

Alfina Wildatul Fitriyah¹, Moh. Bahzar², Wingkolatin³, Siti Munawati⁴, Indah Wahyu Ningsih⁵, Yunita Abdullah Aji⁶

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGION TEACHERS IN OVERCOMING EGOCENTRISM AMONG STUDENTS AT MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH IBRAHIMY SUKOREJO

¹STIS Nurul Qarnain Jember, Indonesia

^{2,3}Universitas Mulawarman, Indonesia

⁴Universitas Islam Syekh Yusuf Tangerang Banten, Indonesia

⁵STAI Al-Hidayah Bogor, Indonesia

⁶Universitas Islam Al-Aziziyah, Indonesia

Email: phinapulapan@gmail.com¹, moh.bahzar@fkip.unmul.ac.id², wingkolatin2525@gmail.com³, st.munawati@unis.ac.id⁴, indah.aysar@gmail.com⁵, yunitaummiulya@gmail.com⁶

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Abstract: *Islamic religion teachers act as educators who not only teach religious materials, but also shape students' characters. This study aims to explore the role of Islamic religion teachers in overcoming students' egocentrism in madrasah. Egocentrism, which is characterized by excessive focus on oneself, can hinder students' social interaction and character development. The research method used is qualitative, with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The research subjects involved religion teachers, students, and parents at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo, Situbondo, East Java. The results showed that religion teachers have an important role in instilling moral and ethical values through interactive teaching methods. The strategies applied include example-based learning, group discussions, and social activities that prioritize empathy and cooperation. In addition, parental support and a positive school culture contribute significantly to reducing students' egocentrism. However, challenges such as a lack of training for teachers and academic pressures remain limiting factors. The findings emphasize the importance of collaboration between teachers, parents and the community in creating a learning environment that supports students' character development. This research is expected to provide insights for the development of more effective educational programs in shaping empathic and social attitudes among madrasah students.*

Keywords: *Islamic religion; teachers; students' egocentrism; madrasahs.*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic religion teachers play a crucial role in assisting students at madrasahs in overcoming their egocentric tendencies, especially in terms of the moral values and religious principles they teach (Rahman et al., 2024), (Masturin, 2024). Students' egocentric views often arise due to individualistic social situations such as social media and peer pressure (Arshad & Zaman, 2020). Islamic teachings, which place strong emphasis on morality and interpersonal relationships, can support religious teachers in fostering empathy, compassion, and unity among students as they are spiritual educators (Sari Dewi et al., 2020); (Sholeh et al., 2021). Scientific studies have shown that students who receive more comprehensive religious education generally exhibit more accepting and compassionate attitudes toward others. For example, Islamic religion teachers who directly guide students through spiritual programs at madrasahs have been proven to reduce egocentric behavior and enhance respect and collaboration among students. Islamic religion teachers can make a significant contribution to transforming students' egocentric attitudes by employing effective teaching strategies (Saguni, 2023).

Islamic religion teachers play a key role in shaping the character of madrasah students, particularly in helping them overcome egocentrism influenced by diverse societal and environmental factors (Deliani, 2020). The implementation of Islamic education portrays teachers as moral and spiritual advisors, in addition to their role as educators. Islamic religion teachers bear the responsibility of shaping their students' moral character by instilling religious principles that emphasize social responsibility, empathy, and collectivism. Egocentrism, which prioritizes individual interests over unity, is in direct contrast to these values. Character education grounded in faith at madrasahs is essential as a means of developing moral values in students (Allison, 2024), (Ramedlon et al., 2023). Additionally, religious teachings focused on morality, such as those found in classical Islamic texts (e.g., *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* by al-Zarnuji), can reduce arrogant behavior. Continuous moral education initiatives, such as Sufi studies, are also effective in shaping students' personalities into more accepting and kind-hearted individuals. If applied correctly, this type of teaching can reduce individualism often exhibited by students in social situations, enhancing empathy and mutual respect.

Egocentrism develops as a result of emotional growth within the social environment of schools (Huang et al., 2022). Islamic religion teachers at madrasahs should be key players in helping students overcome this mindset by emphasizing empathy, mutual cooperation, and social responsibility, in alignment with Islamic principles. Strong evidence suggests that religious teaching based on moral and spiritual principles can reduce students' egocentric attitudes. This is supported by literature reviews and practical field experiences. Previous research by Casmana and Anidaisma has shown that teachers who actively support their students' spiritual and social lives can foster a more accepting and compassionate learning atmosphere while reducing student individualism (Casmana et al., 2023); (Anidaisma et al., 2023). This is expected to provide input for the improvement of religious education programs at madrasahs to help shape students into individuals who value others and have a strong sense of belonging.

The development of empathy can transcend egocentrism to nurture social character. According to research, students' egocentric behavior can intensify if they do not progress to the stage of empathy in their emotional development (Czerniawska & Szydło, 2021). A study on character education in the context of Islamic education (Febriansyah et al., 2023); (Tuncay-Yüksel et al., 2023); and (Eze et al., 2018), suggests that teaching moral and social values based on religion can reduce students' egocentrism. It has also been shown that social studies curricula that place a strong emphasis on cooperation, teamwork, and social interaction help students learn to look beyond their own interests and value others' opinions. Although egocentrism is a natural phenomenon among students, education that emphasizes values of collectivism, empathy, and social responsibility—values embedded in Islamic education—has proven effective in reducing egocentric behavior and promoting healthy social interactions among students. Therefore, social, moral, and spiritual guidance is necessary to help students develop empathy and social skills, although these traits are part of cognitive development (Andrei, 2023).

The important role of an Islamic religion teacher in helping students at madrasahs overcome egocentrism should be rooted in the cultivation of moral and spiritual qualities that align with Islamic teachings. The tendency of individuals to prioritize their own interests over others' is known as egocentrism, and this can hinder students' social and emotional growth (Ogbonnaya, 2021). Since Islamic teachings emphasize the development of positive social relationships and empathy for others, the religious education provided by madrasah teachers is crucial in helping to address this issue. Character development in students is positively influenced by religious-based education. Islamic religion teachers are capable of instilling values such as humility, compassion for others, and unity through moral teachings and spiritual growth. For example, students at certain madrasahs that implement extensive moral development programs experience improvements in collaboration and reductions in individualistic behavior. As a result, Islamic religion teachers play a vital role in assisting students at madrasahs in overcoming their egocentric mindset.

Islamic religion teachers are also important in helping students develop their moral and spiritual character while addressing behavioral issues such as egocentrism (Gumiandari et al., 2021). This role extends beyond academic teaching to encompass the development of Islam-based personalities and ethical guidance. In Islamic studies (Nurlaili, 2023); (Aluk Maknunah & Abdul Muis, 2023); (Warsah, 2020), religious teachers serve as *murabbi* (moral educators) who help students understand and apply Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Madrasahs base their curricula on Islamic teachings, which emphasize morality, empathy, and social responsibility (Kholidah, 2022). Religious educators assist students in internalizing these goals, especially in overcoming the diverse and dynamic social influences of their varying environments (Subaidi et al., 2024).

Islamic religion teachers play a very important role in shaping students' moral and spiritual development. Students often view their religious teachers as trusted and respected individuals who can provide moral guidance. According to research, religious teachers serve as role models and educators, influencing students' behavior and attitudes. This is

especially true in helping students develop more altruistic and compassionate social views (Kurniati & El-Yunusi, 2023) and (Seprina & Rahmat, 2024). Several studies in Islamic education journals also suggest that character education initiatives by religion teachers, such as teaching morality through the study of fiqh, tafsir, and tasawuf, can dramatically reduce students' egocentric tendencies. This study also shows the success of efforts to create a more friendly and community-focused learning atmosphere in schools when Islamic ideals are incorporated into the regular curriculum (Kholidah, 2022); (Commons et al., 2021); (Coughlin, 2021).

Egocentric students often prioritize their own interests over understanding or considering others' viewpoints. This can affect how they develop socially, making it harder for them to collaborate and interact in class. Students become egocentric, particularly during adolescence, as a result of their social environment and elements related to cognitive development. The characteristics of egocentrism align with certain developmental stages. However, these characteristics can persist and negatively impact learning and social interactions among adolescents who do not receive adequate moral and social guidance. This egocentric mindset is further reinforced by elements supporting individualism, such as media, modern culture, and family. Based on this background, this research focuses on examining the role of Islamic religion teachers in minimizing students' egoistic attitudes through the application of moral education methods and religious principles, thereby helping students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo overcome their egocentric views.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on the role of Islamic religion teachers at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo in Situbondo, East Java, in addressing students' egocentric behavior through the application of religious values and effective teaching methods. At this Madrasah, religious teachers not only teach religious knowledge but also foster empathy and cooperation among students. It is important to analyze how these teachers implement teaching strategies that can reduce egocentric behavior and actualize positive social values in accordance with Islamic teachings.

This study uses a qualitative research method (Jahja, 2023) with a field study approach aimed at gathering detailed and in-depth data, and analyzing the role of Islamic religion teachers in overcoming students' egocentrism. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of Islamic religion teachers in addressing egocentrism among students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo. The findings of this study will contribute to the development of more effective teaching methods and strengthen the role of religious teachers in shaping students' character to become better individuals who care for others. With a deep understanding of successful interventions, it is hoped that a learning model can be developed and applied at other madrasahs to address similar issues.

The data sources for this study will include various relevant types of data to explore the role of Islamic religion teachers in overcoming students' egocentrism, providing a

comprehensive view of the situation at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo. Primary data will be obtained from field data in the form of observations, documentation, in-depth interviews with informants and respondents, while secondary data will be obtained from literature studies, critical reviews of previous research, visual data, audio-visual materials, and videos related to the role of teachers in addressing egocentrism at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Sukorejo Situbondo, East Java.

Table 1. Informant Data

N	Time	Position	Education	Amount	initials
1	10 th /3/2024	Headmaster	S2	1	NR
2	15 th /3/2024	4th grade religion teacher	S1	1	QPA
3	27 th /3/2024	5th grade religion teacher	S1	1	IF
4	7 th /4/2024	4th grade students	MI	5	SR, NH, ZH, L, AN
5	18 th /4/2024	6th grade students	MI	8	NR, SM, AG, SR, NW, IM, SA, FH
6	1 st /5/2024	5th grade students	MI	6	AN, UI, S, MH, NM, AH
7	4 th /5/2024	2nd grade religion teacher	S1	1	NJ
8	29 th /5/2024	1st grade religion teacher	S1	1	LR
9	7 th /6/2024	6th grade religion teacher	S1	1	TZ
10	12 nd /6/2024	guidance counseling teacher	S1	2	NH, MW
11	16 th /6/2024	3th grade students	MI	7	AS, FN, WH, AF, JN, F, AL
12	3 rd /7/2024	3trd grade religion teacher	S1	1	SH

The data collection techniques in this study include several methods, such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Through observation and documentation, the researcher found several data recorded by the Headmaster, Islamic Religion Teachers, and Counseling Teachers about student behavior and observed teaching activities in the classroom led by the religious teacher, as well as student interactions, development, and intensive handling during the teaching and learning process, extracurricular activities, worship, social activities, and so on, focusing on individual, collective, and empathetic values. The researcher also conducted in-depth interviews with several informants and respondents, exploring their views on students' egocentrism, the strategies they use to address the issue, and their experiences in teaching moral and social values. Some of these informants or respondents were themselves individuals exhibiting egocentric behavior, i.e., students. The researcher delved into how they engaged with their behavior and attitudes during their time at the madrasah, both toward teachers, peers, and the environment.

In this study, the researcher used thematic analysis, identifying and examining patterns that emerged from the analyzed data (Dawadi, 2020). This was aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of various data collection techniques used to understand the role of Islamic religion teachers in addressing students' egocentrism. The analysis showed that a combination of different data collection techniques provided a more comprehensive picture of the role of Islamic religion teachers in addressing egocentrism at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo. While each technique has its strengths and weaknesses, they complement each other to produce more accurate and in-depth findings.

In the thematic analysis, the researcher began by reading and understanding the data from interviews to identify relevant text segments. These segments were then coded, such as interactive teaching methods or parental support, which allowed the researcher to uncover main themes. These themes included supporting factors like student-engaging teaching methods and parental support, as well as hindering factors like a lack of teacher training and academic pressure. After identifying the themes, the researcher verified their consistency by examining the data further and using triangulation. The results of this analysis provided insight into how these factors contributed to reducing students' egocentrism at the madrasah.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied triangulation, combining various sources, techniques, and researchers to improve the data's validity. Triangulation was carried out by collecting data through interviews with teachers, direct classroom observations, and documentation related to Islamic religious teaching activities. By comparing findings from these different perspectives, the study aimed to obtain a more objective and accurate understanding of the role of Islamic religion teachers in educating and guiding students at the madrasah, ensuring the reliability of the research results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In madrasahs, religious teachers play a crucial role in helping students overcome their egocentrism by instilling moral and social teachings that serve as the foundation for

cooperative and empathetic behavior (Khanam, 2008). Teachers help students learn values such as respect, support, and participation in society, in addition to providing academic knowledge through engaging and value-based teaching methods. Religious educators can help students become more self-aware and empathetic, reducing egocentric behavior and improving social interactions among them by fostering an inclusive classroom environment and organizing activities that encourage social interaction.

The Impact of Religious Education on Reducing Egocentrism

Students are encouraged to understand and appreciate the importance of empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect through the moral and ethical principles taught in religion. Religious education has a substantial impact on reducing the level of egocentrism among students. It integrates moral values and lessons on social justice to help students develop strong character traits and social attitudes alongside their academic understanding. According to Boyatzis' research, children who actively participate in religious education display non-egocentric behavior, meaning they show more openness and responsiveness to the needs and feelings of others (Boyatzis et al., 2006).

As stated in the interviews with several informants:

“Religious education has a very significant impact. When we teach values such as empathy and helping others, I see students start changing the way they interact. They are more open to sharing and helping their friends.” (NR, Personal Communication, March 15, 2024)

“Previously, I saw many students focused only on themselves, but after attending this class, they began to engage in social activities. For example, some of them became active in social service activities that we held, helping those in need in the surrounding community.” (IF, Personal Communication, March 16, 2024)

“The story of Prophet Muhammad, who always helped others and never put himself first, really inspires me. I want to be like him.” (SR, Personal Communication, March 15, 2024)

The interview results indicate that religious education has a significant influence on reducing students' egocentrism. Both teachers and students agree that teaching moral and ethical values through religious education helps students develop an empathetic attitude and concern for others. Interactive teaching methods, such as discussions and inspirational stories, prove effective in changing students' behavior to be more positive and inclusive.

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, it can be concluded that religious education has a significant impact on reducing students' egocentrism. This shows how important the role of character education is in shaping children's character. Egocentrism, which is often characterized by excessive self-focus and a lack of empathy for others, can hinder healthy social interactions. Among the key findings are: First, Increased self-awareness: Effective religious learning can help students understand their place in the universe and society, thereby reducing the tendency for self-centeredness. Second, Strengthening social values: Instilling values such as empathy, tolerance, and cooperation through religious education can help students better appreciate

others and the environment. Third, Character formation: Religious education oriented towards character formation can help students develop admirable traits such as humility, patience, and sincerity. Therefore, an educational approach that integrates religious values is highly relevant in this context.

Religious Teachers' Strategies in Addressing Egocentrism

Religious educators employ a comprehensive and integrated strategy that emphasizes cooperation, empathy, and moral ideals to help children overcome their egocentrism (Schuitema et al., 2008). Religious teachers foster social contact and teamwork among students by using interactive teaching strategies, such as role-playing, group discussions, and project-based learning. Students are also helped to understand and appreciate the needs and feelings of others by incorporating religious teachings that emphasize values of compassion, such as motivational stories from religious leaders. By using these techniques, religious educators help students develop more positive and social character traits, which, in turn, reduce egocentric behavior among students, in addition to providing academic guidance.

As stated by several informants:

“One of the main strategies I apply is using interactive learning methods. I often invite students to discuss in groups on topics related to social and moral values. This helps them share viewpoints and appreciate each other’s perspectives.” (QPA, Personal Communication, March 15, 2024)

“Of course, I often use stories from the Qur’an and Hadith that illustrate care and empathy. For example, the story of Prophet Muhammad, who always helped others, greatly inspires the students. I also ask them to discuss how they can apply these values in their everyday lives.” (NJ, Personal Communication, March 18, 2024)

“I feel more open and caring towards my friends. Group discussions make me better understand other people's opinions, and I find it easier to share.” (UI, Personal Communication, March 20, 2024)

The interview results show that religious teachers' strategies in addressing students' egocentrism through interactive learning methods, the use of inspirational stories, and social activities are effective in shaping empathetic attitudes among students. Both teachers and students agree that this approach not only helps in teaching religious material but also contributes to the development of more positive student character and concern for others.

Observation results indicate that religious teachers at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo employ various methods, such as group discussions, educational games, and social projects, to raise students' social awareness. For example, learning activities involving discussions on Qur'anic verses related to empathy and mutual respect positively impact students' attitudes. Observations of students indicate that they are more open to their peers' ideas when asked to talk about what it means to help. Programs such as community work and social outreach offered by religious teachers at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy have proven to increase students' awareness of environmental and interpersonal responsibilities. By applying innovative teaching strategies and religious principles,

educators can nurture empathy, collaboration, and social awareness in their students (Direct Observation, March 15-19, 2024).

One of the teachers' responsibilities is to help students understand their potential in acquiring methodology and learning attitudes. First, learning by example: where religious teachers provide real-life examples of sharing, humility, and compassion. Second, conduct group discussions: in this case, students are encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences to better understand others' perspectives. Third, social activities: to encourage empathy and compassion, religious teachers involve students in social activities such as volunteering at orphanages or doing work in the community. Fourth, use engaging learning materials: incorporating games, movies, or stories addressing egocentrism themes can increase student engagement and learning outcomes.

Supporting and Hindering Factors

Parental involvement in the educational process, interactive and value-based teaching methods, and a supportive school environment that fosters a collaborative and inclusive learning atmosphere are aspects that contribute to students' ability to overcome their egocentrism in the madrasah (Cubukcu, 2014). Students can practice empathy and collaboration through techniques such as group discussions and social activities, while community and parental support help strengthen the values taught in the classroom. However, obstacles that can reduce the success of these initiatives include the lack of training for educators in utilizing advanced teaching techniques, a school culture that does not encourage constructive social interaction, and the strong academic pressure that causes students to focus more on their own achievements than on shared interests. Additionally, the negative impact of the social environment can also play a role.

Based on interviews with several informants:

"One of the main supporting factors is the interactive teaching methods. When I use group discussions and role-playing, students become more engaged and are able to see their peers' perspectives. Additionally, parental support is also very important. When parents support the values we teach at school, students find it easier to apply them in their daily lives." (TZ, Personal Communication, March 15, 2024)

"One significant hindrance is the lack of training for teachers in implementing innovative teaching methods. If teachers are not familiar with more interactive approaches, they tend to use more traditional methods, which are less effective in addressing egocentrism. Additionally, there is high academic pressure, which makes students focus more on grades than on social attitudes." (NH, Personal Communication, March 16, 2024)

"Yes, my parents always remind me to help each other and care. When they support what the teacher teaches, I feel more motivated to do it." (WH, Personal Communication, March 15, 2024)

The interview results indicate that supporting factors in overcoming students' egocentrism include interactive teaching methods, parental support, and a positive school culture. Conversely, hindering factors include the lack of teacher training, academic

pressure, and the negative influence of the social environment outside the madrasah. Identifying these factors is crucial for creating a better and more effective learning environment for students.

First, interactive teaching methods: The use of interactive teaching techniques has proven to be a highly effective way to increase student engagement. Students can communicate and share opinions through group discussions and cooperative learning exercises. This approach enhances their understanding of empathy and others' perspectives while teaching children how to listen. Students are more likely to experience a sense of social responsibility and respect for others when actively engaged in the learning process.

Second, parental support: Students are more likely to practice moral and ethical principles when parents instill these values in them. These values align with what is taught in the madrasah. In addition to strengthening children's social awareness and encouraging them to look beyond their own interests, parental involvement in school activities fosters a stronger bond with their children.

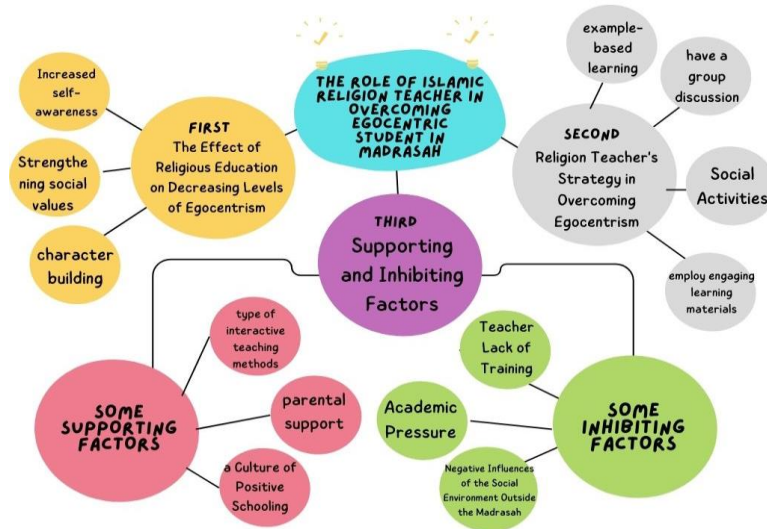
Third, positive school culture: An educational environment that values cooperation and respect for one another significantly reduces egocentric behavior. Schools with a positive culture create an atmosphere where children can learn social skills and improve relationships with their peers. Students who feel safe and comfortable in class are more receptive to learning and collaboration.

First, lack of teacher training: One of the biggest obstacles is the lack of instructors' expertise in using advanced teaching techniques. Teachers who lack the skills or knowledge needed to facilitate interactive learning often rely on more conventional teaching strategies, which may not be as successful in helping students overcome egocentrism. Adequate training is necessary to ensure that educators can offer students various engaging and stimulating learning opportunities.

Second, academic pressure: Students under significant academic pressure sometimes prioritize grades over character development. When students feel pressured to perform well academically, they may neglect important social interactions and prioritize their own interests. This can hinder their ability to develop empathy and care for others.

Third, negative influences from the social environment outside the madrasah: The social environment outside the madrasah can have a significant impact on students' attitudes. When students are exposed to egocentric behavior outside school, it can undermine the effectiveness of efforts made in the madrasah. Students may adopt behaviors that are inconsistent with the values taught at school, creating a conflict between what they learn and what they experience outside the classroom.

Picture 1. Finding Result



Based on the data provided above, a table can be presented to show the supporting and hindering factors in overcoming students' egocentrism at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ibrahimy Sukoerjo Situbondo based on the interview results and observations.

Table 2. Supporting and Hindering Factors in Overcoming Students' Egocentrism

Factor	Description	Supporting Factors	Hindering Factors
Interactive Teaching Methods	The use of teaching techniques that allow students to actively engage, such as group discussions and role-playing.	Increases student engagement, understanding of empathy, and peers' perspectives. Motivates students to collaborate.	Lack of teacher training in implementing innovative teaching techniques.
Parental Support	Parental involvement in supporting the values taught at school and reminding children to help and care for each other.	Increases students' motivation to practice moral values, and creates a stronger bond between parents and children.	-
Positive School Culture	A school environment that fosters cooperation and respect for one another, which reduces egocentric behavior.	Fosters mutual respect and collaboration among students, creating a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere.	School culture that does not encourage constructive social interaction.

Academic Pressure	Excessive focus on high academic grades, which causes students to prioritize personal achievement over collaboration or shared interests.	-	High academic pressure leads students to focus more on individual grades rather than social development.
Negative Social Environment	Negative influences from the social environment outside school that can reduce students' social awareness and worsen their egocentric behavior.	-	Negative influences from the social environment outside the madrasah.

This table illustrates that the supporting factors in overcoming students' egocentrism in the madrasah include interactive teaching methods, parental support, and a positive school culture. On the other hand, hindering factors include the lack of training for teachers, academic pressure, and negative influences from the social environment. Identifying and understanding these factors is crucial to creating a more inclusive and collaborative learning environment that optimally supports students' social development.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study emphasizes the importance of an educational approach that incorporates religious values to reduce students' egocentrism and build better moral character. The implementation of interactive teaching methods, along with parental support and a positive school culture, can create a more inclusive, collaborative, and harmonious environment. In this regard, the role of religious teachers is vital in teaching values such as empathy, love, and respect for others, which can strengthen the social climate in madrasahs. Therefore, close cooperation between educators, parents, and the community is essential to form a generation that is more caring, empathetic, and socially conscious, capable of making a positive contribution to society.

Related to this, the author recommends further research focusing on the exploration of how specific implementations of interactive teaching methods, such as the use of technology in religious education, impact the development of student character in various madrasah contexts. Additionally, further studies could explore the role of an inclusive school culture in improving students' social interactions and its impact on reducing egocentrism. It is important for religious teachers to continue developing skills in applying interactive, value-based teaching methods. Teachers should be trained to be more creative in creating activities that actively engage students in discussions and collaborations while ensuring that religious and social values are applied in every aspect of learning.

Furthermore, parents should be more actively involved in supporting the values taught in the madrasah and applying them in daily life. Close cooperation between parents and schools in educating students will strengthen the internalization of moral values and character in children. Education policymakers should also pay more attention to teacher training, especially in teaching techniques that prioritize student character development, and create policies that support a positive and inclusive school culture. Policies that encourage collaboration between madrasahs, parents, and the community will be very beneficial in creating a harmonious educational environment focused on students' social and character development.

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