



THE EXISTENCE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN MAINTAINING THE QUALITY OF LEARNING

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Abstract:

This research aims to provide an overview of the quality of Islamic Education learning in the minority Islamic environment of SMKN 1 North Toraja. It seeks to understand the role of Islamic Education teachers in maintaining the quality of Islamic Education learning in the minority setting of SMKN 1 North Toraja and identify the challenges faced by Islamic Education teachers in maintaining the quality of learning in the minority environment of SMKN 1 North Toraja. The research type employed is qualitative (Field Research) conducted at SMKN 1 North Toraja, utilizing a Descriptive Qualitative approach. Research instruments consist of observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation guidelines. Data collection procedures encompass observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The research findings are as follows: 1) The quality of learning at SMKN 1 North Toraja is still lacking due to Islamic Education teachers not fully adhering to the lesson plan (RPP) because students have minimal knowledge of Islam and low intellectual abilities. 2) Islamic Education teachers not only teach and guide students but also provide support, acting as motivators and administrators. Importantly, Islamic Education teachers play a role as a second parent for students within the school environment. 3) Challenges faced by Islamic Education teachers in maintaining the quality of learning include students' lack of interest in learning Islamic Education, insufficient knowledge about Islam among students, and environmental factors affecting the quality of learning, particularly in a minority context."

Keywords: *Quality, Learning, Islamic Education Teacher, Minority Environment*

INTRODUCTION

Learning quality is the school's ability to conduct teaching effectively and efficiently, resulting in high-value benefits for achieving predetermined teaching objectives (Ketut Bali Sastrawan, 2016). A good learning process is determined by several factors that the school must manage through educational management. Educational management is utilized to oversee its elements, namely Human Resources (HR), the learning process, and facilities, which are essential components of educational management, along with the curriculum, information, and a conducive environment. This is elaborated in Law No. 12 of 2012 Chapter I Article 1, which states:

"Education is a fundamental and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to possess spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character,

as well as skills needed for themselves, society, nation, and country” (Himpunan Peraturan Perundang-undangan SISDIKNAS 2010).

Based on the understanding of learning quality, it can be comprehended that learning quality is something crucial in life. Allah SWT commands His people to study everything, including matters related to Islam. Islam is a religion that carries a mission for its followers to organize education, as stated in Law No. 12 of 2012 Chapter I Article 1. Therefore, an educator must carefully choose a suitable learning model for students. As Allah says in Q.S. Al-'Alaq/ 96:1-5:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ ١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ ٢ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ ٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ ٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

Translation:

"Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know." (Department of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

The verse explains that humans should believe in the existence of God, the creator of humans (from a clot). Furthermore, to strengthen this belief and preserve it from fading, education and teaching should be implemented. However, it is not enough; humans must also understand the essence of what is learned. It can be concluded that Islam emphasizes that humans find their true selves as dignified beings or express their humanity; thus, education and teaching must be organized.

Teachers play a significant role in improving the quality of learning. The role of a teacher is twofold, serving as both an instructor and an educator. To develop their tasks and roles, teachers must possess personality qualifications, such as being hardworking, democratic, compassionate, appreciative of students' personalities, patient, having various knowledge, skills, and experiences, being pleasant and well-behaved, fair and impartial, tolerant, firm and stable, showing concern for students' issues, agile, capable of praising, engaging in good deeds, appreciating students, being sufficient in teaching, and capable of leading well (Mufidah, 2019).

The figure of an Islamic Education teacher is highly needed in a minority environment. A teacher instructing Islamic Education holds a significant responsibility in cultivating the mental attitude and personality of the students. An Islamic Education teacher can instill religious values in each student through various methods. Additionally, Islamic Education teachers have a specific duty to assist and accompany students to endure and socialize in their surrounding environment. What is more critical is that Islamic Education teachers must equip them with the values of Islamic teachings to prevent them from being influenced by negative culture and environment that may surround the students (Fina Marlina, 2013).

Based on the observations conducted by the researcher, the factors influencing the quality of learning at SMKN 1 Toraja Utara include the lack of interest among students in learning Islamic Education, the low level of activity among students in the learning process, and the fact that some students are not yet proficient in reading the Qur'an. It is known that Islamic Education learning cannot proceed well when there are students who are not yet able to read.

RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this study is field research. The researcher employs field research to gather detailed and comprehensive data in the field by understanding the smallest phenomena that serve as references to the problem points and the larger phenomena. The research is conducted at SMKN 1 North Toraja, Jl. Tagari-Rantepao, Kel. Tagari, Kec, Tallunglipu, North Toraja Regency No. 8, starting from February 25 to April 25, 2023.

Using qualitative descriptive methods, qualitative description is a formulation of the problem guiding the research to explore or portray the social situation being studied comprehensively, extensively, and in-depth (Repository IAIN Parepare 2023). In this study, there are two sources of research: primary data sources and secondary data sources (Andi Abd. Muis, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Quality of Islamic Education in the Minority Environment of SMKN 1 North Toraja

SMKN 1 North Toraja is one of the formal education institutions. To understand the condition of teachers, especially Islamic Education teachers, in teaching students at SMKN 1 North Toraja, the focus is always on achieving the curriculum targets that have been formulated. However, it cannot be avoided that in its implementation, there are sometimes difficulties and obstacles due to inadequate infrastructure. Meanwhile, in the implementation of the teaching and learning process, an essential factor to consider is how students at SMKN 1 North Toraja can master the subject of Islamic education.

The quality of learning is a reflection of the professional ability of teachers in carrying out their teaching duties, and the quality of learning is a process of student learning activities that will include planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising, to achieve quality goals and outcomes. Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by the researcher, it can be analyzed that the quality of Islamic Education learning at SMKN 1 North Toraja still needs improvement. This is because one of the factors is that, in certain conditions, Islamic Education teachers do not fully refer to the Lesson Plans (RPP) that have been made because a significant number of students are still not fluent in reading the Qur'an. Students have very minimal knowledge about Islam, and the intellectual abilities of students are still low.

The researcher concludes that to build the quality of Islamic Education learning at SMKN 1 North Toraja, it is necessary to involve several aspects that Islamic Education teachers need to pay attention to. These aspects include, Planning aspect: In this case, the Lesson Plans (RPP) need to be prepared by considering the learning abilities of students, as students have different abilities that require different approaches.

Student activity aspect: Student activity needs to be built by teachers before the learning process begins. Therefore, teachers must master teaching skills, including opening and closing lessons, explaining, asking questions, providing reinforcement, conducting variations, guiding small group discussions, teaching small groups and individuals, and managing the classroom.

Method and approach aspect: The method and approach of teaching also significantly affect the quality of learning. If the methods and approaches used by teachers are not suitable, students will have difficulty understanding the taught material. A professional teacher will use methods and approaches that are appropriate for the subject matter to achieve the learning objectives. Other aspects affecting the quality of learning include learning strategies. Learning strategies involve collaboration between teachers and students to achieve learning objectives.

Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Maintaining the Quality of Islamic Education in the Minority Environment of SMKN 1 North Toraja.

The role of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at SMKN 1 North Toraja is one of the crucial components in realizing a morally upright generation. The role of a PAI teacher towards students has a significant impact since a student may not succeed without the guidance, teaching, and direction of a teacher who guides them to improve. This is especially crucial at SMKN 1 North Toraja, where the majority of students are non-Muslims, making the responsibility of the PAI teacher even greater.

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by the researcher, it can be analyzed that the role of PAI teachers in a minority environment is highly needed. PAI teachers not only teach and guide students but also provide constant support, acting as motivators and administrators. More importantly, PAI teachers play the role of a second parent for students within the school environment.

In the classroom, the teacher is responsible for class management, fulfilling roles such as, Teacher as an Educator and Guide: Teachers play a role as educators,

obligated to bring about reforms in their classrooms. Teachers have the duty and right to regulate, innovate, and make changes in their classrooms. With the role given, teachers can guide and develop students intellectually, morally, and emotionally. Moreover, teachers act as guides, assisting students in their journey to adulthood.

Teacher as an Administrator: Teachers have full responsibility for organizing their classrooms and are accountable for planning, implementing, assessing, and determining the follow-up actions for the learning process within the class. A teacher proficient in classroom management can more easily influence their students in the realm of Islamic education, specifically.

Teacher as a Parent in School: A teacher is the representative of parents in school for each student. Parents entrust their children to the school and its teachers for education. Therefore, a teacher's role also becomes that of a parent in school. Even though the students may not be their biological children, teachers are still obligated to educate, care for, and guide their students as if they were their own.

The role of a teacher in school is defined by their position as an adult, educator, and employee. Based on their position as a teacher, they must exhibit behavior that meets the ethical, intellectual, and social expectations of society. Teachers are expected to maintain higher ethical, intellectual, and social standards compared to other adults (Nasution, 2011).

This is emphasized in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Jumu'ah, verse 2, where education is considered the main key in the humanization process. Teachers, as the frontline of education, must be capable of evolving to build individuals with ethical norms in their lives and speech, guided by the teachings of Allah.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

Translation:

“He is the one who sent a Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) among the illiterate people from among themselves. The Messenger recites to them His verses, purifies their souls, and teaches them the Book (the Qur'an) and Wisdom (the Sunnah), even though before this, they were clearly in manifest error.”

Challenges Faced by Islamic Education Teachers in Maintaining the Quality of Learning in the Minority Environment of SMKN 1 North Toraja. In the process of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, challenges are inevitable, and creative solutions from teachers are needed to overcome these challenges effectively, ensuring the quality of PAI learning is maintained. Similarly, in SMKN 1 North Toraja, there are challenges faced by PAI teachers in maintaining the quality of learning.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, the challenges faced by PAI teachers include, Lack of interest among students in learning Islamic Religious Education: One of the challenges in maintaining the quality of PAI learning is the students' lack of interest in studying Islamic Religious Education. Regardless of the teaching methods employed by teachers, without enthusiasm from students, the learning objectives will not be achieved. PAI teachers must find solutions to ignite students' enthusiasm for the learning process to achieve the intended objectives.

Lack of knowledge among students about Islam, The second challenge is the students' insufficient understanding and knowledge of the material taught, hindering the continuity of the curriculum. PAI teachers need to strive to find solutions to enhance students' knowledge of PAI. Environmental factors environmental factors significantly influence the quality of PAI learning, encompassing family, community, and school environments. Therefore, good cooperation between families, communities, and schools is essential for the sustainability of PAI learning, ensuring the objectives are met.

To address these challenges and maintain the quality of PAI learning, solutions include initiating each session with Quranic recitation, following up on short surah memorizations and prayers not yet memorized, improving students' learning quality in

studying Islamic Religious Education, providing motivating guidance to students, and, most importantly, the teacher continuously striving for self-improvement to be a positive role model.

CONCLUSION

The quality of learning at SMKN 1 North Toraja still needs improvement because PAI teachers do not entirely adhere to the lesson plans (RPP) due to students' minimal knowledge of Islam and low intellectual abilities. The role of PAI teachers at SMKN 1 North Toraja goes beyond teaching and guiding students; they also provide support, motivation, and administration. Importantly, PAI teachers act as a second parent to students within the school environment.

The challenges faced by Islamic Education teachers in maintaining the quality of learning at SMKN 1 North Toraja include students' lack of interest in learning Islamic Religious Education, insufficient knowledge among students about Islam, and environmental factors. Efforts to address these challenges include initiating each session with Quranic recitation, following up on short surah memorizations and prayers not yet memorized, improving students' learning quality in studying Islamic Religious Education, providing continuous motivation to students, and striving to be a good role model.

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