



Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies for Developing Students' Islamic Morality at MTsN 7 Pidie

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in fostering students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie, identify the current condition of students' Islamic morality, and examine the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing its implementation. The study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive research design. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed using the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through source and method triangulation. The findings indicate that students' Islamic morality is generally in the good category, as reflected in their regular worship practices, respect for teachers, discipline, and active participation in religious activities. The strategies implemented by PAI teachers include integrating Islamic values into classroom instruction, providing exemplary role models, cultivating religious habits, offering advice and motivation, and conducting moral guidance through persuasive approaches. Supporting factors include the madrasah's religious culture, structured religious programs, teachers' exemplary conduct, and parental support. Meanwhile, the major inhibiting factors consist of social media influence, peer pressure, differences in family backgrounds, and the limited instructional time allocated to Islamic Religious Education.

1. Introduction

The development of Islamic morality is one of the primary objectives of Islamic education and plays a strategic role in shaping students' character. Amid the rapid advancement of science, information technology, and globalization, educational institutions are confronted with increasingly complex challenges in instilling moral values among younger generations (Nurhabibah et al., 2025). The widespread accessibility of digital media, changing patterns of social interaction, and the influence of foreign cultures have significantly affected students' behavior, as reflected in declining discipline, reduced respect for teachers, weakened social responsibility, and diminishing commitment to practicing religious teachings (Salsabila & Anshori, 2025). These circumstances

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indicate that education can no longer focus solely on cognitive achievement but must also emphasize the development of students who possess noble character and uphold Islamic moral values.

Within the Indonesian national education system, character development constitutes an integral component of the educational objectives stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. Education is intended to develop learners' potential so that they become individuals who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, possess noble character, are knowledgeable, creative, independent, and responsible. In line with these objectives, Islamic Religious Education plays a vital role in fostering students' Islamic morality through a learning process that extends beyond the mere transmission of knowledge to the internalization of Islamic values in everyday life.(Rejeki, 2025).

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers are the primary actors in the process of fostering Islamic morality within schools. In addition to serving as educators, they function as mentors, role models, motivators, and guides who assist students in practicing Islamic teachings in their daily lives (Mulyadi, 2024). Therefore, the success of developing students' Islamic morality is greatly influenced by the instructional and educational strategies employed by PAI teachers. These strategies include demonstrating exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), cultivating Islamic habits through continuous practice, providing advice and motivation, integrating moral values into classroom instruction, organizing religious activities, and supervising students' behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

Previous studies have demonstrated that teachers' strategies make a significant contribution to the development of students' religious character. Shodiq and Kuswanti reported that religious habituation, teachers' exemplary conduct, supervision of students' worship practices, and the reinforcement of an Islamic school culture effectively enhance students' religious character (Shodiq, Mustain, 2024). Similarly, a study conducted by Ramli and colleagues found that a humanistic approach emphasizing persuasive communication, contextual learning, and the habituation of positive behavior is effective in instilling moral values among students (Ramli & Damopolii, 2024). These findings suggest that fostering Islamic morality requires comprehensive and sustainable strategies supported by a conducive educational environment.

Nevertheless, the implementation of Islamic moral development in schools continues to face various challenges. The influence of social media, limited parental supervision, peer interactions outside the school environment, and the restricted instructional time allocated to Islamic Religious Education often hinder the effective cultivation of moral values among students. Furthermore, some teachers still tend to adopt instructional approaches that emphasize the delivery of academic content rather than the internalization of moral values. These conditions indicate that the successful development of Islamic morality depends not only on classroom instruction but also on strong collaboration among teachers, schools, families, and the broader community to create a supportive environment for students' moral and character development.

MTsN 7 Pidie, as one of the madrasahs committed to strengthening character education, has implemented various religious programs, including the habituation of congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation before classroom instruction, short religious sermons (*kultum*), the commemoration of Islamic holy days, and the promotion of a school culture characterized by greetings (*salam*), friendliness, and courtesy. These initiatives reflect the school's commitment to fostering a religious culture as a means of developing students' Islamic morality. Nevertheless, some students continue to demonstrate inadequate discipline, limited participation in religious activities, and inconsistent application of Islamic values in their daily lives. These conditions indicate that the strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers need to be continuously strengthened and adapted to meet the evolving needs and challenges faced by students in the digital era.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in fostering students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie. Specifically, the study examines the current condition of students' Islamic morality, the strategies implemented by PAI teachers, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the implementation of these strategies. The findings are expected to contribute to the advancement of Islamic education scholarship while also providing practical recommendations for schools and teachers to enhance the effectiveness of fostering students' Islamic morality.

2. Literature Review

The development of Islamic morality is one of the primary objectives of Islamic education and occupies a central position in shaping students' personalities. From the Islamic perspective, education is not merely directed toward developing intellectual abilities but also aims to nurture individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character (*akhlakul karimah*) (Iham & Pramudiansyah, 2026). Consequently, the success of an educational institution is measured not only by students' academic achievement but also by the quality of their moral character, as reflected in their attitudes, behavior, and daily habits. Islamic morality serves as the fundamental principle that guides individuals in maintaining harmonious relationships with Allah (*hablum minallāh*), with fellow human beings (*hablum minannās*), and with the surrounding environment (Siti Romlah, 2023).

Conceptually, Islamic morality is closely associated with the concept of *akhlaq* (moral character). *Akhlaq* refers to a deeply rooted disposition within an individual that naturally gives rise to spontaneous behavior without requiring prolonged deliberation (Najla Akifah, 2025). According to Islamic scholars, good moral character is a reflection of the perfection of one's faith (Fauzen, Muhammad, 2025). Therefore, Islamic education places moral development at the core of the entire educational process. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explicitly stated that one of the primary purposes of his prophethood was to perfect human morality. Accordingly, Islamic morality should not merely be understood as knowledge of right and wrong but rather as an individual's ability to internalize Islamic values so that they are manifested in concrete behaviors such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, courtesy, trustworthiness, tolerance, and social compassion.

In the context of formal education, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a highly strategic role in fostering students' Islamic morality. They function not only as instructors responsible for transferring knowledge but also as educators (*murabbi*), mentors (*muaddib*), motivators, facilitators, and exemplary role models (*uswah hasanah*) for their students (Andriya et al., 2025). The effectiveness of PAI teachers is assessed not only by their ability to deliver instructional content systematically but also by their capacity to shape students' character through the values and exemplary conduct they consistently demonstrate in everyday life (Rohiyah & Rohaeni, 2026). Within Islamic education, teachers' exemplary behavior exerts a profound influence because students primarily acquire moral values through observing, imitating, and internalizing the behaviors modeled by their teachers.

To achieve these educational objectives, PAI teachers require well-designed, systematic, and sustainable instructional strategies. Instructional strategy refers to a carefully planned sequence of educational activities intended to achieve learning objectives effectively and efficiently. In the context of fostering Islamic morality, teachers' strategies extend beyond the delivery of classroom content to encompass various efforts aimed at internalizing Islamic values in students' daily lives (Ula, 2025). These strategies include demonstrating exemplary conduct, cultivating Islamic habits through continuous practice, providing advice and motivation, integrating moral values into classroom instruction, supervising students' behavior, and organizing religious activities that reinforce the development of religious character. Through the implementation of these integrated strategies,

students are expected not only to understand Islamic teachings conceptually but also to apply them consistently in their everyday lives.

One of the most effective strategies for fostering Islamic morality is exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*) (Selamat Pohan et al., 2025). Exemplary conduct is an educational method that was directly demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in guiding the Muslim community. Teachers who consistently demonstrate discipline, honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and commitment to religious obligations serve as positive role models whom students naturally emulate. In addition to exemplary conduct, habituation is another essential strategy in moral development. Habituation is implemented through regular religious activities such as reciting the Qur'an before lessons begin, performing congregational prayers, exchanging Islamic greetings (*salam*), offering prayers before and after learning, maintaining environmental cleanliness, and cultivating mutual respect among students. When practiced consistently, these routines gradually shape enduring moral character and become an integral part of students' daily behavior (Nur et al., 2026).

Another equally important strategy involves providing moral guidance, motivation, and the reinforcement of Islamic values throughout the teaching and learning process. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers are expected not only to deliver curriculum content but also to relate each lesson to moral values and real-life situations relevant to students' experiences. This contextual approach enables students to recognize that Islamic teachings are not merely theoretical concepts but comprehensive guidelines for everyday life. Furthermore, teachers may provide rewards to students who consistently demonstrate commendable behavior and apply educational punishments to those who violate school regulations. Such rewards and sanctions are intended to cultivate moral awareness and personal responsibility rather than merely instill fear of punishment (Hidayati Siregar, 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, the process of developing Islamic morality can be explained through the *Social Learning Theory* proposed by Albert Bandura (Supardi Patu, Muljono Damopoli, 2025). This theory posits that individuals acquire new behaviors by observing models whom they perceive as credible and worthy of imitation. The learning process occurs through four stages: attention, retention, behavioral reproduction, and motivation (Pohan et al., 2024). Within the school environment, teachers serve as the primary role models observed by students. When teachers consistently demonstrate behaviors that reflect Islamic values, students are more likely to pay attention to these behaviors, retain them in memory, and subsequently imitate them in their daily lives. Therefore, the success of fostering Islamic morality is strongly influenced by the quality of the exemplary conduct demonstrated by teachers.

In addition to teachers' instructional strategies, the development of Islamic morality is also influenced by various supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include a religious school environment, well-structured religious programs, strong leadership from the madrasah principal, collaboration among teachers, active parental involvement, and a school culture that consistently promotes the habituation of Islamic values. Conversely, inhibiting factors may arise from family environments that provide limited attention to religious education, negative peer influences, the uncontrolled use of social media, and the low level of awareness among some students in practicing Islamic teachings (Pridayani & Rivauzi, 2022). In today's digital era, the overwhelming flow of information through social media has become a significant challenge for teachers in shaping students' character. Therefore, strong collaboration among schools, families, and the wider community is essential to ensure that the process of moral development can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

In conclusion, the development of Islamic morality is a comprehensive and continuous educational process. Its success depends not only on the quality of instructional content but also on

the strategies employed by teachers, the religious culture established within the school, family support, and students' social environment. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a central role in this process as educators, mentors, and role models who guide students in internalizing Islamic values and translating them into their daily behavior. Therefore, examining the strategies employed by PAI teachers in fostering Islamic morality is of considerable importance for developing effective, adaptive, and contextually relevant models of character education that address the challenges of contemporary education.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive research design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the strategies implemented by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in fostering students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie. A qualitative descriptive approach was selected because it enables researchers to comprehensively describe social phenomena based on actual field conditions and to explore the meanings underlying various moral development activities carried out by PAI teachers.

The research was conducted at MTsN 7 Pidie and involved the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and students as research informants. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on the consideration that they possessed relevant knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the process of developing students' Islamic morality within the madrasah. Data were collected through classroom and school observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine moral development activities and students' behavior within the school environment, while interviews were used to obtain information regarding teachers' instructional strategies, the condition of students' Islamic morality, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting its implementation. Documentation was employed to complement the data by examining school documents, including religious programs, school regulations, and other relevant institutional records.

The collected data were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, following the analytical procedures proposed (Rony Zulfirman, 2022). To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation and method triangulation were employed to enhance the credibility and validity of the data. Through this methodological approach, the study was expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education teachers in fostering students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie.

4. Results

4.1 The Condition of Students' Islamic Morality at MTsN 7 Pidie

The findings revealed that the overall condition of students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie can be categorized as good. This is reflected in students' daily behavior, which demonstrates various Islamic moral values both during classroom learning and within the broader school environment. These values are evident in students' habits of performing religious worship, showing respect to teachers, maintaining positive relationships with their peers, complying with school regulations, and actively participating in religious activities organized by the madrasah. Such findings indicate that the character education programs implemented by the school have made a positive contribution to students' moral development.

Based on observations and interviews with the principal of MTsN 7 Pidie, it was found that the development of Islamic morality has become one of the primary priorities in the educational process. The principal emphasized that educational success should not be measured solely by students'

academic achievement but also by the development of Islamic character and moral conduct reflected in their daily lives. Therefore, all educational programs within the madrasah are designed to create an environment that nurtures students into individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character (*akhlakul karimah*). This commitment is manifested through various institutional policies that strengthen the school's religious culture.

Students' Islamic morality is also reflected in their participation in religious practices that have become part of the school culture at MTsN 7 Pidie. Every morning before formal learning begins, students routinely recite the Qur'an together, offer prayers, and participate in various religious guidance activities. In addition, they regularly perform the *Zuhr* congregational prayer and attend short religious sermons (*kultum*) conducted as part of the school's religious programs. These habitual practices are intended not only to improve students' religious understanding but also to cultivate discipline, responsibility, and awareness of practicing Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Classroom observations showed that most students participated in these activities in an orderly and conscientious manner, although several students still required additional guidance and supervision.

Another important indicator of students' Islamic morality is their respectful attitude toward teachers and fellow students. Interviews with several Islamic Religious Education teachers revealed that students generally practice the culture of greeting others with *salam*, smiling, being friendly, and demonstrating courtesy and politeness when interacting with teachers and other members of the school community. These attitudes are reflected in students' habits of greeting teachers respectfully, speaking politely, and treating their peers equally regardless of their backgrounds. Such values have become an integral part of the religious culture continuously developed through consistent habituation and exemplary conduct demonstrated by all school personnel.

Furthermore, students' Islamic morality is evident in their sense of responsibility and social concern. Islamic Religious Education teachers explained that most students demonstrate responsibility in completing academic assignments, maintaining the cleanliness of the school environment, and assisting classmates who encounter difficulties. Students also show active participation in various religious and social activities organized by the madrasah. These findings indicate that the internalization of Islamic values extends beyond ritual worship and is also reflected in students' interpersonal relationships and social behaviour.

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that the development of Islamic morality continues to face several challenges. Some teachers reported that a number of students still lack discipline in participating in religious activities, show inconsistency in practicing Islamic values outside the school environment, and are easily influenced by peer groups and social media. Differences in family backgrounds and varying levels of parental involvement in religious education also contribute to differences in students' moral development. These findings suggest that the cultivation of Islamic morality is a continuous process that requires sustained guidance and supervision.

The study further demonstrates that the positive condition of students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie is closely associated with the school's success in establishing a strong religious culture. A supportive educational environment, continuous religious habituation, teachers' exemplary behaviour, and the active involvement of all members of the school community play significant roles in fostering students' Islamic character. These findings support the view that moral development cannot rely solely on classroom instruction but must also be reinforced through continuous habituation, practical experience, and meaningful social interaction within the educational environment.

Overall, the findings indicate that students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie is generally well developed, although further improvement is still needed, particularly in strengthening students' consistency in practicing Islamic values beyond the school environment. Therefore, moral

development should continue to be strengthened through collaborative efforts involving teachers, school administrators, parents, and the wider community to ensure that the Islamic values cultivated at school become an integral part of students' personalities and guide their behavior throughout their daily lives.

4.2 Strategies Employed by Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Fostering Students' Islamic Morality at MTsN 7 Pidie

The findings indicate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers at MTsN 7 Pidie employ a variety of strategies to foster students' Islamic morality. These strategies are implemented not only through classroom instruction but also through habitual religious practices, exemplary conduct, continuous motivation, and sustained moral guidance. Collectively, these approaches are designed to internalize Islamic values so that they become an integral part of students' character and daily behavior. The findings demonstrate that the cultivation of Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie is carried out comprehensively by integrating moral development into all educational activities within the madrasah environment.

One of the primary strategies adopted by the teachers is the integration of Islamic moral values into both lesson planning and classroom instruction. Based on interviews with IRE teachers, every instructional plan incorporates not only cognitive learning objectives but also character values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern. Teachers consistently relate lesson content to students' everyday experiences and real-life challenges, ensuring that learning extends beyond conceptual understanding to encourage students to practice Islamic values in their daily lives. Furthermore, student assessment is not limited to cognitive achievement but also evaluates the development of attitudes, character, and behavior throughout the educational process.

Another major strategy is exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), which emerged as the most dominant approach in fostering students' Islamic morality. IRE teachers strive to serve as positive role models by consistently demonstrating discipline, honesty, patience, responsibility, and courteous behavior in their interactions with students. They also make conscious efforts to treat all students fairly, regardless of their backgrounds or academic abilities. When dealing with students who violate school rules or moral norms, teachers prefer to provide patient guidance rather than imposing harsh disciplinary measures that might undermine students' self-esteem. Such exemplary behavior serves as an effective educational medium because students not only receive verbal advice but also directly observe how Islamic values are practiced in their teachers' daily lives.

In addition to role modeling, IRE teachers implement habituation strategies through a variety of religious activities that have become an integral part of the madrasah culture. These habitual practices include the recitation of the Qur'an before classroom instruction, collective prayers, congregational *Dhuhr* prayer, short religious sermons (*kultum*), and the commemoration of Islamic holy days. Furthermore, students are continuously encouraged to practice the 5S culture (*Salam, Senyum, Sapa, Sopan, and Santun*—greeting, smiling, friendliness, politeness, and courtesy) as an essential component of Islamic character education. Through these routine activities, Islamic values are transformed from theoretical concepts into daily habits that become deeply embedded in students' lives. Continuous repetition and consistent implementation enable students to internalize Islamic behavior as a natural part of their everyday activities.

IRE teachers also employ strategies based on advice, motivation, and persuasive guidance to strengthen students' moral development. According to the interview findings, teachers regularly provide guidance concerning the importance of honesty, responsibility, discipline, and respect toward teachers and peers. Such advice is delivered both collectively during classroom instruction

and individually when students encounter personal or behavioral problems. In addressing disciplinary violations, teachers prioritize a family-oriented and persuasive approach by engaging students in dialogue and providing personal counseling. This approach enables students to recognize and reflect upon their mistakes without feeling embarrassed or humiliated. Compared with punitive disciplinary measures, this persuasive strategy is considered more effective in fostering students' internal moral awareness and encouraging genuine behavioral change.

Another important strategy involves establishing harmonious interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. IRE teachers intentionally cultivate open communication by greeting students warmly, listening attentively to their concerns, offering academic and personal encouragement, and creating a supportive and respectful learning environment. Such positive relationships foster mutual trust, making students more receptive to guidance, advice, and moral instruction provided by their teachers. This trusting atmosphere also facilitates teachers' efforts in character development, as students feel valued, respected, and supported throughout their personal growth.

The findings further reveal that these strategies are not implemented independently but rather function as complementary components of a comprehensive moral education framework. The integration of Islamic moral values into classroom instruction, exemplary teacher behavior, habitual religious practices, continuous advice and motivation, and harmonious teacher–student relationships collectively reinforce the internalization of Islamic values among students. Through the consistent and sustained implementation of these interconnected strategies, IRE teachers seek to cultivate students who not only possess sound religious knowledge but also embody Islamic teachings through courteous behavior, responsibility, discipline, and *akhlaqul karimah* (noble Islamic character) in their everyday lives.

4.3 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors Affecting Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Fostering Students' Islamic Morality at MTsN 7 Pidie

The findings reveal that the success of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in fostering students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie is influenced by a variety of supporting and inhibiting factors. These factors originate from both the internal environment of the madrasah and external environments, including families, the wider community, and technological developments. The findings indicate that the development of Islamic morality is a complex process whose success depends not only on the competence of IRE teachers but also on the active support of all stakeholders involved in students' educational development.

Based on interviews with the principal of MTsN 7 Pidie and several IRE teachers, one of the primary supporting factors is the strong commitment of the entire madrasah community to cultivating a religious school culture. The principal, IRE teachers, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and educational staff share a common vision of nurturing students' Islamic character. This commitment is reflected in effective coordination in implementing character-building programs, supervising students' behavior, and consistently demonstrating exemplary conduct in daily school life. Such collaboration among all members of the madrasah creates a conducive educational environment, enabling the continuous and systematic development of students' Islamic morality.

Another important supporting factor is the availability of well-established religious programs that have become an integral part of the madrasah culture. These programs include the daily recitation of the Qur'an before classroom instruction, the performance of congregational *Dhuhr* prayer, collective prayers before and after lessons, short religious sermons (*kultum*), and commemorations of Islamic holy days. In addition, the madrasah consistently promotes the culture of the 5S (*Salam, Senyum, Sapa, Sopan, and Santun*—greeting, smiling, friendliness, politeness, and

courtesy) as part of students' character formation. Through these habitual religious activities, students are provided with continuous opportunities to practice Islamic values directly, ensuring that moral education extends beyond classroom instruction and becomes an integral part of their daily school experience.

Teacher role modeling also emerged as a highly significant supporting factor in the formation of students' Islamic morality. The findings indicate that teachers consistently strive to demonstrate discipline, honesty, responsibility, patience, and respect toward all students regardless of their backgrounds. Such behaviors provide concrete examples that students can observe and emulate in their own lives. Furthermore, harmonious relationships between teachers and students strengthen the moral development process, as students feel comfortable discussing their personal concerns, expressing their opinions, and accepting guidance from their teachers. These findings suggest that exemplary behavior and effective interpersonal communication are fundamental elements in nurturing students' Islamic character.

Beyond the school environment, family support also plays a crucial role in strengthening students' moral development. According to the IRE teachers, students who regularly practice religious activities at home tend to internalize and implement the Islamic values taught at school more effectively. Collaboration between schools and parents in supervising students, encouraging religious practices, and providing moral education reinforces the internalization of Islamic values. Therefore, consistency between religious education at school and within the family environment constitutes one of the essential factors contributing to the successful development of students' Islamic morality.

On the other hand, this study also identified several factors that hinder IRE teachers' efforts to foster students' Islamic morality. One of the major obstacles is the influence of students' social environment outside the school. Students inevitably interact with peers and community members who may not always provide positive role models. Consequently, some students become susceptible to behaviors that contradict Islamic values. This situation often results in the moral principles instilled within the madrasah not being consistently practiced when students are outside the school environment.

Another significant challenge is the rapid development of technology and social media. The IRE teachers explained that social media has both positive and negative implications for students. On the positive side, technology serves as an effective learning resource, enabling students to access educational materials and deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings. However, uncontrolled use of social media may expose students to inappropriate content that conflicts with Islamic values, reduce direct social interactions, and negatively influence their attitudes and behavior. Therefore, continuous supervision and guidance from both teachers and parents are essential to ensure that technology is utilized responsibly and constructively.

Furthermore, differences in students' family backgrounds and varying levels of parental involvement in religious education also present significant challenges. Not all students receive the same degree of religious habituation, parental supervision, or character education at home. As a result, teachers are required to provide more intensive guidance and individualized support to students who need additional moral development. Moreover, the limited instructional time allocated to Islamic Religious Education restricts the extent to which moral values can be fully cultivated during classroom lessons alone. Consequently, teachers maximize extracurricular religious activities and daily religious practices as complementary strategies to reinforce students' Islamic character development.

Overall, the findings suggest that the successful development of students' Islamic morality at MTsN 7 Pidie depends on the synergy between various supporting factors and the school's ability to

overcome existing challenges. A religious school environment, well-structured religious programs, exemplary teacher behavior, and strong family support constitute the primary foundations for nurturing students' Islamic character. Conversely, the influence of peer groups, the rapid growth of social media, differences in family backgrounds, and limited instructional time remain significant challenges that require collective attention. Therefore, stronger collaboration among schools, families, and the wider community is essential to ensure that the process of developing students' Islamic morality is carried out effectively, sustainably, and successfully produces students who embody *akhlaqul karimah* (noble Islamic character) in accordance with Islamic teachings.

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the Islamic morality of students at MTsN 7 Pidie is generally at a good level. This is reflected in students' habitual performance of religious worship, their respect for teachers and peers, their practice of the values of greeting (*salam*), smiling, courtesy, politeness, and mutual respect, as well as their active participation in various religious activities organized by the madrasah. Nevertheless, some students still require further guidance, particularly in strengthening their discipline, sense of responsibility, and consistency in practicing Islamic values beyond the school environment.

The strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers to foster students' Islamic morality include integrating moral values into the teaching and learning process, demonstrating exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), cultivating religious habits, providing continuous advice and motivation, and offering guidance through persuasive communication and harmonious teacher–student relationships. The successful implementation of these strategies is supported by the commitment of the entire madrasah community, well-structured religious programs, a religious school environment, and active collaboration with parents. However, several challenges remain, including the influence of peer groups, the rapid development of social media, differences in students' family backgrounds, limited parental supervision, and the restricted instructional time allocated to Islamic Religious Education. Therefore, strong collaboration among schools, families, and the wider community is essential to ensure the sustainable development of students' Islamic morality.

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