

The Contribution of Islamic Education Teachers Professionalism to Students' Character Development in the School Environment

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Abstract

This study discusses the important role of professionalism among Islamic education teachers in shaping students' character within the school environment. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering subject matter but also serve as role models and motivators for their students. Through a holistic approach, teachers are able to integrate religious values into students' daily lives, thereby promoting the development of positive attitudes, ethics, and morality. The aim of this study is to identify the strategies used by teachers in educating students and to examine their impact on character development.

Keyword: Role, Teacher, Character

Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas peran penting profesionalisme guru pendidikan agama Islam dalam membentuk karakter siswa di lingkungan sekolah. Guru tidak hanya bertanggung jawab dalam mengajarkan materi pelajaran, tetapi juga berperan sebagai teladan dan motivator bagi siswa. Melalui pendekatan yang holistik, guru mampu mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai agama dalam kehidupan sehari-hari siswa, sehingga mendorong pengembangan sikap positif, etika, dan moral. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi strategi yang digunakan oleh guru dalam mendidik siswa serta dampaknya terhadap perkembangan karakter mereka

Kata Kunci: Peran, Guru, Karakter

A. Introduction

Education has a very vital role in shaping individual character, especially for the younger generation. In the context of education in Indonesia, Islamic religious education is one of the important pillars that not only teaches religious knowledge but also shapes students' morals and behavior. Islamic religious education teachers have a great responsibility in this process, because they not only act as educators, but also as role models in implementing religious values.

Character education is becoming an increasingly relevant issue in this modern era, where moral and ethical challenges are often faced by students. Therefore, the role of teachers in teaching religious values is becoming increasingly important. Through effective teaching, teachers can help students understand and internalize religious teachings, which in turn contribute to the formation of good character, in this study, the author will examine the various strategies used by Islamic religious education teachers in educating students, as well as the impact of these strategies on the

development of student character. It is hoped that this study can provide deeper insight into the importance of the role of teachers in shaping student character through Islamic religious education. Thus, religious education is not only a means to understand teachings, but also as a foundation in building strong morals and morals for the next generation of the nation, furthermore character education has become the main focus in the current education system (Nafsaka et al., 2023, p. 903), especially in facing increasingly complex moral and ethical challenges in the era of globalization. Strong and positive character is an important foundation for students' personal and social development, which in turn will form a better society. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a strategic role, because it not only functions as an instrument to improve students' religious knowledge, but also as a means to instill high moral and ethical values.

Islamic Religious Education teachers have a great responsibility in this character building process. They are expected to be role models for students and integrate religious values into every aspect of learning. In addition, Islamic Religious Education teachers also play a role in guiding students to apply religious teachings in everyday life, so that students not only understand religious concepts theoretically, but are also able to apply them in behavior that is in accordance with Islamic values. However, in practice, the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers often faces various challenges especially for teachers who are the spearhead of educational success (Saenah, 2022, p. 129), including lack of support from the school environment, limited learning methods, and the gap between theory and practice (Muliana Kasmorani & Sri Arfiah, 2015). Therefore, it is important to further examine how Islamic Religious Education teachers can effectively contribute to the formation of students' character, as well as what strategies can be used to overcome these challenges (Ifadah & Utomo, 2019, p. 52). This study aims to explore the role and contribution of Islamic Religious Education teachers in shaping students' character, as well as their impact on the formation of a generation with noble character.

Education in Indonesia is not only aimed at improving students' academic abilities, but also at forming strong and noble characters (Raharjo, 2010, p. 230). In this regard, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a very important role. As an integral part of the national curriculum (Ahmad, n.d., p. 251), PAI not only teaches the principles of Islam, but also instills moral values (Hermuttaqien & Mutatik, 2018, p. 42) and ethics that can be the foundation for students' behavior in everyday life. Islamic Religious Education teachers have a responsibility that goes beyond just teaching; they are required to be good role models and moral guides for students. In a broader context, the role of PAI teachers involves character building that includes aspects such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and tolerance. These values are important for forming students who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have high integrity and morality.

However, efforts to shape students' character are not easy and often face various challenges (Prasetya & Aditirigianti, 2023, p. 1298). The influence of the environment, technological advances (Khodijah et al., 2021, p. 26), and social and cultural changes are often factors that influence the development of students' character. This is where the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers becomes very crucial in directing and guiding students to stay on the right track.

Character education in schools, especially in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), has a very important role in forming a generation that is not only

intellectually intelligent, but also has noble character and high morality. Here are some reasons why character education in PAI is very important:

Formation of Morality and Morality: Character education in PAI focuses on cultivating moral values (Mansen, 2018, p. 29) and ethics based on Islamic teachings, such as honesty, responsibility, justice, and love. This helps students develop good morals and directs them to become moral individuals in their daily lives.

Prevention of Negative Behavior: By instilling strong character values from an early age, character education in Islamic Religious Education plays a role in preventing negative behaviors such as juvenile delinquency, bullying, and antisocial behavior. Students who have good character are better able to avoid bad influences from the environment.

Building Integrity (Badruzzaman, 2019, p.78) and Responsibility: Character education encourages students to become individuals who have integrity and responsibility in various aspects of life, both in the school environment and in society. This creates a generation that is trustworthy and responsible in all their actions.

Forming Religious and Spiritual Attitudes (Maisyaroh et al., 2020, p. 26): Islamic Religious Education not only teaches the cognitive aspects of religious teachings, but also forms students' religious and spiritual attitudes. This attitude is important in facing life's challenges, giving meaning, and guiding them to stay on the right path.

Preparing a Generation of Character-Based Leaders (M.S.I, 2017, p. 78): One of the main objectives of character education in Islamic Religious Education is to prepare the next generation who are not only intelligent and knowledgeable, but also have strong characters. This generation is expected to be able to become fair, wise, and noble leaders in the future.

Strengthening National Identity and Diversity: National identity is a unifier of the nation that is able to strengthen relations between citizens in carrying out and achieving common ideals, goals for the future of the nation (Adha et al., 2021, p. 11). In a country with cultural and religious diversity like Indonesia, character education through Islamic Religious Education helps strengthen national identity while respecting differences. Values such as tolerance and respect for diversity are taught to create harmony in society (Almaliki & Fahraini, 2023, p. 127).

Overall, character education in Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in forming students' complete personalities, directing them to become individuals who contribute positively to society, and maintaining religious and cultural values in everyday life.

Therefore, this article aims to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in shaping students' characters, identify the challenges faced, and explore strategies that can be implemented to achieve these goals. Thus, it is hoped that the findings of this study can provide new insights in improving the effectiveness of character education through the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers.

B. Method

This research uses the method *library research* (Khatibah, 2011, p. 37) (library research) to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in shaping students' characters. Data were collected from various literatures such as books, scientific journals, articles, and relevant official documents. Data analysis was

conducted through a content analysis approach to identify key themes related to PAI teaching strategies, the character values taught, and their impact on students. The results of this analysis were synthesized to conclude how PAI teachers contribute to the formation of students' characters and offer recommendations for more effective practices.

C. Research Results and Discussion

Character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual to live and work together, both within the family, society, nation, and state (Buan, 2021, p. 32). Student character reflects various traits, attitudes, and behaviors that are important in the learning process and social interactions at school. Disciplined students are able to manage their time well, follow rules, and consistently carry out their responsibilities, while curiosity makes them excited to learn new things and actively explore deeper knowledge. In addition, the character of hard work and never giving up is seen in students who continue to try despite facing challenges. Responsibility is also a characteristic of students who complete assignments well and maintain a positive learning environment. Respect for teachers and friends, as well as honesty in carrying out obligations, also strengthen social relationships at school. No less important, the character of cooperation and empathy allows students to work in teams, respect the opinions of others, and understand their feelings. Creativity and self-confidence are also prominent qualities, where students dare to think innovatively and face challenges with self-confidence. All of these aspects of character play an important role in shaping students into individuals who are not only academically successful, but also have integrity in social life.

Character education is a planned effort to help students understand, care about, and act according to fundamental ethical values. Thomas Lickona, one of the leading figures in character education (Susanti, 2022, p. 20), states that character education includes three main aspects: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action (Ramdhani, 2017, p. 29). Character education aims to instill values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and tolerance, which are considered the foundation of individual and societal morality.

Character Education is a planned and systematic process to help students develop moral and ethical values that form the basis of good behavior in everyday life. The main goal of character education is to form individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have integrity, responsibility, and the ability to behave in accordance with social and moral norms recognized by society.

Aspects of Character Education

Character education includes various interrelated aspects, namely:

- a. Moral Knowing: This includes students' understanding of moral and ethical concepts, such as what is considered good and bad, right and wrong, and the values held by society. Students are taught to understand the moral principles that underlie ethical behavior.
- b. Moral Feeling: Character education also aims to build students' emotional awareness of the importance of moral values. This involves developing

empathy, a sense of justice, and concern for others. Students are taught to feel the moral impact of their actions on themselves and others.

- c. **Moral Action:** This is the action aspect of character education, where students are taught to apply moral values in real life. This includes making ethical decisions, acting with integrity, and behaving consistently with the values they have learned.

Character Education Objectives

The goals of character education include:

- a. **Developing Good Personality:** Character education aims to form individuals who have good character, such as being honest, fair, responsible, disciplined, and caring towards others.
- b. **Building Integrity:** Integrity means acting according to moral principles, even when no one is watching. Character education aims to build integrity in students, so that they always behave honestly and are trustworthy.
- c. **Creating a Positive Environment:** Character education helps create a safe and positive school environment, where students respect and support each other. It also helps reduce negative behaviors such as bullying and violence.
- d. **Preparing Students for Life in Society:** Character education prepares students to become responsible citizens and contribute positively to society. This involves an understanding of rights and responsibilities, as well as the ability to actively participate in social life.
- e. **Instilling National Values and Diversity:** In a diverse country like Indonesia, character education also plays a role in instilling national values, tolerance, and respect for differences. This helps create a harmonious and respectful society.

Approaches in Character Education

Character education can be carried out through various approaches, including:

- a. **Role Model:** Teachers and adults in schools should be good examples in their daily behavior, as students tend to imitate what they see.
- b. **Habituation:** Students are encouraged to habituate themselves to good behavior through repeated practice, such as being disciplined in time, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting others.
- c. **Integration in Curriculum:** Character values can be integrated into all subjects, not just taught separately. For example, the value of honesty can be taught through math lessons by emphasizing the importance of honesty in data collection.
- d. **Moral Discussion:** Teachers can use case studies or stories that contain moral dilemmas to engage students in discussing and analyzing situations, so that they can understand and explore moral values.
- e. **Rewards and Consequences:** Using a consistent system of rewards and consequences to encourage good behavior and discourage behavior that is inconsistent with character values.

Challenges in Character Education

Character education also faces various challenges, such as:

- a. Lack of Role Models: If teachers or adults do not set good examples, then character education becomes ineffective.
- b. Environmental Influences: Students are exposed to a variety of influences from the environment outside of school, such as media, peers, and popular culture, which sometimes conflict with the character values taught in school.
- c. Gap between Theory and Practice: Although moral values are taught in class, challenges arise when students have to apply these values in real life, especially in complex and stressful situations.
- d. Inconsistent Approach: If the character education approach is not applied consistently across schools or is not supported by all parties involved, the results may be less than optimal.

Character education is a crucial component in the education system that aims to form individuals who are well-mannered, responsible, and able to contribute positively to society. Through character education, students are taught to understand, feel, and apply moral values in their lives, which will ultimately form a generation with integrity and high ethics.

2. Theory of Islamic Religious Education

Islamic Religious Education aims to instill faith, piety, and noble morals in students. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the main purpose of education in Islam is to form people who are able to know God and fulfill their obligations as His servants. Islamic religious education also teaches basic values that become a guide to the lives of Muslims, such as courtesy, justice, trust, and humility.

Theory of Islamic Religious Education is a conceptual framework that regulates the methods of teaching and instilling Islamic teachings to students. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) aims to form individuals who not only have knowledge of Islam, but are also able to internalize, practice, and uphold Islamic values in everyday life. The following is a further explanation of some of the main aspects of the theory of Islamic Religious Education:

The Objectives of Islamic Religious Education

The main purpose of Islamic Religious Education is to form people who have noble morals, faith, piety to Allah SWT, and are able to carry out the teachings of Islam in a kaffah (comprehensive) manner. There are several specific purposes in PAI, among others:

- a. Instilling Faith and Piety: Helping students understand and believe in the pillars of faith and uphold the pillars of Islam as part of everyday life.
- b. Forming Noble Morals: Islamic Religious Education aims to instill praiseworthy qualities such as honesty, justice, patience, and responsibility.
- c. Developing Spiritual Intelligence: PAI teaches students to know Allah SWT, understand His greatness, and develop spiritual intelligence which is the basis of behavior based on Islamic values.

- d. Forming a Kaffah Muslim Personality: Students are expected to be a person who is balanced between the worldly and the ukhrawi, able to carry out their role in the family, society, and as servants of God.

Principles of Islamic Religious Education

Some of the principles underlying Islamic Religious Education include:

- a. Tawhid: Islamic education is centered on the concept of tauhid, which is the belief that Allah SWT is the only God. All aspects of education are directed to instill and strengthen tauhid in students.
- b. Integration of Science and Religion: PAI does not only teach religious knowledge separately, but also seeks to integrate religious teachings with other sciences, so that students can understand that Islam is a religion that encourages knowledge and wisdom.
- c. Balance (Tawazun): PAI teaches balance between spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. This education does not only focus on one aspect, but covers all dimensions of human life.
- d. Continuity (Istiqomah): Islamic education emphasizes the importance of consistency in worship and applying Islamic values in daily life.

Islamic Religious Education Methods

In Islamic Religious Education, the teaching methods used must reflect Islamic values and support the achievement of these educational goals. Some methods that are often used include:

- a. Lecture: Direct delivery of material by a teacher, which is usually accompanied by explanations and interpretations of religious texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith.
- b. Discussion and Q&A: Provide space for students to ask questions and discuss, so that they can better understand and internalize religious teachings.
- c. Role Model (Uswatun Hasanah): Teachers are good examples in daily behavior, which can be followed by students. This is a very effective method in Islamic Religious Education because students tend to imitate their teacher's behavior.
- d. Worship Practice: Direct application in the form of worship, such as congregational prayer, fasting, and other religious activities, which teach students to not only know, but also practice religious teachings.
- e. Text Memorization and Comprehension: Students are taught to memorize the verses of the Qur'an and Hadith and understand their meaning to be applied in life.

Islamic Religious Education Curriculum

Islamic religious education in schools as an effort to form positive spirituality and character. The Islamic Religious Education curriculum is based on the basic principles of Islam and (*good manners*) students (Saputra et al., 2022, p. 152). The Islamic

Religious Education (PAI) Curriculum is an educational program that aims to equip students with a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, as well as develop attitudes and behaviors that are in accordance with Islamic values in everyday life. This curriculum covers several important aspects, such as Aqidah (faith), which focuses on teaching about the oneness of Allah, angels, Allah's books, messengers, the Day of Judgment, and qadha-qadar; Worship, which teaches procedures for worship such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj; Akhlaq (ethics), which aims to form noble characters, such as honesty, patience, and respect for others; and Fiqh, which studies Islamic laws in various aspects of life such as muamalah (social interaction), buying and selling, and family law.

In addition, the PAI curriculum also includes the Quran and Hadith, where students are taught to read, memorize, understand, and apply the teachings of the Quran and Hadith in their lives. The History of Islamic Culture is also an important part of the curriculum, which introduces students to the history of Islamic civilization, starting from the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to the development of Islamic civilization in the modern era.

The teaching method in the PAI curriculum is usually interactive, combining theory, worship practices, and instilling character values through direct learning and discussion. The main objective of this curriculum is to form students who not only have strong religious knowledge, but also have noble morals and are able to apply Islamic teachings in their social and personal lives. This curriculum also plays an important role in shaping students' Islamic identity and increasing their spiritual awareness. Adapted to the needs of students and their social environment. This curriculum usually includes several important aspects such as:

- a. Aqidah: Teaching about the fundamentals of Islamic faith and belief.
- b. Worship: Teaching about the procedures for worship and good deeds.
- c. Akhlaq: Character education that emphasizes Islamic ethics and morality.
- d. Islamic History: Learning about the history of Prophet Muhammad SAW, companions, and important events in the development of Islam.
- e. Fiqh: Islamic law that regulates various aspects of life such as muamalah (social interaction), worship, and ethics.
- f. Tafsir and Hadith: Teaching about the interpretation of the Qur'an and Hadith as the main sources of Islamic teachings.

The Role of Teachers in Islamic Religious Education

In education, professional teachers are needed as professional educators, teachers have the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing and evaluating students in the learning process (Buan, 2021, p. 351). The role of teachers in shaping students' character is very important, because teachers not only function as teachers of subject matter, but also as moral guides and role models. Teachers play a role in instilling values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and mutual respect through daily interactions in the classroom. By providing examples of good behavior, such as discipline in time, fairness in attitude, and empathy for students,

teachers become models that students can follow. In addition, teachers also play a role in creating a conducive learning environment, where positive values such as cooperation, tolerance, and respect can grow. Through teaching that integrates character values into subject matter, teachers can help students understand the importance of ethics and morals in their lives. Teachers who are consistent in providing guidance and constructive feedback also help students develop self-awareness, critical thinking, and the ability to behave well, both inside and outside of school. Thus, teachers have a great influence in shaping students' personalities into individuals with character and noble morals.

- a. Murobbi (Educator): Teachers play a role in educating students as a whole, including moral and spiritual aspects.
- b. Mu'allim (Teacher): Teacher as an instructor who imparts Islamic knowledge and teachings.
- c. Murshid (Guide): The teacher guides students in understanding and practicing Islamic teachings.
- d. Motivator and Facilitator: Teachers also play a role in motivating students to be enthusiastic about studying religion and applying their knowledge in everyday life.

Evaluation in Islamic Religious Education

Evaluation is one of the important components and stages that must be taken by teachers to determine the effectiveness of learning (M.Pd.I, 2019, p. 8). Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is an assessment process to measure the extent to which the objectives of Islamic religious learning are achieved by students. This evaluation includes three main aspects: cognitive, which assesses students' understanding of religious concepts such as *aqidah*, *fiqh*, and Islamic history; affective, which assesses students' religious attitudes and piety, such as awareness of worship and application of moral values; and psychomotor, which assesses the ability to practice worship, such as prayer procedures and reading the Quran. The evaluation methods used include written exams, observations of worship practices, project assignments, and attitude assessments. Good evaluation provides a comprehensive picture of student development in terms of faith, behavior, and the ability to apply Islamic teachings. Evaluation in PAI not only covers cognitive aspects such as knowledge of Islamic teachings, but also affective aspects (attitudes and values) and psychomotor (practice of worship). Evaluation can be done in various ways, such as written exams, observations of religious practices, and assessments of students' attitudes and behavior in daily life.

Challenges and Opportunities in Islamic Religious Education

PAI faces several challenges, such as:

- a. Globalization: The influence of globalization brings foreign values that sometimes conflict with Islamic teachings.
- b. Technological Advances: Students are more exposed to technology and information that is not always in accordance with Islamic values.

- c. Lack of Role Models in the Environment: The lack of role models who practice Islamic teachings well can be a challenge to the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education.

However, there are also great opportunities, such as increasing awareness of the importance of religious education and support from the government in developing a PAI curriculum that is more relevant to the needs of the times.

Islamic Religious Education serves as a foundation in the formation of students' character and behavior based on Islamic teachings, and prepares them to become individuals who are useful to themselves, their families, society, and religion.

3. The Role of Teachers in Character Education

Teachers play a central role in the character education process, especially in the context of Islamic Religious Education. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, teachers function as "ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing madyo mangun karso, tut wuri handayani," which means that teachers must be role models, guides, and motivators for students. Teachers are not only tasked with delivering lesson materials, but must also be able to shape students' characters through role models, advice, and guidance.

The Role of Teachers in Character Education is very important because teachers are not only tasked with conveying academic knowledge, but are also responsible for shaping students' character. (Buan, 2021, p. 3) The task of educators; teachers is more simply to educate, evaluate and continue to improve until students are at the next level of school, because in any case this process must be carried out by educators as a form of life process in education. Character education aims to instill moral, ethical, and social values in students so that they can grow into individuals with integrity, responsibility, and contribute positively to society. The following is a description of the role of teachers in character education:

1. As a Role Model

Teachers are role models for students in terms of attitude, behavior, and moral values. Students tend to imitate what they see from their teachers, whether in the way they speak, behave, or interact with others. Therefore, it is important for teachers to show good examples in everyday life, such as being honest, disciplined, patient, and fair. This example helps students internalize positive values and apply them in their lives.

2. As a Teacher of Moral Values

Teachers play an active role in teaching moral and ethical values to students. This can be done through various subjects, especially Religious Education and Citizenship, as well as through daily interactions at school. Teachers must be able to integrate values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and tolerance into the learning process. This learning is not only done through lectures, but also through discussions, case studies, and other activities that involve students in solving moral problems.

3. As a Mentor and Character Builder

Teachers act as mentors who help students develop their character. This involves providing advice, guidance, and encouragement to students to apply moral values in everyday life. Teachers must support students in facing moral dilemmas and help them make the right decisions based on the values taught. In addition, teachers also build students' character through extracurricular activities, which provide opportunities for students to practice moral values in a broader context.

4. As a Motivator and Facilitator

Teachers must be motivators who encourage students to develop positive character. This is done by giving rewards for good behavior, appreciating student efforts, and providing encouragement to continue to improve themselves. As facilitators, teachers also create a learning environment that is conducive to character development. This includes creating a school culture that supports moral values, such as cooperation, mutual respect, and responsibility.

5. As an Implementation of Positive Discipline

Teachers have an important role in implementing discipline in schools. The discipline applied must be positive and educational, not just punitive. Positive discipline helps students understand the consequences of their actions and teaches them to be responsible for their behavior. Teachers must apply rules consistently and fairly, and provide explanations to students about the importance of following the rules and how this relates to moral values.

6. As a Mediator in Conflict

Teachers often have to act as mediators in conflict situations between students. In this role, teachers help resolve conflicts in a fair and educational way, teaching students to solve problems through dialogue, empathy, and understanding. Teachers help students learn the importance of good communication, respecting differences, and resolving problems peacefully.

7. As a Positive Relationship Builder

Teachers are responsible for building positive relationships with students and between students. A good relationship between teachers and students can increase students' self-confidence and give them a sense of security. It also helps create a supportive environment, where students feel supported and valued. Teachers also play a role in encouraging positive interactions between students, such as working together in groups, respecting each other, and helping each other.

8. As a Character Evaluator

In addition to evaluating cognitive aspects, teachers must also evaluate the development of student character. This can be done through daily observations, student reflections, and feedback from other teachers or parents. This evaluation helps

teachers know the extent to which students have internalized the values taught and provides an opportunity to provide further guidance.

9. As a liaison with parents and the community

Teachers also act as a liaison between schools, parents, and the community in character education. Collaboration between teachers and parents is essential to ensure consistency in the application of moral values at home and at school. Teachers can also involve the community in school activities that support character development, such as social activities or community service programs.

10. As a Protector and Supervisor

Teachers also play a role in protecting students from negative influences that can damage their character, such as bullying, immoral behavior, or drug use. As supervisors, teachers are responsible for ensuring that the school environment is safe and supports the development of positive character in students.

Overall, teachers play a very important role in character education. They not only serve as teachers, but also as mentors, motivators, and protectors for students. This role requires teachers to always be good examples, provide appropriate guidance, and create a learning environment that is conducive to positive character development.

4. Holistic Learning Theory

Holistic philosophy believes that education should encourage students to think critically and analytically about the information they receive (M.Si, n.d., p. 102). The holistic approach in education emphasizes the development of all aspects of the individual, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Holistic means viewing everything as a whole, not partially or separately (Hamzah et al., 2022, p. 556). In the context of Islamic Religious Education, holistic learning includes teaching that focuses not only on religious knowledge, but also on the formation of good character. This is in line with the theory of multiple intelligences put forward by Howard Gardner, which states that education must develop various aspects of students' intelligence, including moral and spiritual intelligence.

Holistic learning theory emphasizes a holistic approach to the learning process, where students are viewed as whole individuals, encompassing intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual aspects. This approach aims to integrate all aspects of student development, not only focusing on cognitive understanding, but also on how they interact with the environment and society around them. Holistic learning seeks to connect learning experiences to real life, so that students can understand the meaning and relevance of what they are learning. Thus, holistic learning encourages students to be actively involved, creative, and reflective, and helps them develop into balanced individuals with a deeper awareness of themselves and the world around them.

Holistic Learning Theory is an educational approach that emphasizes the development of all aspects of the individual as a whole, including cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual aspects. This approach is based on the belief that

education should not only focus on academic ability, but also on the formation of character, values, and skills needed for a balanced and meaningful life. Here is an explanation of holistic learning theory:

Basic Principles of Holistic Learning

Holistic learning is based on several basic principles, including:

- a. **Unity and Interconnectedness:** The holistic approach recognizes that all aspects of human life are interrelated and influence one another. Therefore, education must pay attention to the unity of the various dimensions of human experience, from intellectual to emotional, social, physical, and spiritual.
- b. **Holistic Potential Development:** The goal of holistic learning is to develop the full potential of an individual, be it intellectual, emotional, physical, or spiritual. This means that the curriculum must be designed in such a way that it includes a variety of activities that support the development of these various aspects.
- c. **Learning in Real-Life Context:** Holistic learning emphasizes the importance of the relevance of education to real life. Students are encouraged to understand how the knowledge and skills they learn can be applied in everyday life contexts and make a positive contribution to society.
- d. **Student-Centered Learning:** This theory places students at the center of the learning process. Each student is considered unique, with different needs, interests, and learning styles. Therefore, learning must be adjusted to the characteristics of individual students.

Aspects of Holistic Learning

Holistic learning includes the development of several important aspects of the student, namely:

- a. **Cognitive Aspect:** Focus on developing critical thinking skills, problem solving, and understanding scientific concepts. However, this is not the only goal, but rather part of the overall learning.
- b. **Emotional Aspect:-** Emphasizes the importance of developing emotional intelligence, such as the ability to recognize, manage, and express emotions in a healthy way. Students are taught to build self-confidence, empathy, and positive interpersonal relationships.
- c. **Social Aspect:** Encourage the development of social skills such as communication, cooperation, and the ability to live harmoniously in society. Students learn to appreciate differences, work in teams, and contribute to their community.
- d. **Physical Aspect:** Recognizing the importance of physical health as part of learning. Physical education, health awareness, and physical activity are integral parts of a holistic approach.
- e. **Spiritual Aspect:** In holistic learning, the spiritual aspect does not necessarily mean religion, but rather the development of self-awareness, life purpose, and higher values. Students are invited to explore the meaning of life and develop a connection with themselves and the world around them.

Methods and Strategies in Holistic Learning

The holistic approach uses a variety of methods and strategies to achieve comprehensive educational goals, including:

- a. **Project-Based Learning:** Students engage in projects that integrate multiple disciplines and require them to apply knowledge in real-world situations. This helps connect theory to practice and deepen understanding.
- b. **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Students are encouraged to work in groups, which allows them to learn from each other, develop social skills, and solve problems together.
- c. **Self-Reflection:** Reflection is an important part of holistic learning, where students are encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences, self-evaluate, and identify areas for further development.
- d. **Experiential Learning:** Using direct experience as a learning tool. This can include field activities, simulations, role-playing, or hands-on practice that is relevant to real life.
- e. **Integrated Approach:** Subjects are not taught in isolation, but are integrated to show how different areas of knowledge relate to each other. For example, a project might combine science, math, art, and literature to give students a broader, more comprehensive understanding.

The Role of Teachers in Holistic Learning

Teachers in holistic learning have a role as facilitators and guides who help students develop their potential holistically. Teachers not only transfer knowledge, but also support the emotional, social, and spiritual development of students. Some of the main roles of teachers in this approach are:

- a. **Guiding Independent Learning:** Teachers encourage students to take initiative in their own learning, explore personal interests, and take responsibility for their learning process.
- b. **Connecting Learning to Real Life:** Teachers help students see the relevance of what they learn in class to real-life challenges and opportunities.
- c. **Creating a Supportive Learning Environment:** Teachers are tasked with creating a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment, where all aspects of student development can flourish.

The Benefits of Holistic Learning

A holistic learning approach offers a number of benefits, including:

- a. **Developing Balance in Students:** Students grow in a more balanced way because all aspects of their development cognitive, emotional, physical, and spiritual are given equal attention.
- b. **Readiness for Life:** Students who engage in holistic learning are better prepared to face real-life challenges, because they have learned to apply their knowledge and skills in relevant contexts.
- c. **Strong Character Building:** Holistic learning emphasizes character development, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and resilience, which are essential for long-term success.

- d. Enhance Creativity and Problem Solving: Because students are encouraged to think critically and creatively and work together to solve problems, they become more adaptive and innovative in dealing with new situations.

Challenges in Implementing Holistic Learning

Despite having many benefits, the implementation of holistic learning also faces challenges, such as:

- a. Time and Resource Constraints: Holistic learning requires more time for planning and implementation, and requires adequate resources, which are sometimes difficult for all schools to access.
- b. Lack of Understanding and Support: Not all educators or parents understand the concept of holistic learning, which can lead to a lack of support in its implementation.
- c. Difficulties in Assessment: Measuring students' holistic development is more complex than measuring academic achievement alone, thus requiring more comprehensive assessment methods.

Holistic Learning Theory (Jumiatin et al., 2020, p. 2) emphasizes holistic education, encompassing the development of all aspects of the individual in a balanced manner. By focusing on the balance between cognition, emotion, social, physical, and spiritual, holistic learning aims to form whole individuals who are ready to face life wisely and contribute positively to society. The Central Role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Teachers: Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a significant role in shaping students' character through teaching Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers not only teach religious theory, but also provide examples through daily behavior that reflects Islamic teachings.

The methods used by Islamic Religious Education teachers, such as an integrative approach between religious education and daily life practices, have proven effective in instilling character values in students. Learning that involves discussion, modeling, and reinforcement of positive behavior helps students internalize these values.

Impact on Students: Students exposed to character education through Islamic Religious Education show improvements in attitudes, ethics, and social behavior. They are better able to apply religious values in daily interactions, both at school and outside of school.

Islamic Religious Education teachers act as agents of change who integrate religious values with character education. The holistic and consistent approach of Islamic Religious Education teachers is very influential in shaping the personality of students with noble character. Although the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is important, they face challenges such as limited time for character education and lack of support from the environment outside of school. This affects the extent to which character values can be instilled effectively. To increase the effectiveness of character formation, closer collaboration between teachers, schools, and parents is needed. The development of more structured programs supported by school policies can help Islamic Religious Education teachers carry out this role better. This study confirms that the active role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is crucial in

shaping students' character, and suggests the need for greater support from various parties to optimize character education in schools.

D. Conclusion

Professionalism Islamic religious education teachers have a crucial role in shaping students' character through learning that focuses on religious and ethical values. By integrating Islamic teachings into the learning process and personal examples, teachers help students develop good attitudes and behaviors, such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy. In addition, teachers also function as motivators and guides in the formation of noble morals, so that students can grow into individuals with good morals and are useful to society.

Islamic religious education teachers play an important role in shaping students' character by consistently conveying religious values and being good role models. Through religious education, teachers guide students to internalize Islamic ethics and morals, helping them develop positive attitudes, such as honesty, discipline, and social awareness. Thus, teachers contribute to the formation of individuals who have strong characters and good morals.

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