The Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Management in Improving Teacher Competence and Spirituality at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) management in improving teachers' spiritual competence at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. Teacher spiritual competence is an essential aspect of forming role models, professionalism, and the quality of Islamic education. This research employed a qualitative method using observation, interviews, and documentation for data collection. The results indicate that PAI management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan has been implemented comprehensively, including learning planning that emphasizes the integration of religious values, instructional delivery based on role modeling, and evaluation that focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on teacher attitudes and spirituality. The implication of this integrated PAI management implementation is the increase in worship awareness, moral integrity, and the reinforcement of the teacher's role as a spiritual role model within the school environment. It can be concluded that structured PAI management focused on role modeling is highly effective in enhancing teachers' spiritual competence and professionalism, which ultimately positively impacts the overall quality of education.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Management, Teacher Competence, Teacher Spirituality, Implementation

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Introduction

Religious education constitutes the main foundation in shaping children's character and spirituality from an early age (Risma Melinda, 2024). Within the family, parents, in particular, hold a very crucial role as the first and primary environment in educating children, including guiding and habituating them to perform acts of worship. Worship in Islam is not only an individual obligation but also a means of forming a noble personality, discipline, and spiritual awareness from an early age. Therefore, the habituation of worship, such as the five daily prayers, reading the Qur'an, praying, and emulating the noble character of the Prophet Muhammad, must start from the home environment and be directed by the parents (Dewi Agustin, 2025).

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in schools does not only teach creed (*aqidah*), history, and the theory of worship but also emphasizes the practical habituation of worship (Ujung & Tumiran, 2024). PAI is understood not merely as the transfer of knowledge, but as forming students' attitudes, personality, and skills in practicing Islamic teachings (Tumiran, Siregar et al., 2024). PAI is one of the strategic subjects in the national education system because it functions to shape the morality (*akhlak*), faith, and spirituality of both students and teachers. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System affirms that the goal of education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character. This indicates that the spiritual aspect is a major focus in education in Indonesia.

A professional teacher is demanded to be able to demonstrate their expertise as a teacher in front of the class (Napsiah Nasution, 2025). One of the components that a professional teacher must master is the ability to use various teaching methods (Sakban Lubis, 2019). Teaching methods are the means or paths used by the teacher to achieve the expected learning objectives, namely acquiring knowledge, attitudes, and skills. One of the appropriate methods expected to be an alternative teaching method is the *jigsaw* method, where students are divided into small groups to cooperate, help each other, and discuss to understand the subject matter and group teaching tasks (Siregar et al., 2023).

According to Danny Abrianto (2025), the management of teacher competence in PAI learning cannot be separated from efforts to strengthen spirituality, as teachers play a dual role as educators and moral role models within the school environment. Abrianto adds that teacher competence includes pedagogical, social, professional, and spiritual dimensions that must be managed in an integrated manner. In their other work, Abrianto, Siregar, Syahrial, and Sitorus (2024) assert that the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in PAI opens up opportunities for teachers to integrate spiritual values more contextually, creatively, and according to the needs of the students.

Thus, the management of PAI in elementary schools, particularly at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, needs to be understood as a concrete implementation in improving the spiritual competence of teachers. This article aims to describe the implementation of PAI management in enhancing teacher spiritual competence at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, so that it can serve as a model for the development of Islamic education oriented toward spiritual role modeling.

The main problem in this research is the non-optimal management of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan in improving teacher spiritual competence. This is characterized by differences in the level of awareness and consistency among teachers in carrying out religious practices, the lack of integration of spiritual values in the planning and implementation of learning, and PAI evaluation that still tends to emphasize cognitive aspects rather than affective and spiritual aspects.

Based on the background above, the objectives of this research are to determine the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan, to determine the supporting and hindering factors in the implementation of PAI management in improving teacher spiritual competence, and to determine the impact of PAI

management implementation on the improvement of teacher spiritual competence at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan.

Literature Review
1. Islamic Religious Education Management
    The management of PAI learning covers the functions of educational management: planning, implementation, and evaluation (Mulyasa, 2013). PAI learning planning must emphasize the integration of *Tawhid* (oneness of God), morality (*akhlak*), and worship (*ibadah*) values. The implementation of learning needs to be based on role modeling, while evaluation should not only focus on the cognitive aspect but also on attitudes and religious practices.
2. Teacher Spiritual Competence
    Spiritual competence is the ability of a teacher to understand, internalize, and implement religious values in daily life (Agustian, 2001). A teacher who possesses good spiritual competence will become a role model for students, both in worship, morality, and social interaction (Zuhdi, 2015).
3. The Implementation of PAI in Strengthening Teacher Spirituality
    Several previous studies indicate that PAI learning, when well-managed, is capable of increasing the spiritual awareness of both teachers and students (Sagala, 2016). This confirms that PAI is not only an instrument of learning but also a means of developing the spirituality of educators.

Research Methodology
This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, conducted at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan. The research subjects involved were the school principal, the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher, and the classroom teachers. Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, which was conducted to observe teacher learning activities and religious practices; interviews, aimed at exploring in-depth information from the principal and teachers regarding the PAI management strategy; and documentation, used to study curriculum documents, lesson plans, and school activities related to PAI. Furthermore, the collected qualitative data were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

Results
The Implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan
The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan is carried out systematically, covering three main management functions: planning, implementation, and evaluation, as revealed by the findings from observation, interviews, and documentation. In the aspect of planning, the PAI Teacher and the school principal jointly develop Lesson Plans (RPP) that explicitly emphasize not only the achievement of cognitive aspects but also the integration of essential spiritual habituation, such as incorporating prayer activities, the performance of *Salat Duha* (morning voluntary prayer), and *Tadarus Al-Qur'an* (Qur'an recitation) into daily routines. Furthermore, at the implementation stage, teaching and learning activities are not solely reliant on conventional methods like lectures and discussions, but are enriched with direct worship practice and a strong emphasis on teacher role modeling (*uswah hasanah*). In addition, school activities are reinforced by routine religious programs, including congregational prayers, the commemoration of major Islamic holidays, and Islamic studies, which aim to create a religious academic environment. Finally, the evaluation aspect of PAI is implemented comprehensively, encompassing written assessments, worship practice assessments, and continuous observation

of teacher attitudes and behavior in their daily lives. The school principal also plays an active role by regularly conducting monitoring to ensure teacher consistency in internalizing and practicing spiritual values within the school environment.

Supporting and Hindering Factors

The effectiveness of the PAI management implementation in improving teacher spiritual competence is supported by several crucial factors. The most significant supporting factor is the presence of a school vision that is explicitly religious and based on Islamic values, which provides a strong philosophical foundation and a clear direction for all school programs. This support is strengthened by the full commitment and support from the school principal, which is not only instructive but also tangible, evidenced by the provision of adequate infrastructure that supports spirituality (e.g., proper worship facilities) and the allocation of resources for spiritual development programs for teachers. Finally, the creation of a very conducive school culture with a religious environment, where interactions among school members are based on Islamic values, automatically motivates teachers to improve their self-quality and consistency in acting as spiritual role models (*uswah hasanah*) for students.

Despite the strong supporting factors, this research also identified several hindering factors that need to be addressed. The main obstacle is the inconsistency of a small number of teachers in routinely performing *Sunnah* (recommended voluntary) worship, which may reduce the credibility of their spiritual role modeling in the eyes of the students. Furthermore, the limited time allocation for PAI learning within the curriculum structure poses a challenge, preventing PAI material from being fully integrated deeply across all subjects. Another crucial hindrance is the lack of standardized evaluation instruments to measure teachers' spiritual development. Consequently, the assessment of teachers' spiritual aspects tends to rely on subjective observation, which risks being less accurate in reflecting the true increase in spiritual competence.

The Impact of PAI Management Implementation on Teacher Spiritual Competence

The research findings indicate that the structured and integrated implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan has yielded a significant positive impact on the improvement of teacher spiritual competence. This impact is manifested in several key indicators. First, teachers show a noticeable increase in discipline in performing acts of worship, both mandatory (such as congregational obligatory prayers) and *sunnah* (recommended voluntary prayers, such as *Salat Duha* and *Tadarus Al-Qur'an*). Second, there is a profound increase in religious awareness, which is reflected through the improved quality of the teachers' attitudes, speech, and actions within the school environment; they increasingly prioritize Islamic values in their daily interactions. This enhanced competence ultimately strengthens the teacher's role as a role model (*uswah hasanah*) in building a religious culture in the school, demonstrated by consistent habitual practices such as initiating greetings (*salam*), praying together, and exhibiting polite and respectful behavior. Overall, the improved spiritual competence of the teachers is reflected in the effective integration of Islamic values into the teaching and learning process across all subjects, which in turn has a positive and transformative impact on students' character and spirituality.

Conclusion

This research concludes that the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) management at SD Rahmat Islamiyah Medan has been comprehensive and well-structured through the integration of management functions: planning that emphasizes spiritual aspects and habituation; implementation that focuses on practical worship, routine religious activities, and role modeling (*uswah hasanah*); and evaluation that covers cognitive, practical, and teacher attitude aspects. The success of this implementation is supported by the school's religious

vision, the principal's commitment, and a conducive school culture. Nevertheless, hindering factors were still found, including teacher inconsistency in performing *sunnah* worship and the lack of a standardized spiritual evaluation instrument. Overall, this integrated PAI management has proven to have a significant and positive impact by improving teachers' spiritual competence, characterized by better discipline in worship, increased religious awareness in behavior, and the strengthening of the teacher's role as a role model, which ultimately contributes directly to the formation of students' character and spirituality.

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