

Management of Islamic Character Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in Pidie Regency

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ABSTRACT

Islamic character education aims to strengthen religious knowledge by continuously shaping individual self-improvement to develop skills for a life aligned with Islamic teachings. This study aims to examine the strengthening program, its implementation, supervision, evaluation, determining factors, and challenges in enhancing Islamic character education at MIN in Pidie Regency. A descriptive qualitative approach was used, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The research subjects included supervisors, principals, and teachers. The findings indicate that: (1) The principal's program for strengthening Islamic character education is planned at the beginning of each semester, involving the School Development Team (TPS) and implemented optimally; (2) The program is carried out by engaging all school personnel, following a democratic leadership approach; (3) Supervision helps assess teachers' commitment and responsibilities, while evaluations identify program achievements and challenges; (4) Challenges include limited funding for teacher training, inactive teachers, and difficulties in implementing extracurricular activities such as PMR, religious competitions, and scouting.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping students into ideal individuals, as outlined in Indonesia's National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003. One of the primary objectives of education is to develop students with noble character, which necessitates character education as part of the learning process. The success of character education depends on all stakeholders, including students, teachers, principals, and supervisors.

Despite ongoing efforts, Indonesia faces significant challenges in education, including a high repetition rate among students, as highlighted by the PISA survey. Many students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, struggle with discipline, motivation, and engagement, leading to lower academic performance. Addressing these issues is critical for improving Indonesia's education quality, especially in preparation for "Golden Indonesia 2045". Recent cases of youth misconduct in Indonesia, such as bullying and violence among children of public officials, highlight the moral crisis and the urgent need for character education. The Ministry of Education and Culture has identified three major character issues: intolerance, harassment (especially sexual harassment), and bullying. Experts emphasize the role of families, schools, and society in fostering strong moral values.

Islamic character education, rooted in the exemplary personality of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), is a fundamental aspect of moral development. Schools, particularly Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, are responsible for integrating Islamic values into their curricula. Schools in Pidie Regency have formulated specific visions and missions emphasizing faith, morality, and academic excellence. However, challenges such as lack of funding, inadequate teacher training, and student behavior issues remain obstacles to effective implementation.

Research Problem

The study investigates: How Islamic character education is managed in MIN (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri) in Pidie Regency.

Research Objectives

1. To analyse the programs of Islamic character education in MIN Pidie Regency.
2. To examine the implementation of Islamic character education.
3. To assess supervision and evaluation processes.
4. To identify challenges in Islamic character education management.

The research aims to contribute to the improvement of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, aligning it with the national education goals and preparing students for future challenges.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Educational Management

Educational management refers to the organization and administration of educational resources to achieve effective learning outcomes. Fadhilah (2023) state that educational management is distinct from education itself, as it involves the planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating of learning processes. Effective school management requires collaboration among teachers,

principals, and other stakeholders to enhance the quality of education (Syafi'i et al., 2023).

Adisusolo (2019) emphasize that teachers must implement appropriate strategies to achieve learning goals, making management a crucial element in education. According to Nurbaya (2021), educational management applies principles, concepts, and theories to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Educational management encompasses four primary functions:

1. Planning (Perencanaan): Developing strategies and setting goals for effective education (Winardi, 2019).
2. Organizing (Pengorganisasian): Structuring educational activities and assigning responsibilities (Usman, 2022).
3. Directing (Pengarahan): Supervising and guiding teachers and students towards set objectives (Harjanto, 2022).
4. Controlling (Pengendalian): Evaluating educational outcomes and making necessary adjustments (Siagian, 2020).

Concept of Character Education

Character education aims to instill moral and ethical values in students. The Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 emphasizes education as a means to develop students' faith, morality, and intellectual abilities.

Lickona (2020) defines good character as a combination of moral knowledge, commitment, and action. Roza (2020) further highlights that character formation involves cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, shaped through social interactions at home, school, and society.

Barnadib (2020) categorizes character values into:

1. Religious values (e.g., faith and worship).
2. Social values (e.g., honesty, tolerance, discipline).
3. Nationalism (e.g., patriotism and responsibility).
4. Personal values (e.g., independence and creativity).

Relationship Between Religious Education and Character Development

Religious education plays a vital role in character development by shaping students' moral and ethical foundations. Arifin (2022) describes religious education as a comprehensive system that influences students' behavior, decision-making, and worldview. Islamic character education emphasizes the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), promoting values such as honesty, kindness, and discipline. The Qur'an (Al-Ahzab: 21) states: *"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have an excellent example for those who hope in Allah and the Last Day and remember Allah often"*.

Role of Family and School in Character Education

1. Family: Parents play a crucial role in instilling character values from an early age. Ulwan (2022) emphasizes the importance of parental guidance in shaping children's moral and religious values.
2. School: Teachers serve as role models and are responsible for implementing character education in the curriculum. Uno (2020) states that teachers must embody ethical behavior as students tend to imitate their actions.

Function and Objectives of Character Education

According to Setiawati (2019), character education serves three main functions:

1. Development: Helping students develop positive behaviors.
2. Correction: Strengthening moral integrity.
3. Filtering: Differentiating between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.

The Indonesian government (TAP MPR No.II/MPR/1993) emphasizes character education to create individuals who are spiritually strong, responsible, and academically competent.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive approach to analyze the implementation of Islamic character education management. The descriptive method aims to depict the current conditions in the field at the time of the study, with data being analyzed qualitatively to extract meaningful insights from observed phenomena.

The research was conducted at MIN 2, MIN 42, and MIN 11 in Pidie Regency, spanning three months, from December 1, 2024, to February 25, 2025. The primary subjects of the study included school principals, teachers, and officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Pidie Regency. A purposive sampling technique was applied, meaning that only the most relevant participants were selected until sufficient data was collected.

The main research instrument was the researcher, supported by additional data collection tools. Ensuring the validity of the data involved several techniques:

1. Prolonged engagement, allowing the researcher to spend extended time collecting data from representative sources.
2. Triangulation, comparing data from direct observations, interviews, and document analysis.
3. Reference checks, utilizing documents related to character education programs to support primary findings.

Data collection techniques included:

1. Observation, where the researcher directly observed the implementation of Islamic character education in schools during operational hours. Observations focused on teacher-student interactions and school activities.
2. In-depth interviews, conducted with principals and teachers to gather insights into the education management strategies and challenges. Moleong (2019) emphasizes that interviews should reconstruct past experiences, project future expectations, and verify information through triangulation.
3. Document analysis, where administrative records such as lesson plans, principal reports, and school programs were reviewed to complement observational and interview data.

The data analysis process followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, involving:

1. Data Collection, gathering information from observations, interviews, and documents.
2. Data Reduction, filtering and summarizing key findings while discarding irrelevant data (Moleong, 2019).
3. Data Presentation, organizing data in a structured narrative format.
4. Conclusion Drawing and Verification, ensuring that conclusions are well-supported by evidence and cross-verified for credibility (Sugiyono, 2020).

This methodological approach ensures a systematic and in-depth understanding of Islamic character education management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, contributing to the improvement of school leadership, teacher effectiveness, and overall educational quality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Character Education Strengthening Programs at MIN Schools in Pidie Regency

The research reveals that school principals at MIN 2, MIN 42, and MIN 11 Pidie have developed comprehensive programs for strengthening Islamic character education. These programs are structured into long-term, mid-term, and short-term plans, formulated in collaboration with the School Development Team (TPS), which includes principals, vice principals, senior teachers, educational supervisors, and school committees.

Annual programs focus on daily Islamic practices such as Dhuha and Dhuhr prayers, Friday charity (infaq), and Quran memorization (tahfiz). However, challenges arise in teacher self-development activities, including a lack of funding for teacher training, overcrowded classrooms (up to 40 students per class), and leadership issues, particularly due to age-related limitations of certain school principals.

Semester-based programs include student administration, teacher supervision, classroom observations, cooperation with school committees, and school security measures. While these programs are implemented as effectively as possible, constraints such as budget limitations and insufficient teacher participation pose challenges.

Implementation of Islamic Character Education Strengthening at MIN Schools in Pidie Regency

The implementation of character education programs is a collaborative effort, involving all school personnel. Principals emphasize democratic leadership, ensuring that teachers actively participate in decision-making and program execution. Strategies such as routine morning greetings, compulsory Dhuha prayers at 10:00 AM, and structured student discipline programs are integrated into daily school activities.

Teachers responsible for subjects like Fiqh, Quran Hadith, Islamic History, and Counseling play a key role in embedding Islamic values in students. Despite this, some teachers remain inactive or inconsistent, requiring

stronger supervision. Additionally, some extracurricular activities related to character building, such as Scouting and religious competitions, are not optimally implemented due to various constraints.

Supervision and Evaluation in Strengthening Islamic Character Education

Principals act as supervisors, monitoring teachers' commitment, discipline, and classroom management. Supervision allows for the assessment of program effectiveness, but due to heavy administrative workloads, principals often delegate supervision to vice principals and senior teachers.

Evaluation processes focus on:

- Assessing teachers' adherence to character education programs
- Monitoring student behavior and academic performance
- Identifying challenges and areas for improvement

Despite efforts, some teachers remain resistant to structured supervision, leading to inconsistent implementation of character education initiatives.

Challenges in Strengthening Islamic Character Education

Several challenges hinder the optimal implementation of character education at MIN schools, including:

1. Funding constraints Limited financial resources restrict teacher training and extracurricular activities.
2. Teacher participation Some teachers lack motivation or fail to disseminate training knowledge to colleagues.
3. Overcrowded classrooms Large student-to-teacher ratios make it difficult to maintain personalized instruction and discipline.
4. Principal workload Heavy administrative tasks limit principals' ability to directly supervise teachers.
5. Inefficient program evaluation Due to time constraints, follow-up evaluations of teachers' performance and character education initiatives are inconsistent.

Effectiveness of Islamic Character Education Programs

The structured approach to Islamic character education at MIN schools aligns with best practices in educational management. Research by Yusmina (2021) highlights that well-planned programs significantly impact students' moral development. The integration of Islamic practices into daily school activities reflects a strong commitment to faith-based education, supporting findings by Sanjaya (2020) on the role of structured religious curricula in character formation.

However, budget limitations and teacher engagement remain key obstacles. Studies by Atamaja (2022) indicate that effective program implementation requires financial investment and continuous teacher training. Without sufficient funding, certain initiatives, such as professional development workshops and student activities, remain underdeveloped.

Leadership Strategies in Character Education Implementation

The democratic and participatory leadership styles adopted by school principals are effective in fostering teacher involvement and accountability. Research by Fadhilah (2023) emphasizes that teachers perform better when given autonomy and responsibility within a structured leadership framework.

However, findings suggest that some principals adopt an authoritarian approach when enforcing discipline, particularly when dealing with teachers who neglect their responsibilities. According to Danim (2021), a situational leadership approach balancing democratic and authoritative methods ensures that school programs are implemented effectively.

Impact of Supervision and Evaluation on Program Success

Supervision is a crucial element of character education management, yet the delegation of supervisory duties to vice principals and senior teachers limits direct principal oversight. Research by Sagala (2020) suggests that effective supervision requires principals to be directly involved in teacher evaluations.

Additionally, evaluations are often superficial, lacking in-depth feedback mechanisms. Sudjana (2019) argues that effective program evaluation should include measurable benchmarks, follow-up training, and targeted interventions. Without these components, teachers struggle to improve their performance, impacting overall character education outcomes.

Addressing Challenges in Islamic Character Education

To overcome existing challenges, several recommendations emerge from the study:

1. Increased funding allocation government and school committees should prioritize financial support for teacher training and student programs.
2. Structured teacher development programs schools should implement mandatory training dissemination policies, requiring trained teachers to share knowledge with colleagues.
3. Smaller class sizes efforts should be made to reduce student-to-teacher ratios, allowing for more personalized instruction and effective character education.
4. Enhanced supervisory roles for principals administrative tasks should be delegated to non-teaching staff, allowing principals to focus on teacher mentoring and program evaluation.
5. Comprehensive program assessment frameworks schools should adopt systematic evaluation tools, ensuring that all character education initiatives are monitored and refined regularly.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study on Islamic Character Education Management at MIN schools in Pidie Regency highlights several key findings:

1. Structured Character Education Programs school principals develop character education programs at the beginning of each semester, involving the School Development Team (TPS). However, the programs lack detailed budget allocations, especially for teacher training.
2. Democratic Leadership in Implementation the active involvement of all school personnel ensures effective program execution. Principals adopt a democratic leadership style, fostering collaboration with teachers to enhance teaching quality and character development.
3. Supervision and Evaluation regular monitoring and assessment help evaluate teacher commitment and program effectiveness. However,

administrative workloads limit direct principal supervision, affecting program consistency.

4. Challenges in Implementation major obstacles include limited funding for teacher training, inactive teachers, and difficulties in extracurricular activities such as Scouting, religious competitions, and extracurricular character-building initiatives.
5. Enhancing Program Structure schools should improve planning and budget allocation to ensure sustainable and well-executed character education programs.
6. Strengthening Leadership Strategies principals should apply flexible leadership styles, adjusting approaches based on teacher commitment, motivation, and performance to optimize character education outcomes.
7. Improving Supervision and Monitoring increased monitoring efforts by school leaders will enhance teacher discipline, motivation, and accountability in character education implementation.
8. Alternative Funding Strategies schools should explore cost-effective teacher training solutions, such as in-house training, peer-learning initiatives, and local teacher forums (KKG), to reduce financial constraints while maintaining professional development opportunities.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research should explore the long-term impact of Islamic character education programs on student behavior and academic achievement in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. A comparative study between schools with well-structured character education programs and those with minimal implementation could provide deeper insights into best practices, challenges, and measurable outcomes. Additionally, investigating the role of parental involvement in reinforcing character education at home would offer a more holistic understanding of effective character-building strategies in Islamic education.

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