

Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies in Improving Religious Character Education of Students in Class XI of MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi

Frendy Rahmansyah¹⁾, Bustanul Arifin²⁾, Irmawan Jauhari³⁾

^{1,2,3}Tribakti Lirboyo Islamic University, Kediri East Java Indonesia

Email: ¹rahmansyahfrendy04 @ g mail.com , ²arifinbustan65@g mail.com , ³irmawanj@gmail.com

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Abstract: *This study aims to explore the strategies of Islamic Religious Education teachers in fostering religious character among Grade XI students at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The findings reveal that Islamic Religious Education teachers develop comprehensive planning through the preparation of contextual teaching modules integrating Islamic values. The implementation involves habituation of religious practices such as prayer, Quran recitation, moral storytelling, and ethical classroom interactions. Evaluation is carried out holistically through behavioral observation, feedback from fellow teachers and parents, and continuous reflection. The study concludes that character education at MA At-Taqwa is effectively embedded through collaborative, reflective, and affective strategies aligned with students' sociocultural context. These findings contribute to the theoretical framework of value-based education and offer practical insights for curriculum developers and educators in Islamic schooling systems.*

Abstrak : *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi strategi guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam membentuk karakter religius peserta didik kelas XI di MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru PAI merancang perencanaan pembelajaran secara komprehensif melalui penyusunan modul ajar kontekstual yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai keislaman. Pelaksanaan strategi melibatkan pembiasaan praktik keagamaan seperti shalat, tadarus, cerita moral, dan komunikasi etis di kelas. Evaluasi dilakukan secara holistik melalui observasi perilaku, umpan balik dari guru dan orang tua, serta refleksi berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pendidikan karakter religius di MA At-Taqwa berhasil diterapkan melalui strategi yang kolaboratif, reflektif, dan kontekstual. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan teori pendidikan berbasis nilai dan praktik pembelajaran karakter di lingkungan madrasah.*

Keywords: *Character Education, Islamic Education, Religious Character, Teacher Strategy, Value-Based Learning*

INTRODUCTION

Education has not quite enough answer main in form character a complete human being , not only intelligent in a way intellectual , but also mature spiritually and emotionally . In context Islamic

education, formation character religious become pillar main For realize generation that does not only knowledgeable, but also moral glorious. Rasulullah SAW emphasized importance science and education in his words: "*Demand knowledge That must for every Muslim*" (HR. Muslim). In reality moment this, the importance mark religious the more emerge in the middle challenges of the digital era and the increasing moral crisis among teenagers complex.

Along the development of the era of globalization and progress technology information, generation young face current information without undefined limits always in harmony with values Islam. Based on results survey Research and Development Center of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in (Aisyah & Ulum, 2024) more from 40% of students school medium confess Once do action No Honest in exams and more of 20% experienced decline interest in activity religious. This is reflect existence decline involvement religious students and their weaknesses culture school in form spiritual character.

character building religious must become internalized culture in all over activity education, not just learning thematic or activity ceremonial. Many schools Still make education character just slogans and formal agendas (Kartini, 2024). In fact, the value religious like honesty, responsibility responsibility and discipline is essential moral foundations in life nationality and religion. The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher holds role central as actor main in this process. The teacher does not only convey material, but also become role model and facilitator in planting mark.

Islamic Education teacher strategies become very important in this process. Various approach start from role model, habituation, narrative value, up to moral reflection is proven capable strengthen internalization character religious student (Sobri, 2021). However, the study Rozaq and Ummah (2024) show that many teachers still achievement-oriented cognitive and less apply integrative and participatory strategies in form character students. Meanwhile that, research by Rossa & Hosna (2024) emphasize importance management activity systematic religion in grow awareness religious student.

Study previously part big Still nature general or No focused on levels education certain. For example, research Wahab (2024) study formation the character of the ulama in the pondok Islamic boarding school, meanwhile other research further highlight strengthening culture school in a way wide without peeling role strategic teacher in context class. In fact, the Madrasah Aliyah level, especially Class XI is a critical period formation students' very moral identity need approach measurable and adaptive strategies.

The gap the confirm the need research that examines in a way specific Islamic Education teacher strategies in form character religious participant students in grade XI of Madrasah Aliyah. Research This focusing on MA At- Taqwa Putra Bekasi which is known with its religious programs. Researchers want to know How planning, implementation, and evaluation teacher strategies in integrate values

religious to in learning in a way real . With approach qualitative and studies case , it is expected study This capable describe in a way deep dynamics and challenges faced by Islamic Education teachers in madrasas.

Objective from study This is to : (1) Describe planning Islamic Education teacher strategies in increase education character religious student Class XI MA At -Taqwa Putra Bekasi; (2) Analyzing implementation Islamic Education teacher strategies in implant values character religious in class and (3) Reviewing form evaluation strategies carried out by teachers in evaluate success formation character religious students . With dig direct field practice , research This expected can give input practical and conceptual for development education Islamic character .

Study This own uniqueness Because combine approach affective and reflective in the learning process carried out by the teacher, with consider context socio-cultural students in madrasas. Research it also emphasizes on relevance teacher strategies with life real student so that education character No stop in space class , but become part from life daily . Strategy like *storytelling* , moral discussion , and habituation worship is the approach studied in study This .

The solutions offered in study This is development Islamic Religious Education teacher strategy based on values and practices , which emphasize involvement student in a way active , reflective , and applicable . With Thus , education character religious No just become not quite enough the Islamic Religious Education teacher's answer alone , but rather become an integral part of supportive madrasa culture formation a generation of Muslims who are knowledgeable and moral . Findings from study This expected give contribution theoretical for development PAI curriculum and contribution practical for teachers and schools in strengthen learning based character .

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe in detail the strategies of Islamic Religious Education teachers in cultivating religious character in grade XI students at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi. The research subjects consisted of the principal, vice principal of curriculum, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and students who were selected purposively. Data were collected through non-participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation of relevant files. The researcher acted as the main instrument by going to the location and gaining contextual understanding. Analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing inductive conclusions. Data validity was tested through triangulation of techniques and sources, extended observations, and increased observation persistence to ensure data accuracy and scientific accountability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Education Teachers' Strategic Planning in Improving Religious Character Education

Planning is a crucial initial step in implementing religious character education because it determines the direction and success of the learning process. At MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers develop learning strategies based on curriculum references and students' character needs. Ustadz Husni Mujaddid (2024), one of the PAI teachers, explained that in planning, teachers first develop a teaching module or RPP, which outlines the methods, media, and teaching materials to be used. This teaching module not only covers cognitive aspects but is also designed to instill religious values in an integrated manner.

The planning of teaching modules at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi also considers the psychological and sociological aspects of students. Islamic Religious Education teachers select teaching materials that are appropriate for the characteristics of eleventh-grade adolescents, who are in the process of discovering their identity. Therefore, small books like *Ubudiyah* are used because they are easier to understand and more applicable than advanced fiqh books like *Fathul Qorib* or *Fathul Mu'in*. This choice aims to make religious material more contextual and not burden students' understanding, but rather to shape religious awareness gradually and naturally.

When developing plans, teachers also determine which character values they want to instill in each core competency (KD). Values such as honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and a love of cleanliness are systematically incorporated into each learning objective. This strategy allows for integration between cognitive and affective aspects within a lesson unit. (Darnanengsih & Rusyaid, 2020) state that incorporating character values into each KD makes religious education more meaningful in shaping students' personalities.

In addition to developing teaching materials, planning also includes determining appropriate learning methods and media. Teachers consider the use of discussion methods, question-and-answer sessions, case studies, and role-play to foster active student engagement in understanding and practicing Islamic values. For example, when discussing material on honesty, teachers insert relevant stories from the Prophet's companions to encourage students to discuss and learn moral lessons from them. This aligns with the perspective of Ningsih (2025), that contextual and participatory approaches can increase the effectiveness of internalization of values.

Planning doesn't stop at material and methodological aspects, but also involves instilling values through daily routine activities at school. Ustadz Najib (2024) stated that students are accustomed to reading the Quran, praying together, shaking hands with teachers, and performing the Dhuha prayer in congregation every day before learning begins. These activities are designed not as formalities, but as

part of a character-building strategy through repetition and consistency of behavior . (2021) explains that character building will be able to shape students' character which plays an important role in influencing students' individual thinking abilities in making decisions and a great sense of responsibility.

During the planning process, teachers not only work individually but also collaborate with other teacher teams through subject teacher meetings (MGMP) and curriculum meetings. These forums are used to align learning strategies and discuss challenges in implementing character education. Team involvement is crucial to avoid overlapping values or inconsistent approaches between teachers. This is in line with Rohman's opinion. (2024) who emphasized that synergy between teachers has high significance in helping to strengthen students' character.

Thus, the Islamic Religious Education teacher planning strategy at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi reflects a comprehensive approach, from curriculum design and material selection to learning methods and habituation activities, to collaborative work with fellow teachers. All these aspects are designed to address students' affective needs in developing a strong and sustainable religious character. This strategy also demonstrates that character education is not merely a discourse, but a structured and measurable process that begins with a thorough planning stage.

Implementation of Islamic Education Teachers' Strategies in Improving Religious Character Education

Strategy implementation is the core of the pre-planned implementation of religious character education. At MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi, Islamic Religious Education teachers not only deliver learning materials but also foster a religious classroom atmosphere through habituation and role modeling. The learning process begins with routines such as greetings, reciting Al-Fatihah and praying together, as well as providing light advice to build students' inner peace. According to the researchers' observations, these activities are implemented consistently and have become part of the school culture that supports character development.

In core learning activities, Islamic Religious Education teachers actively incorporate character values such as honesty, responsibility, and respect for others. Religious material such as the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam, and the stories of the Prophet's companions are connected to students' daily lives. Teachers provide concrete examples so that students not only understand cognitively but also feel the relevance of these values in their lives. For example, when discussing faith in angels, students are encouraged to reflect on the fact that all their actions are recorded and monitored by angels, so they must maintain their behavior and attitudes.

Teachers also create a dialogic space in the learning process, where students are given the opportunity to ask questions, express opinions, and discuss politely. In these interactions, teachers

consistently use polite language and cultivate good language among students. When an answer is not quite right, teachers don't immediately say " *wrong* ," but instead respond with something like, " *Let's discuss this again* " or " *This answer could be further developed* ." This approach creates a safe and comfortable learning environment, enabling students to be more open and motivated to learn.

The application of character values is also reinforced through activities outside of core learning, such as congregational prayer, Quran recitation, and rotating recitation of Islamic sermons by students. These activities are designed to foster self-confidence, responsibility, and a love for Islam. Teachers play an active role in facilitating these activities, while also providing guidance and ongoing evaluation. Furthermore, Mulyana & Muntaqo (2022) emphasized that routine and consistent activities give quite an improvement For form character religious student .

In every lesson, teachers also instill the value of politeness by addressing students respectfully and teaching them communication etiquette. Students are taught to ask permission before speaking, listen attentively when the teacher explains, and not interrupt when others are speaking. These habits foster mutual respect, which is an integral part of Islamic teachings. This strategy refers to etiquette-based character education, which has been proven effective in shaping student character, as research by Zakiah & Nurrahmi (2024) .

In addition to classroom activities, Islamic Religious Education teachers also foster close relationships with students outside of the classroom. They approach students who are experiencing difficulties or who show a decline in enthusiasm for learning personally. They provide motivation in a gentle and thoughtful manner, ensuring students feel cared for and not judged. This approach aligns with Islamic educational principles, which emphasize compassion and spiritual development.

The strategy's implementation also involves actively engaging students in collective religious activities such as Islamic holiday commemorations, community service, and public religious studies. These activities provide students with direct experience in practicing Islamic values in community life. Through these experiences, students learn to care, cooperate, and demonstrate social awareness. Teachers guide students to reflect on the values embodied in each activity, making it part of transformative learning.

Overall, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers' strategies in developing religious character at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi is not merely instructional, but rather aims at comprehensive and continuous development. The strategies used integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor approaches into a single, values-oriented activity. Teachers act as facilitators and role models in instilling Islamic values through concrete actions, polite language, and warm emotional relationships with students. This implementation is what truly brings Islamic religious education to life in learning practices.

Evaluation of Islamic Education Teachers' Strategies in Improving Religious Character Education

Evaluation is an integral part of the religious character education process, aiming to measure the extent to which Islamic values have been internalized in students' behavior. At MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi, Islamic Religious Education teachers implement a holistic evaluation approach encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. One of the primary methods used is direct observation of student behavior in the classroom and school environment. Ustadz Husni Mujaddid (2024) emphasized that assessment is conducted by considering indicators such as religious attitudes, discipline, politeness, and students' commitment to practicing Islamic teachings. This evaluation is conducted not only in an academic context but also in students' social interactions and daily lives.

Character evaluation at this madrasah also involves the participation of various parties. Islamic Religious Education teachers receive input from other subject teachers, homeroom teachers, the principal, and even parents and the surrounding community. This allows teachers to obtain a comprehensive picture of students' character development, both inside and outside the school environment. According to Ustadz Najib (2024), informal reports from parents are very helpful in understanding students' attitudes at home and in the community. This multi-stakeholder collaboration supports objective and comprehensive evaluation.

The evaluation model used is not purely quantitative, but rather qualitative and thematic. Teachers assign a specific value focus each week, such as honesty, discipline, or responsibility. These values are then monitored and analyzed in depth before moving on to the next value. This strategy helps students understand and practice each value holistically and without rushing. Assessments are conducted in stages to ensure each value receives its fair share of attention.

In practice, evaluation is not interpreted as a judgmental process, but rather as a means of development and reflection. Teachers convey evaluation results to students in the form of constructive advice and guidance. For example, students who lack discipline are not immediately reprimanded but are instead engaged in discussions to understand the importance of these values in life. This educational evaluation reflects a humanistic approach to Islamic education, as explained by Pradana and Sutarto. (2025) that teachers play a role as moral guides, not just those responsible for knowledge.

Evaluation is also conducted informally through daily interactions between teachers and students, both in the classroom, on the school grounds, and outside of learning. Teachers observe students' habits of dress, speech, behavior toward others, and religious practices such as prayer and reading the Quran. For example, when a student fails to maintain cleanliness, teachers remind them personally using polite and educational language. This type of evaluation is more effective because it directly touches on

students' affective aspects and strengthens the emotional bond between teacher and student, as suggested by Sulthoni. et al . (2024) , that a positive relationship between educators and students is the key to success in education.

In addition to observations and input from various parties, teacher reflection is also an important part of strategy evaluation. After each learning cycle, teachers conduct an internal evaluation to determine the success of the approach used. If obstacles such as low student participation or inactivity are identified, the teacher will adjust the approach for the next meeting. This reflection allows for continuous improvement in learning strategies. This aligns with the principle of formative evaluation, where evaluation is not only intended to measure but also to refine and develop educational strategies toward greater effectiveness and context.

Overall, the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher strategies at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi reflects a comprehensive and reflective approach. Evaluation was conducted not only using formal measurement tools but also through *real-time observation* , communication between teachers, and community involvement. This approach is able to capture the dynamics of students' religious character across multiple dimensions. Evaluation is conducted not merely as an administrative instrument, but also as a bridge connecting learning strategies with tangible outcomes in student behavior. Thus, teachers act not only as instructors but also as moral educators who continuously reflect on and refine the Islamic values-based character approach.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the strategy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in forming the religious character of class XI students at MA At-Taqwa Putra Bekasi includes a structured process through integrated planning, implementation and evaluation stages. Planning is carried out by compiling teaching modules that combine cognitive material and contextual Islamic character values, using applicable teaching materials such as the Ubudiyah book, and designing participatory learning methods and appropriate media. The implementation of the strategy focuses on cultivating religious values in learning and school life, such as greetings, prayers, worship practices, and polite communication between teachers and students. Meanwhile, evaluation is carried out using direct observation, teacher reflection, as well as input from other teachers and parents, which strengthens the validity of holistic student character assessments. Overall, the PAI teacher strategy in this madrasah has been able to answer the challenges of forming religious character in the context of Islamic secondary education through a reflective, contextual and collaborative approach. Teachers not only act as teachers, but also as role models and moral builders. This research provides a conceptual contribution to strengthening value-based learning strategies and expanding character education practices in the madrasa context. These

findings also form the basis for developing curriculum policies and teacher training to be more adaptive in shaping a generation of Muslims with noble character and relevant to the dynamics of the times.

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