

The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Shaping Elementary Students' Religious Character through Classroom Management

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the important role of Islamic religious education teachers, classroom management, and religious character education, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors that can interfere with the process of developing students' religious character. Religious character is expected to shape students with religious principles and good morals. This research uses a qualitative method with field research. Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques used data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was validated through source triangulation and technical triangulation. The research informants consisted of the principal, Islamic religious education teacher, fifth-grade homeroom teacher, and fifth-grade students. The results of the study indicate that the role of Islamic religious education teachers in shaping the religious character of fifth-grade students based on classroom management is implemented through management functions including planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising. During the planning stage, Islamic religious education teachers develop learning activities and habits that instill religious values. During the organizing and implementing stages, teachers act as educators, guides, motivators, and role models through activities such as praying before class, reading the Quran, praying in congregation, and instilling attitudes of discipline, honesty, and responsibility. During the supervising stage, teachers monitor the development of students' religious character. Supporting factors in the development of students' religious character include teacher role models, a religious school environment, and parental support. Inhibiting factors include limited supporting facilities, diverse student characteristics, and influences from the outside environment. This research is expected to provide recommendations for improving the quality of religious character education through classroom management at elementary school, so that students are not only academically intelligent but also spiritually intelligent.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a process that plays a crucial role in shaping individuals who are knowledgeable, virtuous, and of strong character. From the perspective of Islamic education, character formation is the primary goal to be achieved through an integrated learning process encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Farikhin et al., 2024; Judrah et al., 2024). Religious character is one of the most essential values, as it relates to human relationships with God, fellow human beings, and the environment (Fahmi & Susanto, 2018). Religious character is reflected in attitudes such as obedience in worship, honesty, discipline, responsibility, tolerance, and the ability to practice religious values in daily life. Therefore, elementary schools, as the initial stage of formal education, hold a strategic role in instilling religious character in students from an early age.

The importance of religious character formation aligns with the objectives of national education as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Article 3, which emphasizes that national education aims to develop students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, devoted to God Almighty, and possess noble character. In its implementation, Islamic Education teachers serve as the primary actors responsible for guiding, directing, and providing exemplary conduct to students. Their role extends beyond delivering instructional material; they also shape students' religious habits and behaviors through various religious habituation activities at school. Research findings indicate that Islamic Education teachers act as educators, mentors, advisors, and role models in fostering the religious character of elementary school students (Khairani & Rosyidi, 2022; Mudlofir, 2016; Murniyetti et al., 2016; Sandria et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, the era of globalization and digitalization presents significant challenges to the formation of students' religious character. Advances in information technology bring both positive and negative impacts on children's moral development. School-based observations reveal that some students still exhibit behaviors inconsistent with religious values, such as lack of discipline in participating in religious activities, insufficient respect for teachers, low responsibility in completing tasks, and declining awareness in performing worship. Studies further highlight that social environment influences, excessive use of gadgets, and weak supervision are factors affecting students' behavior in elementary schools (Yanuar & Ardiansyah, 2025). These conditions underscore the urgent need for systematic and sustainable reinforcement of religious character.

In Islamic perspective, the importance of character formation is emphasized in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), narrated by At-Tirmidhi, which states that the best gift parents can give their children is good manners. Moreover, Allah SWT commands that education and guidance be delivered with wisdom and good counsel, as stated in Quran Surah An-Nahl verse 125. These two sources of Islamic teaching demonstrate that the development of religious character requires a planned, continuous process that involves exemplary conduct from educators. Consequently, Islamic Education teachers bear a significant responsibility in creating a learning environment that supports the internalization of religious values among students (Kamila, 2023).

One effective strategy for fostering students' religious character is the application of classroom management (Putri & Husmidar, 2021). Classroom management not only functions to establish a conducive learning environment but also serves as a medium for instilling character values through the organization of the learning setting, habituation of positive behaviors, provision of rewards and sanctions, and reinforcement of religious culture within the classroom (Permatasari et al., 2023). Through effective classroom management, teachers can guide students to practice religious behaviors such as praying before lessons, reciting the Quran,

maintaining discipline, and showing respect to teachers and peers (Fajri et al., 2023). Thus, religious character formation is achieved not only through the delivery of religious material but also through classroom management that supports the habituation of religious values.

Previous studies have shown that Islamic Education teachers play a vital role in shaping students' religious character through teaching, exemplary conduct, and habituation of Islamic values (Putri & Husmidar, 2021). Khusna, (2016) found that Islamic Education teachers act as educators, mentors, advisors, and role models in fostering the religious character of elementary school students. Furthermore, Ramud, (2024) explained that religious character formation is carried out through contextual learning, teacher exemplification, and habituation of Islamic values within the school culture.

However, literature reviews reveal a research gap. Most previous studies focused on the role of Islamic Education teachers in character formation through exemplary conduct, teaching, and religious habituation. In contrast, research specifically examining how Islamic Education teachers integrate classroom management as a primary strategy for shaping students' religious character remains relatively limited. Moreover, earlier studies tended to discuss character education programs in general, without thoroughly exploring the implementation of classroom management, supporting factors, and challenges faced by Islamic Education teachers in the process of religious character formation.

Based on preliminary observations at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, Bukittinggi City, it was found that the school has implemented various religious habituation programs, such as the 5S culture (smile, greet, salute, polite, courteous), praying before lessons, murajaah of short verses, congregational dhuha prayer, and congregational zuhur prayer. However, several obstacles remain, including low student participation in religious activities, lack of discipline in following religious habituation, and suboptimal teacher supervision of student behavior during learning activities. These conditions indicate that the implementation of classroom management based on religious character requires further reinforcement to achieve the optimal goal of religious character formation.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design (Agusti et al., 2018; Amnda et al., 2020; Anidar et al., 2026; Efendi et al., 2026; Engkizar et al., 2025; 2026; Htay et al., 2025; Oktavia et al., 2023; Rahawarin et al., 2023). This approach was chosen to understand and provide an in-depth description of the role of Islamic Education teachers in shaping students' religious character through classroom management at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, Bukittinggi City. The research was conducted at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, located on Jalan Pincuran Gaung, Guguk Panjang District, Bukittinggi City, with the focus on fifth-grade students. The key informant in this study was the Islamic Education teacher, while supporting informants consisted of the principal, classroom teachers, and students directly involved in the implementation of religious character formation at the school. Informants were selected purposively, as they were considered to possess relevant information aligned with the research focus.

Data collection was carried out through participatory observation, unstructured interviews, and documentation (Alfarikh et al., 2021; Aryasutha et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2025; Satria et al., 2025). Observation was used to directly examine the activities of teachers and students in implementing religious character formation through classroom management. Interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth information regarding the teacher's role, supporting factors, and challenges encountered in the process of shaping students' religious character. Documentation

was employed to complement data obtained from observation and interviews. Data validity was tested through source triangulation and method triangulation. Subsequently, data were analyzed through stages of data collection, data reduction, data categorization, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, thereby producing a comprehensive depiction of the role of Islamic Education teachers in shaping students' religious character through classroom management.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Developing Elementary Students' Religious Character through Classroom Management

Islamic religious education teachers play a crucial role in shaping the religious character of students at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo. Islamic religious education teachers must serve as role models; therefore, they must be able to set a good example for their students. Based on the results of the research conducted, the role of teachers can be broken down as follows.

First, teachers as instructors. In this role, teachers convey Islamic religious education knowledge, guide the learning process, and help students understand the material so that learning objectives can be achieved. Based on the results of the research conducted, Islamic religious education teachers have fulfilled their role as instructors in shaping students' religious character. This role is evident in the way teachers present material that is easy to understand, provide examples relevant to students' daily lives, and ensure that students can grasp the material being taught.

The results of interviews with Islamic religious education teachers indicate that the teaching process is not limited to simply conveying Islamic religious education material, but also emphasizes the importance of educating students. Islamic religious education teachers have a responsibility to shape students so that they possess both academic abilities and religious character by instilling Islamic values in the learning process. When a student does not understand the material, the teacher revisits the topic using simpler methods and concrete examples drawn from the students' daily lives.

This is reinforced by interview results with students, who stated that Islamic religious education teachers teach in an engaging and easy-to-understand manner, consistently providing clear and relevant examples so that students can grasp the material easily. These findings indicate that the teaching approach employed by the teachers has a positive impact on students' interest in learning and their understanding of the material. Based on the observations, Islamic religious education teachers appear to relate the material to students' daily lives, so that religious values are not only understood theoretically but also applied in daily life. Teachers do not focus solely on cognitive aspects but also pay attention to shaping students' attitudes and behaviors.

Second, teachers as educators. The interview results show that a teacher's role is not only to teach but also to guide students to exhibit behavior consistent with religious teachings. Islamic religious education teachers strive to guide students in developing character traits such as honesty, responsibility, and good manners in daily life. Amid an increasingly modern world, Islamic religious education teachers play a vital role in guiding students to maintain good moral character and to distinguish between behaviors that align with religious norms.

This is reinforced by interview results with students who stated that Islamic religious education teachers consistently remind them to treat everyone with kindness, to be honest during exams, to dress neatly, and to be disciplined in carrying out their duties. In addition to providing guidance, teachers also impose consequences on students who do not comply. This aims to instill a sense of responsibility and discipline in students. Thus, the research results indicate that Islamic religious education teachers have effectively fulfilled their roles as educators. Teachers not only function as conveyors of Islamic religious knowledge but also as mentors who guide students to

develop good character in accordance with religious teachings.

All three teachers teach life skills. Interviews with Islamic religious education teachers revealed that life skills training is conducted through hands-on learning, such as teaching and demonstrating the proper procedures for prayer. These activities aim to ensure that students not only have theoretical knowledge but are also able to perform their religious duties correctly. In addition, teachers also assign independent tasks to be completed at home. This is intended to foster students who are responsible, independent, and disciplined. This is reinforced by the results of interviews with students, who stated that Islamic religious education teachers always remind them to behave well, be honest, be disciplined, dress neatly in accordance with Islamic religious teachings, and be responsible for the tasks assigned. The results of these interviews indicate that students are beginning to demonstrate a sense of responsibility toward themselves and have a good understanding of the importance of their obligations. Thus, the research findings show that Islamic religious education teachers have fulfilled their role in developing students' skills through the practice of religious rituals.

All four teachers provided guidance and direction. Based on the observation results, Islamic religious education teachers strive to set a good example because they realize that teachers are figures whom students should emulate. This exemplary behavior is manifested through their attitude, behavior, manner of speaking, and positive interactions with students in the school environment. Islamic religious education teachers

The classroom teacher emphasized that students tend to imitate the habits practiced by their teachers. Therefore, Islamic Education teachers must consistently maintain proper behavior and provide good examples so that they can serve as role models for their students. In addition, students also stated that Islamic Education teachers demonstrate good conduct and frequently offer advice. Thus, the findings indicate that the exemplary values applied by Islamic Education teachers have a positive influence on student development. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching but also for serving as role models for their students.

Fifth, teachers provide motivation. Interviews revealed that Islamic Education teachers consistently encourage students to study diligently, remain disciplined, act honestly, take responsibility, and perform worship properly. They motivate students who experience difficulties in learning and give appreciation to those who demonstrate good behavior. For students who feel pessimistic, teachers offer praise to boost their self-confidence and encourage them to maintain positive attitudes.

Interviews with students confirmed that Islamic Education teachers actively provide advice, encouragement, and reinforcement. These findings demonstrate that teachers have fulfilled their role as effective motivators. They offer motivation, guidance, advice, and exemplary conduct, thereby fostering students' development of good character.

Sixth, teachers engage in classroom management. The discussion of classroom management in shaping students' religious character, based on observations and interviews in Grade V at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, shows that Islamic Education teachers have implemented effective strategies. The research findings highlight several aspects of classroom management: planning. Observations revealed that teachers prepare lesson plans well in advance to support religious character formation. Interviews indicated that teachers design instructional plans before the start of the academic year, outlining lessons for an entire semester. These plans focus not only on cognitive development but also on cultivating religious behaviors such as discipline, honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and worship habits. Teachers also connect lesson content with students' daily lives to facilitate comprehension and practical application.

In addition, teachers plan specific activities to strengthen religious character. Before lessons begin, students are instructed to prepare their desks, followed by

reciting memorized surahs designated by the teacher. Daily recitations include Surah Asy-Syam, Surah Al-Baqarah, the duha prayer, prayers for parents, and the study prayer. Observations and interviews confirmed that the learning process proceeded according to the established lesson plans. Planning consistently incorporated learning objectives, religious habituation, and the integration of lesson content with everyday experiences, ensuring that religious values were embedded in both theory and practice.

Second, organizing. Based on observations and interviews conducted in Grade V at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, Islamic Education teachers have implemented organizational strategies in shaping students' religious character by assigning tasks and responsibilities during the learning process. Teachers appointed students to read the Qur'an, lead prayers, and remind their peers to maintain order. This demonstrates that Islamic Education teachers not only function as instructors but also foster a sense of responsibility and concern for the classroom environment. In addition, the arrangement of students' seating was an important part of the organizational strategy. Placing quiet students alongside more active ones was intended to encourage positive social interaction and help less active students become more communicative. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers have successfully applied organizational strategies to shape students' character, creating learners who are active, disciplined, responsible, and respectful of one another.

Third, actuating. Interviews revealed that the implementation of Islamic Education learning in Grade V was carried out using active learning methods. Teachers adapted lessons to students' characteristics to prevent boredom. Therefore, lessons were delivered with a mix of explanations, question-and-answer sessions, light games, and impromptu quizzes. These methods were designed to capture students' attention and maintain their enthusiasm for learning. Active learning implementation reflects teachers' efforts to create a lively and engaging classroom atmosphere. This approach also helped students understand the material more easily and encouraged them to participate enthusiastically in lessons.

Fourth, controlling. Interviews indicated that Islamic Education teachers in Grade V conducted supervision by observing students' attitudes and behaviors within the school environment. Supervision was intended to assess the extent to which students applied religious values taught in class, such as reciting the Qur'an, memorizing short surahs, praying, and maintaining good conduct at school. Teachers provided direct guidance and counseling when students engaged in inappropriate behavior. If misconduct was repeated and exceeded acceptable limits, teachers applied firm disciplinary measures. This supervision demonstrated teachers' efforts to ensure that the formation of religious character was carried out consistently. Through observation, guidance, and evaluation, teachers were able to monitor students' progress in developing religious character. Thus, the controlling function applied by Islamic Education teachers played an important role in overseeing students' religious character formation.

Second, religious character. The formation of religious character in students is an essential effort to instill religious values from an early age. Religious character is not only related to the understanding of religion but also reflects students' attitudes and behavior. One of the ways this character is formed can be observed through students' daily habits. Based on interviews conducted in Grade V at SD Negeri 05 Tarok Dipo, several forms of habituation were identified in shaping students' religious character.

Worship Values. Interviews with Mrs. Masnilan, S.Pd.I, the Islamic Education teacher, revealed that before lessons begin, students recite short surahs or memorized verses together, followed by the study prayer. In addition, students are accustomed to performing the zuhur prayer in congregation on time. This practice has been implemented since the lower grades, indicating that students have understood the importance of worship as part of their school routine. A Grade V student also stated

that before studying, all students are required to recite memorized verses, short surahs, daily prayers, and the study prayer together. When the time for zuhur prayer arrives, students immediately leave the classroom to perform congregational prayer. These statements show that students have internalized the importance of worship. The Grade V homeroom teacher further confirmed that students are already accustomed to reciting prayers before and after lessons. Thus, it can be concluded that worship values have been well instilled through the habituation practices implemented by Islamic Education teachers, helping students apply religious values in their daily lives.

Spirit of Struggle (Ruhul Jihad). Interviews with the Islamic Education teacher indicated that elementary school students, especially those entering adolescence, require encouragement and motivation from teachers. Teachers provide motivation to students experiencing learning difficulties and give appreciation to those who strive and dare to express their opinions in class. Moreover, teachers do not immediately criticize students who give incorrect answers; instead, they offer support to maintain students' confidence and morale. This was reinforced by the Grade V homeroom teacher, who stated that Islamic Education teachers are able to create an orderly, comfortable, and enjoyable learning atmosphere, making students more enthusiastic about learning. Teachers' experience in teaching has had a positive impact on students' motivation to learn at school.

Based on the interviews conducted, students appeared active, enthusiastic, and motivated in participating in the learning process. They also engaged in classroom activities, which indicates that the value of ruh al-jihad has begun to develop within them through motivation, habituation, and guidance provided by Islamic Education teachers.

Moral and Discipline Values. Interviews with Islamic Education teachers revealed that moral values were instilled through advice, exemplary conduct, and habituation in daily school activities. Teachers also emphasized discipline by encouraging students to arrive on time, dress neatly, and take responsibility for completing assigned tasks. This was reinforced by the Grade V homeroom teacher, who stated that students had already demonstrated good behavior and discipline in following school rules and participating in learning activities. These findings show that students applied both discipline and moral values in practice.

Exemplary Values. Interviews with Islamic Education teachers highlighted their efforts to consistently model good behavior, as teachers are viewed as figures to be imitated in daily life. This was supported by the Grade V homeroom teacher, who explained that students tend to adopt teachers' habits, making it essential for teachers to demonstrate proper conduct. Students also confirmed that Islamic Education teachers consistently provided examples of good behavior and offered advice. These findings indicate that teachers' exemplary conduct positively influenced the formation of students' religious character.

Trustworthiness and Sincerity Values (Amanah and Ikhlas). Interviews with Islamic Education teachers revealed that they consistently taught students to be trustworthy and sincere, especially when given responsibilities. Students were directed to carry out tasks with accountability and without complaint, understanding that every responsibility must be fulfilled earnestly as part of religious character formation. This was reinforced by the Grade V homeroom teacher, who noted that students demonstrated trustworthiness when assigned responsibilities, such as serving as flag bearers or ceremony officers. Students were considered capable of performing their duties responsibly. Furthermore, interviews with students showed that they were accustomed to completing tasks assigned by teachers, such as classroom duties. These findings indicate that values of trustworthiness and sincerity have begun to take root in students through habituation, teacher guidance, and the application of responsibility in daily school activities.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Islamic Education Teachers in Shaping Students' Religious Character through Classroom Management

Based on the results of observations and research conducted, the role of Islamic Education teachers in shaping students' religious character is influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors.

First, the supporting factor is teacher exemplarity. Interviews with the principal revealed that the principal's exemplary conduct greatly contributes to the formation of students' religious character. Through teachers' exemplary behavior, students tend to imitate the actions they observe daily. Teachers are expected to consistently demonstrate good behavior such as politeness, discipline, responsibility, and the application of religious values in everyday life. This was reinforced by the homeroom teacher, who stated that students find it easier to imitate real actions rather than merely receiving advice. For example, when teachers arrive at school on time, students are encouraged to be disciplined and adopt such positive habits. Thus, teacher exemplarity becomes a key factor supporting the development of students' religious character in schools.

Second, the supportive school environment. Interviews with the principal indicated that the school strives to create an environment conducive to religious character formation through religious posters, motivational messages, and school habituation programs such as the implementation of 5S (smile, greet, salute, polite, courteous). In addition, the school supports religious activities that foster students' religious character. The homeroom teacher also explained that a comfortable and clean classroom environment, along with positive relationships between teachers and students, contributes to a supportive atmosphere in shaping students' religious character.

Third, parental support. Interviews with the principal indicated that one of the key elements in shaping students' religious character is the family environment. Children spend more time at home than at school, making parental supervision essential. To support this, the Bukittinggi City Education Office provides a religious activity monitoring book that records students' daily worship practices, from subuh to isha prayers. The book is filled out by students or parents, signed by parents, and later checked by teachers at school. In addition, the homeroom teacher explained that when students face disciplinary issues or declining academic performance, the school immediately communicates with parents through WhatsApp groups or by inviting them to school. Good communication between school and parents thus becomes a shared form of supervision in shaping students' religious character.

Inhibiting Factors. The first challenge is limited facilities. Interviews revealed that the absence of a dedicated prayer room (*mushalla*) is a major obstacle in implementing programs for religious character formation. Activities often depend on weather conditions, and congregational prayers must be divided into several rooms due to space limitations, which reduces the conducive atmosphere of worship. This was reinforced by Islamic Education teachers, who stated that most religious activities are still conducted outdoors because of the lack of facilities. Students also reported discomfort during outdoor activities, especially in hot or rainy weather. Therefore, inadequate worship facilities hinder the effectiveness of religious programs.

Second, diverse student characteristics. Interviews with the principal showed that not all students share the same character, requiring differentiated approaches in religious character formation. Some students easily accept advice, while others are more difficult to guide and need intensive supervision. Islamic Education teachers confirmed that differences in students' attitudes and behaviors are evident in class, with some being quiet and others requiring special attention. To address this, teachers must employ classroom strategies that support the formation of religious character.

Third, environmental influences. Interviews with the principal highlighted that

external factors, particularly mobile phone use and social media trends, pose challenges in shaping students' religious character. This was supported by a student interview, which revealed that peer influence plays a significant role in daily activities, including study habits and social media use. Sometimes students prefer to follow friends' invitations to play or join certain trends rather than completing school assignments. Thus, it can be concluded that the student environment has a significant impact on the formation of religious character.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the role of Islamic Education teachers in shaping students' religious character has been carried out effectively through the application of classroom management, which includes planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision. Teachers function not only as instructors but also as educators, mentors, role models, and motivators in instilling religious values in students. The formation of religious character is implemented through various habituation activities, such as praying before and after lessons, Quran recitation (*murajaah*), congregational prayers, and the cultivation of discipline, honesty, responsibility, and courtesy. In addition, teachers collaborate with homeroom teachers and parents to monitor students' character development. The success of religious character formation is supported by teacher exemplarity, a conducive school environment, and parental involvement. However, the process also faces several obstacles, such as limited supporting facilities, differences in students' character and background, as well as external influences including social environment, technological developments, and social media trends that are not always aligned with religious values. Nevertheless, through synergy between teachers, schools, and parents, the formation of students' religious character can continue to be pursued effectively and sustainably.

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