educators must have adequate digital skills to integrate technology in a way that supports effective learning.

Islamic religious education in elementary schools must be improved by the government, educational institutions, and the community. Policies that support improving educator competence, providing adequate resources, and ongoing training will greatly assist in achieving better educational goals. Thus, through synergistic cooperation between various elements, it is hoped that Islamic religious education can run optimally, so that it can form good personalities of students in accordance with the dignity of Islamic teachings.

Through this article, the author will explore various aspects related to the role of educators in learning Islamic Religious Education. This study will cover the challenges faced by educators, effective teaching methods, and plans that can be taken to improve the quality of religious education. Therefore, it is hoped that this article will increase knowledge of Islamic religious education as well as the formation of good personalities of students in elementary schools

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative research. Qualitative research is a study that is intended to understand and describe what is experienced by the research subject, for example the perpetrator, perception, motivation, action and others holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language in a specific natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 2013). Researchers in qualitative research must collect data related to the discussion. Data collection in qualitative research is in the form of interviews and observations. Researchers in conducting data validity researchers use triangulation of Sources, Methods and time. Researchers in this study use the analysis of miles, Huberman and Saldana which analyzes in three steps, namely Data Condensation, Data presentation and Conclusion Drawing/Verification.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Teacher Exemplary Behavior as the Key to Character Formation of Students

Currently, the teaching position is considered to have the potential to ease some of the responsibilities of parents in educating their children, both academically and

non-academically. Teachers are expected to be competent not only because they know their duties and responsibilities, but also because they must implement them well. A teacher must have four skills, namely professional, pedagogical, personal, and social skills, as referred to in Law no. 14 of 2005. The most basic thing for a teacher who can educate the personality of his students is the personality aspect. In the future, this personal aspect will be the beginning of the formation of dedication, commitment, attention and a strong personal desire to continue to give the best as his role in the world of education. So being a teacher is not a job that can be considered easy, teachers must be able to provide good examples to their students because they are the ones who will be role models for their students.

Character education is a complete educational process that connects the moral dimension with the social realm in the lives of students, as the foundation for a quality and responsible national life. A teacher must really take care of his speech and behavior. Bad for student development will be the result of inappropriate speech and behavior, because students can imitate the teacher's speech and behavior without considering whether it is right or wrong (Kurniawan, 2012:91) in (Syahara, 2022:57). The personality of good students is formed from what they learn and what they get during the learning process, but besides that, it is not only the learning outcomes or subjects they study but also the teacher's example that is imitated by students both at school and outside of school. Exemplary includes imitating or imitating others, observing and adapting their behavior, words, actions, life and way of thinking. Exemplary comes from the word *keteladanan* which means worthy of being imitated or imitated well (Big Dictionary of the Indonesian Language Center, 2008: 1424). Therefore, a teacher must be able to carry out his responsibilities well and be a role model for his students. Teacher behavior greatly influences students so that the teacher's exemplary behavior in forming students' character becomes a good example when it comes to attitudes, behavior and morals that are worthy of being imitated by students.

A qualified teacher has a good character and can be a role model for his/her students. The positive behavior of teachers can be imitated by students, thus contributing to the formation of good and positive character. Elementary school children are known to be very good at imitating what they see, hear, and observe. Therefore, the teacher's role model is very effective in changing students' behavior and attitudes. This character education instills a good habit so that students become good, able to understand what is right and what is wrong. A great teacher can be a role model for his/her students in terms of positive attitudes, values, and behavior.

Teachers have a very important role in shaping the character of students. They not only teach a subject but also provide guidance to students through challenges and problems. Caring and caring teachers can provide emotional support to students, help them feel valued and trusted. themselves and motivated to learn and develop. The teacher's role model in building the character of students refers to the skills

and attitudes shown by a teacher to influence and guide students to develop good and positive character. Teachers who have good role models are teachers who have solid, mature, wise, wise and noble morals. Thus, teacher role models are an important key in shaping students' character, because positive teacher behavior can be an effective example for students to develop good attitudes, values, and behavior. Wibowo (2012: 72) in Syahara, et al. (2022) said that there are ways to find role models or become more role models for students, namely:

1. Consequences of what is taught

Before teaching good values to students, teachers should think about how to apply these values in life. By reflecting, teachers can see for themselves whether they have done their actions or not and where the difficulties lie.

2. Don't play hide and seek

Many teachers play masks in front of students. Pretending to be good, it turns out that the reality is not good. Teachers must be trained to accept themselves as they are, with all their shortcomings and weaknesses. If you are wrong, dare to admit it to the students; If you don't know, just say you don't know, and don't say you understand. Most students are impressed if their teachers dare to admit their mistakes in front of their students, even dare to apologize for the mistakes they made.

3. Developing knowledge

Teachers can only help students to continue learning and developing their knowledge if they continue to learn. This can be seen if teachers only teach what is in the book, it is considered not adding anything else. So it is considered important to increase knowledge through new contributions from teachers.

The way that teachers can build students' character is to be role models in attitudes and behavior, students tend to imitate the actions of their teachers, so it is important for teachers to show good attitudes, such as politeness and discipline. Insert moral messages in every lesson. For example, when teaching, teachers can relate the material to values such as honesty and responsibility, so that students understand the importance of applying these values in everyday life. In addition, building character can also be done by appreciating students' efforts, not only when they achieve academic achievement, but also when they show good progress or effort. This appreciation can increase students' self-confidence. Teachers must be able to admit mistakes and be open, so that students learn to be responsible for their own actions. This also creates an environment that supports honesty. Show empathy to students by understanding their feelings and helping them when they are in trouble.

This can build mutual respect among students. Teachers can also invite students to get involved in social activities or help classmates who need help. This can foster altruistic character and a sense of solidarity in students. By implementing these methods consistently, teachers can contribute significantly to the formation of

positive character in students, which will be beneficial for their personal and social development in their future.

Effectiveness of Active Learning Methods in Islamic Religious Education

In order to create efficient and active learning, it is important for educators to be able to choose the right learning method to increase student interest and learning outcomes. It is very important for teachers to apply active learning to students in the subject in order to provide examples of direct implementation of character formation through the material presented. Active learning is learning that allows students to play an active role in it, either in the form of interactions with peers or students with their teachers in the learning process that begins (Mubayyinah & Ashari, 2017). In the learning process, it is certainly very important to apply a method, especially in Islamic Religious Education, and this active learning method is considered capable of increasing the effectiveness of student learning in the classroom.

The active learning method in Islamic Religious Education can be proven effective in improving the quality of learning and student participation, through this method the knowledge of religious concepts from students will be deeper. In addition, active learning in Islamic Religious Education courses can encourage students to think, ask, speak and apply what they know from the lessons they have learned. Active learning methods are easy and comfortable to apply. In Islamic Religious Education learning is only limited to the cognitive domain and social attitudes of students, but in addition, the transfer of experience and knowledge from one student to another becomes easy through the application of this learning method.

Active learning methods empower students to actively participate in the learning process. Students not only get information from the teacher, but also act as the main subjects in the learning process. This can be seen in research using the Jigsaw method, group discussions, and collaborative projects, which allow students to express their opinions, learn new concepts, and gain broader insights into the lessons learned. Active learning is considered appropriate and relevant to the aim of improving the quality of learning, and can motivate students to be more active in the learning process (Nur Jannah, 2019) in (Danuwara & Maghribi, 2023). In addition, active learning methods can also connect students from new knowledge to skill experiences to mature students' thinking skills (Wahyudi & Hasanah, 2017) in (Danuwara & Maghribi, 2023). Active learning methods have been proven to be effective in increasing student engagement, understanding of concepts and developing critical and creative thinking skills (Supriatna et al., 2024) in (Wahid, et al., 2024). Wahid, et al (2024) stated that there are several things that are a challenge in implementing active learning methods, namely:

1. Limited availability of resources
The resources in question can include several things such as physical facilities, technology, time, teachers, and teaching materials.
2. Teachers' understanding of the concept of active learning
Some factors that may cause teachers' lack of understanding of this method are curriculum and training, teaching traditions, curriculum and evaluation demands, and resources and support.
3. Integration of Islamic religious values in the learning process
Some factors that need to be considered when facing these challenges include understanding and synchronizing vision, curriculum and learning materials, contextual teaching and adaptation to school culture.

Active learning in Islamic Religious Education subjects can include discussions, questions and answers, and also learning practices. Group discussions encourage students to be active in communicating and collaborating with other friends. So this method is considered to be able to create effective learning, especially in Islamic Religious Education subjects by integrating student character values in the form of cooperation and good communication. Kusuma and Inayati (2023) stated that this discussion aims to reduce the burden of thinking by inviting others to provide answers. This is effective because everyone has a different opinion. In addition, it can also instill a sense of responsibility, train critical thinking and train speaking skills. Then, student teaching practices encourage the formation of good attitudes through activities to apply the learning outcomes that they understand during learning.

4. CONCLUSION

The teaching and learning process of Islamic Religious Education has a crucial position in creating the personality of students in elementary schools. Teachers as moral role models play an important role in this process. The implementation of active learning methods has also been proven to be able to improve the quality and effectiveness of character education. In addition, parental involvement and synergy between schools, families, and communities are essential to support the sustainable formation of student character. This collaboration ensures that students not only receive academic education, but also grow into individuals with strong character, good morals, and readiness to face life's challenges.

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