

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN FOSTERING STUDENTS' MORALS AT STATE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL 1 BANYUDONO

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Abstract

Personality is a crucial factor for the success of students in the learning process. Instilling good habits from an early age is very important for students. Teachers play a significant role in schools, especially Islamic Education teachers, who are educators directly responsible for moral development and the inculcation of legal norms concerning right and wrong, as well as responsibility. This study aims to determine the roles, methods, supporting factors, and obstacles faced by Islamic religious education teachers in shaping the personalities of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono. The approach used is qualitative, employing case study research methods through data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of this study conclude that Islamic religious education teachers play an essential role in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, primarily as educators, guides, habituators, and implementers of religious activities. Efforts made by Islamic religious education teachers to cultivate students' morals include encouraging the habit of reciting "basmallah" at the beginning of learning activities, saying "hamdallah" at the end, starting lessons by reciting Asma'ul Husna, maintaining classroom cleanliness, assigning additional tasks to memorize prayer recitations, promoting Quranic literacy, guiding and setting an example for students to perform congregational prayers, and actively participating in the execution of religious activities.

Keywords: Character building; Islamic education teacher; Barriers to character building.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a deliberate and directed effort to humanize humans. Through an educational process humans can grow and develop naturally and perfectly so that they can carry out their duties as humans and maintain their surroundings properly and usefully. Education is also something that cannot be separated in human life, because with education humans can develop the potential that exists in themselves (Verysanjaya, 2023). Moral education is a set of basic principles of morals and the virtues of attitudes and character (character) that must be possessed and made a habit by the child from the age of mumayiz and starting to be able to use his mind so that he becomes a mukalaf then he becomes a young man who is ready to sail the sea of life.¹ It is a matter that is no longer in doubt, that morals, attitudes and character are one of the fruits of strong faith and the result of religious growth in a person (Mukti, Nahar, & Baihaqi, 2022).

If the objectives of the Science of Morals can be achieved, then humans will have inner cleanliness which in turn gives birth to commendable actions. From these praiseworthy deeds, a peaceful, harmonious, harmonious, physically and mentally prosperous society will be born, which allows him to do activities to achieve the happiness of life in this world and the happiness of life in the hereafter (Harnida, 2020).

Education has the responsibility to enhance the personality of the nation's children (Tanis, 2013), as one of its duties is to pass on the noble values of the nation and its ancestors. On the other hand, education aims to facilitate students in gaining an understanding to develop their potential

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at school (Ulfah & Arifudin, 2022). According to Syahputri (2021), education is an activity carried out by educators and students to exchange knowledge and experiences.

Education is an effort conducted with a sense of responsibility and well-planned to provide guidance to students (Fauziah, Montessori, Miaz, & Hidayati, 2021). The concept of Islamic education itself is not only focused on intelligence but also aims to produce individuals who continuously perfect their faith, piety, and morals, and can build harmony in their lives. In this context, Islamic Education is not only centered on intellectual aspects but also on emotional ones. Such guidance and coaching can be provided by the immediate family, schools, and the surrounding community to bring about positive changes. Islamic religious education is a type of learning conducted by an individual or educational institution that imparts knowledge about Islam to those who wish to understand it more deeply, both academically and practically in daily life (Syafrin, Kamal, Arifmiboy, & Husni, 2023).

Religious education is the core of moral, character, and attitude formation in students. Therefore, in imparting knowledge, teachers are required to provide religious education to their students and must also set a good example, as teachers are often favorite figures for their students (Musya'Adah, 2020). Consequently, teachers must be ready to serve as role models; failing to set a good example means failing in their primary duty as educators (Sirait & Marbun, 2022).

In terms of educational competence, teachers are also required to provide a learning concept that is not monotonous. They are expected to use and develop varied and effective educational media, making learning more engaging and encouraging students to explore, think critically, and actively develop their skills based on the lessons provided at school (Tafonao, 2018).

The advancement of Science and Technology has led to changes in various aspects of life, especially in education, particularly concerning the recent moral decline among the younger generation (Haniyyah, 2021). For instance, the invention of televisions, computers, and mobile phones has caused a portion of society, especially teenagers and children, to become engrossed in the screen world, which has become their constant companion. Many teenagers today, upon waking up, first reach for their smartphones, neglecting other activities (Zis, Effendi, & Roem, 2021).

As a result, family relationships become strained. This indicates that screen technology can mesmerize many teenagers and children, leading them to submit to screens while ignoring other aspects of life. The deteriorating morals or character of the younger generation is marked by the prevalence of free sex among teenagers, drug trafficking, student brawls, and the circulation of pornographic videos and photos among students (Ariatama, Prayoga, Sopha, Anggraini, & Handayani, 2022).

The moral decay of the nation has become acute, manifesting in rampant corruption, crime, and criminal activities across all sectors of development. These phenomena highlight the urgent need for an effective remedy to address these issues, which can be found in the cultivation and nurturing of personality and character from an early age (Nasri, 2020). This effort must be integrated across family, school, higher education institutions, and society through the education system. Education should not only emphasize intellectual intelligence but must also be accompanied by ethics, morals, and good character (*akhlakul karimah*). Education is crucial and urgent in human life as it aims to develop all potential in humans, including physical, intellectual, and behavioral potentials (Sulastri, Octaviany, & Atikah, 2023).

As regulated in Indonesian Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Chapter II, Article 3 states that national education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation to educate the life of the nation. It aims to develop students' potential to become individuals who are faithful and pious to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Inkiriwang, 2020).

Education is a process of character building for the nation. To cultivate individuals with noble character values, Islamic education is essential. Its primary mission is to humanize humans,

enabling them to follow the rules of Allah and His Messenger, resulting in the creation of a perfect individual (*insan kamil*). Character education involves instilling values that include knowledge, willingness, awareness, and actions (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022).

Character formation in students at school is heavily influenced by the role of teachers, particularly Islamic Education (Islamic religious education) teachers who can shape students into noble individuals through the examples and habits they set. Teachers are role models and idols for students in all aspects, especially in teaching and educating (Haniyyah, 2021). Teachers serve as role models by demonstrating good behavior, thereby molding and shaping a generation with strong character. Therefore, it is in the hands of teachers that students are developed to be academically proficient, skilled, emotionally mature, and spiritually sound (Judrah, Arjum, Haeruddin, & Mustabsyirah, 2024).

Islamic religious education teachers, aside from their teaching duties, which include imparting religious knowledge, also have the responsibility of educating and nurturing students. They assist in personality development and moral education, as well as in fostering and developing students' faith and piety (Kamila, 2023). One of a teacher's duties is to shape and guide students to behave in an Islamic manner and prevent them from engaging in bad behavior, as mentioned in Surah Al-Imran, verse 104: "And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful."

Given the importance of the role of Islamic religious education teachers in forming students' Islamic character, it is necessary to have good and professional Islamic religious education teachers to cultivate a generation with strong character. State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono is a public school that, despite not having a religious background, reflects a religious atmosphere comparable to that of religiously affiliated schools through its extracurricular religious and diniyah programs. The orderly implementation of these religious programs at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono would not be possible without the role of dedicated teachers.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive research method. Qualitative research is a type of field research because the data collected consists of written or spoken words from subjects and observable behavior. The design used in this research is a qualitative descriptive design, which is employed to investigate problems that require an in-depth study of a particular issue (Rukajat, 2018). The method applied involved factually describing the role of Islamic Education (Islamic religious education) teachers in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono. The research was conducted at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono Boyolali during the even semester of the 2023-2024 academic year. The object of this research was the cultivation and formation of morals at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono.

The subjects of this research were the Islamic religious education teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out using the constant comparative method, which involves comparing events or incidents that occur while the researcher analyzes them continuously throughout the research process. The research procedure consisted of preparation and planning, conducting observations, data processing, discussing observation results, and finally compiling the observation report.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Teachers in Moral Development

Islamic Education (Islamic religious education) teachers have a significant role in shaping the Islamic character of students. Islamic religious education teachers are not just educators who deliver educational content; they also guide students to become devout individuals. Additionally, Islamic religious education teachers serve as role models and mentors for their students, helping

them practice Islamic principles and behave according to Islamic teachings, thus fostering commendable character traits. This is evident at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, where Islamic Education teachers are pivotal in the moral development of students, making them a cornerstone for the formation of praiseworthy morals.

From observations and interviews, it was found that Islamic religious education teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono hold a very important and strategic position in nurturing students' morals. Islamic religious education teachers act as mentors, habit-formers, and role models for students, both during class and outside of class hours. They also implement religious activities designed by the school to develop students' morals.

Observations showed that Islamic religious education teachers set examples for students by arriving on time, speaking kindly, and teaching students to behave respectfully towards teachers, elders, and peers. According to an interview with Mr. Budi Utama, a Islamic religious education teacher, he collaborates with other Islamic religious education teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono to actively instill good habits and set positive examples for students. For instance, they begin each class by inviting students to start with the recitation of "*Basmallah*," then check classroom cleanliness. If the classroom is found to be dirty, students are instructed to clean it up first. Mr. Budi Utama S.Ag also consistently encourages his students to end the class with the recitation of "*Hamdallah*," to instill a religious character in them.

Islamic religious education teachers practice Quran reading to train and check students' recitations, ensuring that they can read the Quran correctly according to Tajweed rules by the time they graduate from State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono. Additionally, Islamic religious education teachers assign students the task of memorizing prayer recitations, with periodic checks during classroom learning to ensure fluency.

Outside of class, Islamic religious education teachers also play an active role as mentors, providing guidance and setting examples for students in moral development activities. This includes encouraging the habit of performing Dzuhur and Asr prayers in congregation. These prayers are performed routinely every day, with Islamic religious education teachers providing direction and encouragement for students to pray in congregation and setting an example by praying with them.

According to interviews, Islamic religious education teachers also actively participate in organizing and implementing school-designed activities for the moral development of students. One such activity is the Quran Literacy Program (BTA), which aims to improve students' Quranic literacy. Other activities, such as the Ramadan Pesantren, are organized during Ramadan to instill religious values in students, helping them develop a more Islamic character and strengthen their relationship with Allah Swt.

Methods of Moral Development

Based on observations and interviews, the methods used by Islamic religious education teachers in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono include:

First, habit formation method. In an effort to cultivate students' morals, Islamic religious education teachers use the habit formation method. This involves encouraging students to think, behave, and act according to Islamic teachings. Students are trained to adopt good habits in all school activities. For example, before starting a lesson, Islamic religious education teachers invite students to clean the classroom, begin the learning activities with the recitation of "*Basmallah*," and end with the recitation of "*Hamdallah*." This practice implements the habit formation method in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono.

Second, Exemplary Method. The exemplary method is the primary approach in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono. When students observe good examples in their teachers, they learn the principles of goodness and internalize various noble

morals, especially in worship. In this regard, Islamic religious education teachers, alongside other teachers and staff at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, actively provide role models for students. The discipline of teachers and staff, especially in performing prayers, is crucial. For instance, when it is time for congregational prayers, all activities are paused, and all teachers and staff leave their rooms to head to the prayer area, setting an example for students.

Third, Advisory Method. Islamic religious education teachers use the advisory method to guide students in behavior and ethics. This method involves providing advice that contains the values of noble morals to help students understand their actions and behavior, particularly in the school environment. According to observations, the advisory method is applied by Islamic religious education teachers in various situations. For example, if students are seen eating or drinking while standing, the Islamic religious education teacher immediately corrects and advises them. Similarly, if students are not dressed according to the school's dress code, such as not tucking in their shirts neatly, the Islamic religious education teacher promptly provides advice and corrections.

Factors Influencing Moral Development

In the efforts made by Islamic religious education teachers to develop students' morals, there are various supporting and inhibiting factors. Based on the observations and interviews conducted, the supporting and inhibiting factors in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono include:

First, Supporting factors. The support and good cooperation among educators at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, especially the Islamic religious education teachers, are the main supporting factors in the moral development of students. The principal and the teaching staff actively support programs and practices aimed at moral development. The involvement of the entire school community ensures that the moral development process is well-organized through collaborative efforts. When students are receptive to advice, it facilitates the Islamic religious education teachers' efforts to guide, educate, develop, and direct them towards better behavior. This receptiveness makes it easier for Islamic religious education teachers to cultivate better personal qualities in their students. State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono has several programs focused on students' moral development, such as the extracurricular activities of reading and writing the Qur'an (BTA). This program involves reading the Qur'an following the rules of Tajweed and studying its content to instill Qur'anic ethics and strengthen Islamic faith in students. Additionally, the school conducts a Ramadan fast-track program aimed at enhancing students' faith and devotion and guiding them to be closer to Allah Swt during the holy month.

Second, inhibiting factors. Facilities are crucial for supporting the learning process. However, inadequate facilities can hinder both students and educators in delivering and receiving lessons effectively. At State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, limited infrastructure, such as insufficient LCD projectors in some classrooms, poses challenges to creating a creative and innovative learning environment, impacting moral development efforts. Additionally, the prayer facilities are not adequately representative. The prayer space, a repurposed classroom, is insufficient to accommodate all students for congregational prayers. Moreover, limited water facilities for ablution make it difficult for students to perform this ritual promptly. Every student has a unique personality, and some are more challenging to guide and manage in terms of moral development. Certain students may be described as troublesome, rebellious, and unwilling to follow the guidance provided by teachers regarding moral conduct.

Solutions to Inhibiting Factors

As previously outlined, there are several inhibiting factors in the moral development of students at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono, including inadequate school facilities, diverse student personalities, and scheduling challenges for religious activities such as the Qur'an reading and writing (BTA) program, which lowers students' awareness and interest in participating. Based on these identified inhibiting factors and interviews with Islamic religious education teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono Boyolali, the following solutions are proposed:

First, Improving School Facilities. Efforts should be made to procure adequate school facilities, as these are essential for Islamic religious education teachers to effectively cultivate students' morals. This includes both classroom learning aids like LCD projectors and extracurricular facilities such as a prayer space that can accommodate all students, along with sufficient ablution facilities. Without adequate facilities, Islamic religious education teachers' efforts in moral development cannot be fully realized.

Second, Enhancing Teacher Collaboration. Strengthening cooperation among Islamic religious education teachers and other subject teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono is crucial. This collaboration should focus on understanding the characteristics of students with challenging personalities through emotional approaches, then guiding and directing them toward better personal development.

Third, Fostering Student Awareness. Cultivating students' awareness to consistently exhibit good behavior can be achieved by designing a school culture oriented towards fostering noble character (*akhlakul karimah*). This can include activities such as performing Dhuha prayers and delivering short sermons (*kultum*) after Dhuhr prayers, thereby creating a religious educational environment.

Fourth, Effective Scheduling of Religious Extracurricular Activities. An effective schedule for the BTA extracurricular activities should be established by considering days with the fewest class hours. For instance, choosing Friday, when classes end at 11:20 AM, allows BTA activities to be held after Friday prayers, giving students time to rest beforehand.

By addressing these factors, the efforts to develop students' morals at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono can be significantly improved.

CONCLUSION

The role of Islamic Education (Islamic religious education) teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono is crucial in shaping the moral character of students. Islamic religious education teachers serve not only as educators but also as mentors and role models, guiding students in practicing Islamic principles and fostering commendable character traits. Through observations, interviews, and documentation, it was found that Islamic religious education teachers employ methods such as habit formation, exemplary behavior, and advice to develop students' morals. They actively participate in religious activities like congregational prayers, Quran recitation, and other school programs that support moral development. Key supporting factors include collaboration among teachers, focused school programs, and students' receptiveness to advice. However, challenges such as inadequate facilities and difficulties in managing certain students pose obstacles. Proposed solutions include improving school facilities, enhancing teacher collaboration, fostering student awareness, and effectively scheduling extracurricular activities. These measures aim to significantly enhance moral development efforts at State Vocational High School 1 Banyudono.

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