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The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Character Values in Students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak

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Abstrak

This study aims to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak and to analyze the strategies implemented by PAI teachers in the process. Student character is an important focus in modern education, where PAI teachers have the responsibility to shape students' personalities with noble morals through the integration of Islamic values in learning. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with PAI teachers, observation of the learning process, and documentation of religious activities involving students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. Meanwhile, the analysis method used is descriptive qualitative, namely data collection, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the study show that PAI teachers play a central role as role models, moral educators, and spiritual guides. They also use various strategies in instilling character values, such as the integration of values in learning, habituation, and religious extracurricular activities. This study concludes that the role and strategies implemented by PAI teachers are very effective in shaping the character of students who are disciplined, honest, responsible, and have empathy for others. This study recommends increasing cooperation between teachers, parents, and the community to strengthen the instillation of character values in the school environment and its surroundings.

Keywords: character values, teacher role, educational strategy

Introduction

Education not only serves to improve students' intellectual intelligence but also plays an important role in shaping the character and morals of students. In the field of education, spiritual intelligence has not been able to be instilled in the souls of students, because intellectual intelligence is still focused on the need for students to memorize and know concepts. Teachers' efforts to develop students' spiritual intelligence can be realized through programmed learning. Various efforts made by teachers can be said to be fruitful because, through habit-forming activities carried out by teachers, children's awareness of spiritual intelligence is increasingly evident. This is because Islamic Religious Education teachers are at the forefront of achieving aspects of spiritual intelligence in their students. (Anisa, 2022)

In formal education in Indonesia, instilling character values is one of the main goals that is expected to produce a generation with integrity and noble morals. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) as a compulsory subject in schools plays a strategic role in shaping students' character through the teachings of universal Islamic values. Islamic education is referred to as the foundation for character education. (Sholikah & Maulida, 2020) In secondary schools, such as at SMAN 1 Ngemplak, Islamic Religious Education teachers are expected to be important actors in instilling character values in students.

Along with the increasingly complex moral challenges among the younger generation, instilling character values is becoming increasingly relevant. Globalization, technological developments, and various negative influences from outside often have an impact that erodes noble values in society. To deal with this, schools as formal educational institutions must take a strategic role in fortifying students with strong characters who can face the challenges of the

times. Here, PAI teachers play a key role, not only in delivering religious material, but also in guiding students to internalize character values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and social concern. Because the main goal of education is to form capable moral people, by the character of the nation. (Wahyuni, et.al 2024)

SMAN 1 Ngemplak one of the senior high schools in Boyolali Regency, Central Java, places character education as one of the main pillars of its learning process. One important instrument in this effort is the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers who are expected to be able to teach and instill character values in students. Thus, the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is not only limited to delivering curriculum materials, but also includes character formation through various educational strategies, both in and outside the classroom.

Character education has become a national agenda that is proclaimed in the education system in Indonesia. (Hartono, 2017) This is in line with the vision of national education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, where one of the functions of education is to form humans who have noble character, are cultured, and play a role in building a dignified national civilization. Character education is a systematic effort to help students understand, internalize, and practice noble values that will become the basis of behavior in everyday life.

In the context of schools, character education cannot be separated from the role of teachers as the main agents who interact directly with students. Teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers, have a strategic role in teaching moral and ethical values that are derived from religious teachings. Islamic Religious Education not only teaches cognitive aspects, but also shapes students' attitudes, behaviors, and ethics in interacting with others. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education teachers must be able to be role models and guides in the process of forming student character in schools. However, in its implementation, instilling character values is not always easy. The challenges faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers are very diverse, ranging from heterogeneous student backgrounds, the influence of less conducive outside school environments, to limited time to teach character values in depth in each class meeting. For this reason, the right strategy is needed so that Islamic Religious Education teachers can carry out their role optimally in forming student character at SMAN 1 Ngemplak.

Past research includes that conducted by Hadi Samsul (2022). entitled The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Islamic Character Values through Habituation in Students of SMP Negeri 10 Mukomuko-Bengkulu. In addition, Zida Haniyyah (2021) entitled The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Forming Islamic Character of Students at SMPN 03 Jombang. Embarianiyati Putri & Diana Husmidar (2021) entitled The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Cultivating Religious Character of Elementary School Students. What the researchers studied was the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. This is different from previous researchers if there are similarities but different locations.

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent of the role of Islamic religious education teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN I Ngemplak. Character education is a series of guidance for students to become whole human beings with character in the dimensions of heart, mind, body, feelings, and will. Character education can be interpreted as value education, personality education, and moral education, which aims to be able to distinguish between good and bad. This means applying good traits in living life wholeheartedly. Character education aims to build values and norms in society and Character education has functions, including giving an impact on children to have good behavior, providing knowledge of good and bad behavior, and filtering things that are not appropriate.

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Method

This type of research is qualitative research because the data required is data taken directly from the research object without providing any treatment from the collected data. This research is descriptive, whereas descriptive research is research that produces data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. (Zainudin, & Atikah, 2024) This research is field research, in this study, the researcher sees the conditions of the object that is the target of the research, or in other words, the researcher goes directly and sees the object of his research directly. This study adopts a qualitative research design by exploring in depth the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. This design was chosen to allow for a detailed analysis of teaching strategies, methods applied, and the impact of PAI teachers' efforts in shaping student character. This study aims to gain comprehensive contextual insight into how character education is carried out in specific settings.

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. (Nuralan, et, al, 2022) Observations were conducted in the classroom during the PAI learning process to understand the teaching methods and interactions between teachers and students directly. In-depth interviews were conducted with PAI teachers and several students to explore their views on strategies for instilling character values and the challenges faced. Interview instruments were developed using relevant open-ended questions to explore important aspects of the study. In addition, documentation involved analysis of lesson plans, teaching materials, and extracurricular activities related to character education. The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The analysis process began with the transcription of interview results and recording observations. The data were then grouped into main categories based on emerging themes. Each theme was analyzed to identify patterns, similarities, and differences in the practices and experiences of PAI teachers and students' perceptions. The results of this analysis provide insight into the role of teachers in instilling character values and the effects of the strategies implemented. The findings from this analysis were compared with related literature to provide context and a deeper understanding of character education practices in schools.

Results

This study aims to identify the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak, as well as to explore the strategies used by PAI teachers in instilling these character values. Based on interviews with PAI teachers, classroom observations, and analysis of related documents, the following research results were obtained: 1. The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Character Values in Students The results of the study on the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak in instilling character values in students show that teachers play an important role as role models, educators, and mentors. As role models, PAI teachers provide examples of positive behavior that reflect character values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. Students see the teacher's behavior directly as a model to follow in everyday life.

As educators, Islamic Religious Education teachers not only focus on the cognitive aspects of religious teaching but also actively instill character values in the learning process. They integrate moral values, such as tolerance, justice, and cooperation, into every activity in the classroom, both in subject matter and social interactions at school. As mentors, Islamic Religious Education teachers play a role in guiding students spiritually and morally. Through activities such as short-term Islamic boarding schools, religious mentoring, and extracurricular

programs, teachers help students understand and internalize the religious values that underlie character formation. This guidance provides a strong foundation for students to become better individuals in behavior and attitude. Overall, the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in these three aspects has proven effective in shaping the character of students who have noble morals and can apply positive values in their lives at school and in society.

Table. 1 The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Character Values in Students

Teacher's Role	Description
Role Model	Model Teacher behavior that emphasizes values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and concern for others.
Moral Educator	Teaches moral and spiritual education to students. Instills religious values that underlie the formation of student character, such as honesty, tolerance, discipline, and responsibility.
Spiritual Mentor	Guides students in carrying out worship and internalizing spiritual values in everyday life. Motivates students to increase their piety and faith through religious activities such as congregational prayer, group prayer, and religious

Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies in Instilling Character Values in Students.

The results of the study on the strategies of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak in instilling character values in students show that teachers use various effective approaches, including the integration of character values in learning, habituation through routine activities, persuasive approaches, and extracurricular activities.

First, the integration of character values in learning is carried out by inserting values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline into religious subject matter. PAI teachers ensure that every learning is not only cognitive but also forms positive student behavior. These values are instilled through discussions, stories, and case studies that are relevant to students' daily lives.

Second, the habituation of positive values through routine activities is also an important strategy. PAI teachers encourage students to practice character values through good habits, such as arriving on time, praying before and after studying, and being disciplined in assignments. This habituation aims to shape students' character so that they continue to be consistent in applying these values in their daily lives, both at school and outside of school.

Third, through a persuasive and communicative approach, Islamic Religious Education teachers create harmonious relationships with students, where communication takes place openly and with empathy. This approach fosters students' awareness of the importance of character values without feeling forced. Islamic Religious Education teachers also approach students through personal dialogue, understand their problems, and provide solutions based on religious values.

Fourth, extracurricular activities and religious programs play a role in strengthening the internalization of character values. Activities such as short Islamic boarding schools, religious studies, and social services are designed to provide space for students to practice values such as togetherness, tolerance, and a sense of social responsibility. This program actively involves students, both in groups and individually, so that students' character is formed through real experiences outside the classroom. Overall, these strategies have proven effective in instilling character in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. Islamic Religious Education teachers are not only

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tasked with teaching but also guiding and shaping students' personalities through holistic and sustainable methods. The results of this approach are students who are more disciplined, responsible and have high moral awareness.

Table 2. Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies for Instilling Character Values in Students

No	Strategy	Information
1	Integration of Character Values in Learning	Integrating character values into every learning process, both directly through lesson materials and indirectly through classroom interactions.
2	Habituation of Positive Values	Habits in instilling character values through routine activities such as Dhuha, Friday, and Dhuhur prayers
3	Persuasive and Communicative Approach	This approach is using dialogue listening to their problems, and providing relevant solutions or advice. Using good communication methods to emphasize character values.
4	Extracurricular Activities and Religious Programs	Teachers play an active role in managing extracurricular activities and religious programs aimed at strengthening the instillation of character values.

The results of observations and interviews show that the role and strategy of Islamic Religious Education teachers in instilling character values have had a positive impact on students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. Students become more disciplined in carrying out their duties, both in terms of worship and academic activities. In addition, students show an increase in responsibility, honesty, and concern for fellow friends. One real example of this positive impact is the increase in student participation in social and religious activities organized by the school. Students are not only actively involved but also take the initiative to organize activities that are beneficial to the surrounding environment, such as mosque cleaning programs or fundraising for victims of natural disasters. From the results of this study, it can be concluded that the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak is very significant in instilling character values in students. With various appropriate strategies, Islamic Religious Education teachers have succeeded in internalizing character values in students, which are then reflected in their daily attitudes and behavior.

Discussion

Research on the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in instilling character values in students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak confirms that PAI teachers have a central role in shaping students' character through an integrated approach to the education process. In this discussion, the researcher will review the findings related to the role and strategies of PAI teachers, and relate them to theories of character education and best practices that are relevant in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia.

The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Character Values in Students

Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak play several important roles in shaping students' character. Based on research findings, these roles include the role of role models, moral educators, and spiritual guides. These roles are in line with the views of many

education experts that teachers not only function as learning facilitators but also as figures who are expected to provide real examples in practicing the values taught.

a. Role as a Role Model

According to character education theory, one of the most effective ways to instill character values is through role models (Uswatun Hasanah). (Munawaroh, 2024) Thomas Lickona (2012), a character education expert, stated that children tend to learn through observing the behavior of adults around them, especially teachers they respect. At SMAN 1 Ngemplak, Islamic Religious Education teachers consistently try to demonstrate behavior that reflects character values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline. This is in line with the principle that teachers do not only teach theory but must figure that students imitate. Researchers found that many students at SMAN 1 Ngemplak consider Islamic Religious Education teachers as figures they can emulate in their daily lives. Students feel inspired by the integrity and dedication of teachers in carrying out their duties. This fact confirms that the moral role models of Islamic Religious Education teachers are very influential in the process of instilling students' character.

b. Role as Moral Educators In addition to being role models.

Islamic Religious Education teachers play an important role as moral educators who explicitly teach good values. Moral education in Islam has a strong foundation in the Qur'an and Hadith which teach good manners and morals. (Ririn, et al, 2024) Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak emphasize the importance of good morals as a form of practicing Islamic values. In this context, they use a teaching approach that links religious teachings with the realities of students' lives. This is by the learning approach recommended by Lickona, namely the "moral education" approach, where teachers not only transfer knowledge but also help students understand the moral implications of their actions. Islamic Religious Education teachers play a role in helping students understand the consequences of their behavior, both spiritually and socially. This is reinforced by the implementation of ethical discussions in class, where teachers encourage students to consider the moral aspects of a particular situation, which helps students in the process of internalizing these values.

c. Role as a Spiritual Guide

The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers as spiritual guides is very important in shaping students' religious awareness. (Abdullah, et al, 2023) At SMAN 1 Ngemplak, Islamic Religious Education teachers not only focus on the cognitive aspects of Islamic teachings, but also encourage students' spiritual appreciation through various activities such as joint prayers, congregational prayers, and spiritual guidance. This activity is a means for students to further explore the spiritual aspects of religion and at the same time internalize religious values related to everyday life. According to the research results, students who are active in religious activities show better attitudes in terms of responsibility and discipline. This is by the views of Islamic education experts such as Al-Ghazali who emphasize the importance of spiritual guidance in shaping noble morals. Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak have succeeded in creating an environment conducive to students' spiritual development, which ultimately supports the formation of positive character.

Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies in Instilling Character Values in Students

Effective instilling character values requires the right strategy so that the moral messages and values taught can be accepted and understood by students. Based on research findings, Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak use several main strategies in instilling character values, namely the integration of character values in learning, habituation

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through routine activities, persuasive and communicative approaches, and participation in religious extracurricular activities.

a. Integration of Character Values in Learning The strategy of integrating character values in learning is an effective step used by Islamic Religious Education teachers. Teachers not only convey religious teaching material but also relate the material to the context of relevant character values. For example, when teaching about zakat, teachers also invite students to reflect on the importance of social concern and empathy for others. This strategy strengthens students' understanding that religious teachings are not just rituals, but have real relevance in social life. This strategy is supported by constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that students learn better when they can relate new knowledge to their own experiences. By connecting religious teaching materials with relevant character values, Islamic Religious Education teachers help students internalize the teachings more deeply.
b. Habituation Through Routine Activities Habitation of character values through routine activities is one of the main strategies implemented at SMAN 1 Ngemplak. Activities such as praying Dhuha together, reading prayers before lessons start, and shaking hands with teachers before entering class are part of the routine that aims to instill discipline, togetherness, and respect. This habituation strategy is in line with behaviorist theory which emphasizes the importance of repetition in forming positive habits. In this study, it was found that habituation of religious activities in schools had a significant impact on student behavior. They became more disciplined, and responsible, and had a better attitude towards teachers and fellow students. This shows that good routines can shape students' character continuously.
c. Persuasive and Communicative Approach PAI teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak use a persuasive and communicative approach in interacting with students. This approach allows students to feel more comfortable and open to discussing various problems, both related to lessons and personal problems. Teachers also use positive communication techniques by giving praise and appreciation to students who demonstrate good behavior, as well as guiding students who still need direction in understanding character values. This persuasive approach is in line with the theory of educational communication, where positive interactions between teachers and students can increase students' motivation to learn and develop their character. Students feel appreciated and motivated to demonstrate behavior that is by the values taught.
d. Extracurricular Activities and Religious Programs Extracurricular activities related to religion at SMAN 1 Ngemplak, such as religious studies, commemoration of Islamic holidays, and social services, are also effective means of instilling character values. These activities not only strengthen students' understanding of religious teachings, but also provide direct experience in applying values such as social concern, cooperation, and tolerance. Activities such as community service provide students with the opportunity to practice the values of caring and togetherness with the community. According to Bandura (1986), social learning through observation and active participation in real activities can strengthen the internalization of moral values. In this case, religious extracurricular activities help students experience directly how character values can be applied in everyday life.

The findings of this study are relevant to the concept of character education in general which emphasizes the importance of the role of teachers in guiding students towards developing good character. Character education cannot be separated from the aspects of role models, habits, and consistent guidance from teachers. This study shows that at SMAN 1

Ngemplak, Islamic Religious Education teachers have carried out this role well through a holistic approach and focused on student needs. Islamic Religious Education teachers not only act as teachers of religious material but also as agents of change who shape students' morals and character. This is in line with the goals of national education which emphasize the formation of human beings with character as one of the main priorities. The strategies used by Islamic Religious Education teachers, such as the integration of values in learning, habituation, and extracurricular activities, can be used as examples of best practices in character education that can be implemented in other schools.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study on the Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Character Values Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak have a very significant role in the process of forming students' character. They not only act as religious teachers, but also as role models, moral educators, and spiritual guides. In the process of instilling character values, Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMAN 1 Ngemplak apply several effective strategies First, the integration of character values in Islamic Religious Education subject matter, where religious teaching material is linked to the context of real-life values that are relevant to students. Second, habituation through routine activities such as congregational prayer and joint prayer, which form discipline and a sense of togetherness. Third, a persuasive and communicative approach that helps create a good relationship between teachers and students, so that students feel comfortable learning and interacting. Fourth, participation in religious extracurricular activities provides students with real experience in applying the values of social concern, cooperation, and empathy.

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