

The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in the Formation of Students' Morality at SDN Bahalayung Bakumpai, Barito Kuala

***Nofia Anggraini¹, Ahmad Gazali², Rizka Aziza Puteri³**

¹Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Al-Jami Banjarmasin, Indonesia

²Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Antasari Banjarmasin, Indonesia

³Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK) Maestro Banjarmasin, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: nofiaanggraini@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in forming students' morality at SDN Bahalayung, Bakumpai, Barito Kuala, and to identify the internal and external factors that hinder this process. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach involving the principal, IRE teacher, and students of Grades IV, V, and VI as research subjects. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the IRE teacher performs four interconnected roles: role model, guide, motivator, and supervisor. These roles are implemented through exemplary behavior, advice, direct guidance, encouragement, habituation, behavioral monitoring, and educational sanctions. The main obstacles are students' low moral awareness, differences in student characteristics, limited instructional time, insufficient parental support, and the influence of gadgets, social media, and unfavorable peer environments. The novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of the four teacher roles within a rural public elementary school context and its identification of digital exposure and family-school discontinuity as interconnected challenges to moral formation.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Teacher Role, Moral Formation

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam pembentukan akhlak siswa di SDN Bahalayung, Bakumpai, Barito Kuala, serta mengidentifikasi faktor internal dan eksternal yang menghambat proses tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru PAI, dan siswa kelas IV, V, dan VI sebagai subjek penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis melalui tahap reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru PAI menjalankan empat peran yang saling berkaitan, yaitu sebagai teladan, pembimbing, motivator, dan pengawas. Peran-peran tersebut diwujudkan melalui pemberian keteladanan, nasihat, bimbingan secara langsung, pemberian dorongan, pembiasaan, pemantauan perilaku, serta penerapan sanksi edukatif. Kendala utama yang dihadapi meliputi rendahnya kesadaran moral siswa, perbedaan karakteristik siswa, keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran, kurangnya dukungan orang tua, serta pengaruh gawai, media sosial, dan lingkungan pergaulan yang kurang mendukung. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada analisis terpadu terhadap keempat

peran guru dalam konteks sekolah dasar negeri di wilayah pedesaan serta identifikasi paparan digital dan ketidaksinambungan antara lingkungan keluarga dan sekolah sebagai tantangan yang saling berkaitan dalam pembentukan akhlak siswa.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam, Peran Guru, Pembentukan Akhlak

Introduction

Islamic education is fundamentally concerned not only with the transmission of religious knowledge but also with the formation of human beings who are able to translate religious understanding into ethical conduct. Education becomes meaningful when students are able to demonstrate the values learned through concrete behavior in their daily lives. Within this framework, morality occupies a central position because it connects knowledge, belief, attitude, and action. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) therefore has a distinctive responsibility because religious learning is expected to influence students' personal and social behavior. Contemporary studies indicate that teachers remain central actors in transforming educational values into students' everyday character (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024). Character education at the elementary level is particularly important because moral habits developed during childhood can become foundations for later personality development (Arif et al., 2024).

The elementary school period represents a formative stage in which students increasingly develop patterns of interaction, self-control, responsibility, and respect for others. Children at this stage learn not only from formal explanations but also from observation, imitation, repetition, and social interaction. Consequently, moral education cannot be restricted to a particular lesson period or to the delivery of theoretical material. It must be embedded in classroom routines, teacher-student relationships, school culture, and daily social practices. Research on elementary education demonstrates that teachers influence students' moral development through modeling, habituation, guidance, and continuous reinforcement (Andayani, 2024). This perspective places teachers not merely as instructors but as significant moral agents within the school environment.

Islamic Religious Education has a particularly strategic position because the subject contains explicit teachings concerning faith, worship, morality, responsibility, social relations, and personal conduct. The effectiveness of IRE, however, cannot be measured solely through students' ability to memorize religious concepts. Its broader educational significance becomes visible when students demonstrate honesty, politeness, discipline, responsibility, respect, and concern for others. Studies of IRE teachers have shown that their responsibilities extend beyond instructional delivery toward moral guidance and character development (Aulia et al., 2022). Thus, the success of IRE requires the integration of cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions.

The role of teachers becomes increasingly complex in contemporary educational environments. Students are exposed to diverse sources of information through digital devices, social media, online games, and peer networks. Some of these influences may support learning, whereas others may introduce language, attitudes, and behavioral patterns that conflict with Islamic moral values. Research concerning IRE and technological development has identified technology as both an educational opportunity and a potential challenge to students' moral development (Halim et al., 2023). Teachers therefore need to function as educational filters who help students distinguish between constructive and destructive influences.

The importance of teacher modeling is particularly evident in Islamic education. Students often observe how teachers speak, dress, respond to mistakes, interact with others, and solve problems. These behaviors may communicate moral lessons more powerfully than verbal explanations. The teacher therefore becomes a living representation of the values being taught. Research on character education consistently identifies teacher exemplary behavior as one of the strongest mechanisms for moral formation at the elementary level (Nazilah et al., 2024). A teacher who consistently demonstrates respectful and responsible behavior creates an implicit curriculum that students can observe and imitate.

Moral formation also requires sustained guidance. Students cannot always distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior independently, especially when they encounter interpersonal conflicts or social pressures. Teachers need to provide explanations, corrections, encouragement, and opportunities for students to reflect on their actions. Guidance is particularly necessary when students display behaviors such as mocking peers, using inappropriate language, violating rules, or showing disrespect toward teachers. Qualitative research on IRE teachers demonstrates that moral development is strengthened when teachers combine religious instruction with direct guidance and interpersonal interaction (Mbagho et al., 2021).

Motivation is another important dimension of moral formation. Students may understand that honesty, discipline, and respect are good values but may not consistently practice them. Moral behavior requires internal willingness rather than mere compliance with external rules. Teachers can encourage this willingness through appreciation, positive reinforcement, meaningful advice, and the explanation of the consequences of behavior. Research on IRE teachers at the elementary level shows that teachers can contribute to students' spiritual and emotional development by providing motivation and sustained assistance (Parhati et al., 2022). Motivation thus becomes a bridge between knowing moral values and practicing them.

Supervision is equally necessary because moral development occurs through repeated behavior. Without monitoring, students may understand moral principles but continue to engage in undesirable conduct. Supervision should not be interpreted merely as surveillance or punishment. Instead, it should function as an educational mechanism through which students learn to recognize mistakes, understand consequences, and gradually develop self-control. Contemporary character education research emphasizes that teachers' supervision should be combined with guidance and habituation so that external regulation can gradually become internal regulation (Nasrullah et al., 2023).

The formation of morality also requires consistency between educational messages and everyday school practices. If teachers teach respect but communicate disrespectfully, students receive contradictory messages. Similarly, if discipline is emphasized only during IRE lessons but ignored elsewhere, students may perceive morality as a classroom requirement rather than a personal value. Character education is therefore most effective when moral principles become part of the broader school culture (Arif et al., 2024). Collaboration among teachers, school leaders, parents, and the community becomes important in maintaining such consistency.

The local context of SDN Bahalayung makes this issue particularly significant. The school is located in Bahalayung Village, Bakumpai District, Barito Kuala Regency, South Kalimantan. The school serves 100 students distributed across six class groups,

with 20 students in Grade IV, 16 students in Grade V, and 26 students in Grade VI. The school has one IRE teacher who is directly involved in religious instruction and moral development. This setting provides an important context for examining how one IRE teacher performs multiple educational roles in a public elementary school environment.

The preliminary observations documented in the source reveal a gap between the normative objectives of IRE and students' actual behavior. Some students were reported to use harsh language, mock one another, engage in bullying, and use classmates' parents' names as objects of ridicule. Some students also demonstrated inadequate discipline and insufficient respect toward teachers during learning activities. These conditions indicate that moral formation remains an ongoing process rather than a completed educational outcome. The presence of such behavior strengthens the need to examine how the IRE teacher responds to real behavioral problems.

The problem is further complicated by the influence of students' environments beyond school. Children may encounter expressions, attitudes, and behaviors through peer groups and digital media that contradict the moral values promoted by teachers. The teacher consequently cannot assume that classroom instruction alone is sufficient to shape student behavior. Recent research on Islamic education in the digital era emphasizes that character education must address students' real social and technological environments rather than remain limited to traditional classroom instruction (Komalasari et al., 2025). This makes teacher guidance and parental cooperation increasingly important.

The present study focuses on four major roles performed by the IRE teacher: role model, guide, motivator, and supervisor. These four roles were explicitly established in the source study as indicators for analyzing teacher involvement in students' moral formation. The role-model dimension concerns the teacher's behavior and example. The guidance dimension concerns advice, direction, correction, and assistance. The motivational and supervisory dimensions concern students' encouragement and continuous behavioral monitoring.

The moral indicators examined in this study include politeness, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and respect for teachers and peers. These indicators provide a concrete framework for assessing moral formation because they are observable in students' daily behavior. Politeness can be observed through speech and interaction, discipline through compliance with school rules, honesty through consistency between words and actions, responsibility through fulfillment of obligations, and respect through appropriate treatment of teachers and classmates. Such indicators enable moral education to be examined beyond abstract theological concepts. They also correspond to contemporary character education literature emphasizing observable ethical behavior in elementary schools (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024).

Previous studies have established the importance of IRE teachers in students' moral development, but the existing literature still leaves contextual and analytical gaps. Many studies focus on secondary schools, religious schools, or broad character education programs. Fewer studies examine how a single IRE teacher integrates exemplary behavior, guidance, motivation, and supervision in a public elementary school located in a rural setting. The present study addresses this gap through a localized case at SDN Bahalayung. Its emphasis is not simply on whether the teacher contributes to moral development but on how the four roles operate together under specific contextual constraints.

The study is also important because moral formation should not be reduced to the responsibility of the IRE teacher alone. The source findings demonstrate that parental support, students' personal awareness, peer environments, and digital technology influence the effectiveness of teacher intervention. Consequently, the teacher's role needs to be understood within an ecological framework in which school, family, peers, and digital environments interact. Recent studies similarly argue that character development becomes stronger when school-based education is supported by parents and the broader community (Nazilah et al., 2024; Sarah et al., 2024). This perspective prevents the analysis from placing unrealistic responsibility on the IRE teacher. The purpose of this study is therefore to analyze and describe the role of the IRE teacher in forming students' morality at SDN Bahalayung, Bakumpai, Barito Kuala. More specifically, the study examines the teacher's role as a moral exemplar, guide, motivator, and supervisor. It also identifies the internal and external factors that hinder the teacher's efforts. The study seeks to contribute empirical insight into moral education at the elementary level, particularly within a public school context. The expected contribution is a more integrated understanding of how religious teaching, teacher behavior, interpersonal guidance, motivation, and supervision interact in the formation of students' morality.

Literature Review

Islamic Religious Education and Moral Formation

Islamic Religious Education should be understood as an educational process that seeks to connect religious knowledge with lived moral conduct. Its objectives extend beyond students' mastery of religious information toward the development of faith, ethical awareness, and responsible behavior. In this perspective, morality becomes one of the most important indicators of successful religious education. Students are expected not merely to know what Islam teaches but also to practice those teachings in their relationships with God, themselves, teachers, peers, and society. Contemporary studies describe IRE as an important instrument for developing students' religious and moral character (Aulia et al., 2022). The teacher therefore occupies a central position in translating Islamic values into educational practice.

Character education at the elementary level requires systematic and continuous implementation. Arif et al. (2024) found through a systematic literature review that character education in Indonesian Islamic elementary schools involves multiple forms of intervention, including habituation, religious activities, classroom integration, and school culture. These approaches demonstrate that character formation is multidimensional. Students acquire values through formal learning as well as repeated experiences. The implication is that IRE teachers need to design interactions that allow students to practice moral values rather than merely listen to explanations. Moral education consequently becomes an experiential process.

Teacher as Role Model

Teacher exemplary behavior is a foundational concept in Islamic education. Students observe teachers as adults who embody the values communicated during instruction. A teacher who consistently demonstrates politeness, honesty, discipline, fairness, and responsibility provides students with concrete examples of how abstract values are translated into conduct. Research in elementary schools has repeatedly identified teacher modeling as a significant component of character development (Aini

& Ramadhan, 2024). This role becomes particularly influential because children learn through imitation and social observation.

The role of teacher modeling also relates to professional ethics. Islamic education teachers are expected to demonstrate congruence between their instructional messages and personal conduct. Recent research indicates that PAI teachers can become moral exemplars when professional ethics are visible in everyday interactions with students and colleagues (Khairat et al., 2025). Such modeling creates credibility because students are more likely to accept moral advice from teachers whose behavior reflects the advice. Teacher credibility therefore becomes part of the moral educational process.

Teacher as Guide

The teacher's role as a guide involves helping students understand appropriate behavior and correcting inappropriate conduct. Guidance is not limited to formal counseling sessions but can occur through everyday classroom interactions. When students mock classmates, use harsh language, or violate rules, teachers can intervene by explaining why the behavior is inappropriate and showing alternative ways of responding. Mbagho et al. (2021) found that PAI teachers contribute to moral formation through guidance, advice, exemplary behavior, and corrective interventions. Such guidance is important because children are still developing their ability to regulate behavior independently.

Guidance also requires sensitivity to individual differences. Students have different personalities, family backgrounds, emotional characteristics, and levels of moral awareness. A uniform approach may therefore be ineffective. The teacher needs to determine whether a student requires direct correction, private counseling, encouragement, repeated habituation, or collaboration with parents. Research on character development emphasizes the importance of contextual teacher responses to students' individual needs (Andayani, 2024). Guidance consequently becomes a relational rather than purely instructional activity.

Teacher as Motivator

Moral behavior cannot be sustained through punishment and rules alone. Students need internal motivation to practice ethical values when no teacher is watching. The teacher can foster such motivation by explaining the meaning of moral conduct, acknowledging positive behavior, encouraging improvement, and connecting values with students' everyday experiences. Parhati et al. (2022) demonstrate that PAI teachers contribute to students' spiritual and emotional development through motivation and continuous assistance. Motivation thus supports the transition from external compliance to personal commitment.

Motivation also becomes important when students experience repeated failure in controlling their behavior. A teacher who responds only with criticism may produce resistance or fear rather than genuine moral awareness. Encouragement allows students to understand that moral improvement is a process. The teacher can help students identify mistakes without labeling them as inherently bad individuals. Such an approach supports moral growth because students learn to view correction as an opportunity for improvement.

Teacher as Supervisor

Supervision is an essential element in moral formation because values need to be reinforced through consistent practice. Teachers observe student behavior, identify deviations, and intervene when necessary. However, supervision should not be understood as authoritarian control. Effective supervision combines monitoring with explanation, guidance, and opportunities for students to develop self-regulation. Nasrullah et al. (2023) demonstrate that PAI teachers can contribute to character development through discipline-oriented educational practices.

The supervisory function becomes increasingly important when students are exposed to digital environments. Teachers cannot monitor every digital interaction, but they can educate students about appropriate digital behavior. Recent literature concerning Islamic digital literacy highlights the importance of integrating adab, akhlaq, and social-media ethics into Islamic education (Komalasari et al., 2025). Thus, supervision today should include not only students' physical behavior at school but also their developing capacity to make responsible choices in digital environments.

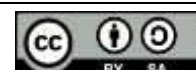
Moral Indicators in Elementary Education

Politeness is an important indicator of students' morality because it is immediately visible in daily interaction. It includes appropriate speech, respectful communication, courteous behavior, and consideration for other people's feelings. Elementary students need repeated opportunities to practice politeness because moral habits develop through repetition. Research on teachers and elementary students emphasizes the role of habituation in developing ethical and respectful interaction (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024). Consequently, politeness should be reinforced consistently across classroom and school activities.

Discipline represents another important dimension of moral formation. Discipline involves compliance with rules, punctuality, responsibility, and self-control. It is not merely obedience to external authority but should gradually become an internalized capacity to regulate behavior. Character education studies demonstrate that teacher modeling and habituation are important mechanisms for developing discipline (Sarah et al., 2024). IRE teachers can strengthen discipline by connecting school routines with Islamic values concerning responsibility and accountability.

Honesty is closely connected with Islamic moral education. Students need to understand honesty not only as avoiding lies but also as maintaining consistency between speech, actions, and reality. School environments provide many opportunities to cultivate honesty, including completing assignments independently, acknowledging mistakes, returning lost property, and telling the truth. Moral education becomes effective when honesty is reinforced through teacher example and classroom culture. Studies on character education at the elementary level emphasize that honesty must be practiced rather than merely defined.

Responsibility is another essential moral indicator. Students demonstrate responsibility by completing assignments, following agreed rules, caring for school facilities, and accepting the consequences of their actions. The development of responsibility requires teachers to provide students with opportunities to make decisions and experience the consequences of those decisions. Teacher guidance should therefore avoid excessive control that prevents students from developing independence. Recent research on character formation emphasizes responsibility as a dynamic process that develops through repeated participation and teacher support.



Respect for teachers and peers constitutes a further dimension of moral formation. Respect includes appropriate speech, willingness to listen, appreciation of differences, and avoidance of behaviors that humiliate or harm others. In the context of the present study, this indicator is particularly important because preliminary observations identified mocking, harsh speech, and bullying-related behaviors. Such conduct demonstrates why moral education must address students' interpersonal relationships. Teachers need to transform religious principles into concrete interactional norms.

Previous Relevant Studies

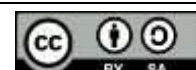
Mbagho et al. (2021) investigated the role of PAI teachers in forming students' morals at SMP Negeri 2 Diwek Jombang. Their qualitative study used observation, interviews, and documentation to examine teacher involvement in moral formation. The study found that teachers played roles in guidance, exemplary behavior, and moral correction. This research supports the argument that moral development is strongly related to teacher behavior and interaction. The present study extends this discussion by focusing on an elementary public school and by distinguishing four interconnected roles: exemplar, guide, motivator, and supervisor.

Aulia et al. (2022) examined the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in moral development at MTs Private Al-Azhar Medan Sunggal. Their findings indicate that teachers provide religious and moral education intended to guide students toward understanding and practicing Islamic teachings. The study confirms the importance of teachers in translating religious knowledge into moral conduct. However, the secondary-school context differs from the elementary-school context of SDN Bahalayung. Younger students may depend more heavily on imitation, repetition, and direct supervision, making the present study contextually significant.

Parhati et al. (2022) examined the role of PAI teachers in developing students' spiritual and emotional intelligence at an elementary school. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach involving students, teachers, and the principal, with observation, interviews, and documentation as data collection techniques. Its findings indicate that PAI teachers contributed to students' spiritual and emotional development through guidance and support. The methodological similarity strengthens the relevance of the study to the present research. The present study, however, places greater emphasis on observable moral behaviors and the four-role framework.

Halim et al. (2023) examined the role of PAI teachers in moral development in relation to technological development at SDN Sumberkare II, Probolinggo. The study found that technological development can produce challenges for students' moral development and emphasized teacher efforts through explanation, exemplary behavior, and habituation. This finding is particularly relevant to the present study because the source data at SDN Bahalayung also identify gadgets and social media as important external challenges. The similarity suggests that digital influence is not an isolated local problem. The present research contributes a more localized analysis of how the teacher responds to such influences within the Bahalayung context.

Nasrullah et al. (2023) examined the role of IRE teachers in character education and highlighted the importance of discipline and moral values. Their qualitative research demonstrates that IRE teachers have responsibilities that extend beyond religious knowledge transmission. Character formation requires continuous interaction



between instruction, habituation, and teacher behavior. The study supports the present research's emphasis on teacher involvement in everyday moral development. The present research adds the dimensions of motivation and supervision to the analysis of teacher roles.

Arif et al. (2024) conducted a systematic literature review on character education in Indonesian Islamic elementary schools. Their review demonstrates that character formation involves diverse models and practices, including religious activities, habituation, and school culture. This literature supports the view that moral education should be understood as a comprehensive educational process. The present study complements this broader literature by providing a specific empirical case from a public elementary school in South Kalimantan.

Aini and Ramadhan (2024) examined teachers' roles in developing ethical and moral values among elementary students. Their qualitative findings emphasize that teachers function not merely as transmitters of knowledge but also as role models who guide students through examples of appropriate behavior. This finding closely corresponds with the role-model dimension in the present research. The study also supports the argument that moral education occurs through everyday interaction rather than through formal lessons alone. The present study develops this argument by connecting modeling with guidance, motivation, and supervision.

Nazilah et al. (2024) examined the role of educators in IRE learning for character formation in elementary schools. Their findings emphasize teacher exemplary behavior as a central element and highlight the importance of active learning and collaboration among schools, parents, and communities. This study is relevant because the present research identifies limited parental support as one of the external obstacles. The similarity reinforces the importance of viewing character formation as a shared educational responsibility. The present study contributes empirical evidence from SDN Bahalayung concerning how this responsibility is experienced in practice.

Sarah et al. (2024) investigated the role of teachers in implementing character education in elementary schools. Their findings show that teachers function as role models and integrate character values into daily learning activities. They also identify environmental influences and resource limitations as challenges to character education. These findings are consistent with the obstacles identified at SDN Bahalayung. The present research nevertheless provides a more specifically Islamic interpretation by examining moral formation through the role of an IRE teacher.

Andayani (2024) reviewed literature on teachers' roles in shaping elementary students' moral character. The review emphasizes the importance of discipline, moral values, and teacher contributions to character education. It further indicates that character education must be connected to students' actual social experiences. This perspective supports the present study's decision to examine students' daily interactions rather than focusing only on classroom achievement. The present study adds a specific empirical account of moral formation in a public elementary school in Barito Kuala.

Khairat et al. (2025) investigated Islamic education teachers as role models in character formation and professional ethics. The study emphasizes that professional ethics are not merely abstract standards but are manifested through teachers' everyday behavior. This finding is highly relevant to the role-model dimension in the present research. A teacher's credibility is strengthened when students observe consistency between what the teacher teaches and what the teacher does. The

present study confirms this principle through the teacher's practices of greeting, knocking before entering a classroom, speaking politely, and demonstrating appropriate interaction.

Komalasari et al. (2025) examined character education through Islamic Religious Education pedagogy in the digital era. Their work highlights both opportunities and risks associated with digital technology and argues for stronger integration of Islamic values into digital education. This finding corresponds with the present study's identification of gadgets and social media as external influences. The relevance of this research lies in showing that moral education must respond to contemporary changes in students' social environments. The present study contributes by demonstrating how such challenges are perceived and addressed at SDN Bahalayung.

The literature reviewed above demonstrates that there is strong agreement concerning the strategic position of teachers in character formation. However, the studies differ in educational level, institutional context, moral indicators, and analytical categories. Some emphasize role modeling, some focus on religious habituation, and others examine technological influences or school-family collaboration. The present study integrates these dimensions through four roles performed by the IRE teacher. This integration constitutes an important analytical contribution because moral formation is presented as a process involving example, guidance, motivation, and supervision simultaneously.

The research gap can therefore be formulated at the intersection of context and role integration. Existing studies have demonstrated the importance of PAI teachers in secondary schools, Islamic schools, and various elementary contexts. Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to the integrated operation of four teacher roles within a public elementary school in a rural area of South Kalimantan. The present study addresses this gap through the case of SDN Bahalayung. Its findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of how religious education functions within a broader ecological context involving students, teachers, families, peers, and digital environments.

Method

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. The qualitative orientation was selected because the study sought to understand the actual practices, experiences, interactions, and challenges involved in the formation of students' morality. Rather than measuring moral development through numerical scores, the study examined how the IRE teacher performed specific educational roles in the school context. The research was conducted at SDN Bahalayung, located in Bahalayung Village, Bakumpai District, Barito Kuala Regency, South Kalimantan. The choice of location was directly related to the research focus on the role of the IRE teacher in students' moral formation.

The research subjects consisted of the principal, the IRE teacher, and students from Grades IV, V, and VI. The principal was included as a supporting informant because of his role in school policy and institutional management. The IRE teacher served as a central informant because of his direct responsibility for religious instruction and moral guidance. Students from Grades IV, V, and VI were selected as primary student informants because they were considered sufficiently capable of describing their experiences and observing teacher practices. The source document

specifically identifies these students as primary informants and excludes lower-grade students because of concerns regarding their ability to provide sufficiently reliable information.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to examine teacher-student interactions, teacher modeling, students' behavior, and the school environment in which moral education occurred. Interviews were conducted to obtain information from the principal, IRE teacher, and students concerning the implementation of teacher roles and the obstacles encountered. Documentation was used to complement observational and interview data and to provide contextual information about the school. The combination of these techniques enabled triangulation across different sources and forms of evidence, consistent with qualitative educational research practices (Parhati et al., 2022).

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting, organizing, and focusing information relevant to the research questions. Data presentation involved arranging the findings according to the major analytical categories, particularly teacher roles and inhibiting factors. Conclusions were developed by identifying patterns and relationships among the evidence obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. This analytical procedure allowed the study to move from descriptive field information toward an integrated interpretation of the teacher's contribution to moral formation.

Results and Discussion

Research Findings

The school context provides an important foundation for interpreting the findings. SDN Bahalayung has six class groups and a total of 100 students, consisting of 56 boys and 44 girls. Grade IV has 20 students, Grade V has 16 students, and Grade VI has 26 students. The school has one principal, six classroom teachers, one IRE teacher, one librarian, and one school caretaker. The presence of a single IRE teacher means that the moral formation process examined in this study is strongly associated with the practices and consistency of one religious educator.

The preliminary condition of student morality indicates that moral formation remains necessary. The source identifies several behaviors that do not fully reflect Islamic moral expectations, including harsh language, mocking, bullying, and using classmates' parents' names as objects of ridicule. Some students also demonstrate inadequate discipline and insufficient respect for teachers during learning activities. These behaviors indicate a gap between the normative objectives of IRE and actual student conduct. The findings therefore justify the importance of examining teacher interventions rather than assuming that the existence of religious instruction automatically produces moral behavior.

The teacher's role as a moral exemplar is visible through everyday conduct. The IRE teacher demonstrates appropriate behavior through greeting students, shaking hands with teachers, using polite language, and demonstrating proper etiquette when entering classrooms. One notable practice is that the teacher knocks on the classroom door before entering and says the greeting, thereby modeling appropriate classroom etiquette. The teacher also demonstrates the appropriate way to ask for help and express gratitude. These practices transform moral concepts into observable behavior that students can imitate.

The role of the teacher as a guide is demonstrated through direct correction and advice. When students use harsh language or mock their peers, the teacher first provides a verbal warning and then explains the moral consequences of the behavior. The teacher uses relatively gentle language so that students understand the mistake rather than merely experience punishment. If inappropriate behavior is repeated, the teacher may provide an educational sanction appropriate to the situation. This approach demonstrates that correction is intended to produce awareness and behavioral change rather than fear.

The teacher's guidance also covers positive moral habits. Students are encouraged to practice politeness, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and respect for teachers and peers. Guidance is not restricted to formal IRE lessons because the teacher intervenes when moral problems arise during everyday school interaction. This indicates that moral formation takes place through continuous interpersonal engagement. Such a finding is consistent with research emphasizing that character education becomes more effective when values are embedded in students' everyday experiences (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024).

The teacher's role as motivator is manifested through encouragement, attention, advice, and habituation. Students are encouraged to practice good behavior repeatedly until such behavior becomes familiar. Motivation is directed toward behaviors such as speaking politely, being honest, obeying rules, and respecting others. Rather than relying exclusively on negative consequences, the teacher attempts to build students' awareness and willingness to behave appropriately. This finding corresponds with research showing that PAI teachers contribute to spiritual and emotional development through encouragement and sustained support (Parhati et al., 2022).

The motivational process is particularly important because not all students respond to moral instruction in the same way. Some students readily imitate the teacher, whereas others require repeated reminders. The source indicates that the teacher recognizes differences in students' responses and continues to provide guidance. This demonstrates that moral formation cannot be expected to occur uniformly or immediately. It requires persistence and adaptation to students' individual characteristics.

The teacher also performs a supervisory role both inside and outside the classroom. The teacher monitors student behavior and responds when students display inappropriate conduct. When violations occur, the teacher provides correction, direction, and advice so that students understand the behavior that should be changed. Supervision therefore functions as a preventive and corrective mechanism. The findings demonstrate that supervision is integrated with moral education rather than functioning as a separate disciplinary system.

The moral outcomes identified in the study can be organized around five major indicators: politeness, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and respect for teachers and peers. These indicators are observable through students' speech, compliance with school rules, completion of responsibilities, interpersonal interactions, and responses to teacher guidance. The source explicitly defines these dimensions as indicators of student moral formation. The teacher's four roles operate across these indicators rather than addressing them separately.

The findings also reveal several obstacles that constrain the teacher's efforts. Internal obstacles include students' low awareness of moral values and differences in

student characteristics. External obstacles include limited instructional time, insufficient parental support, and the influence of social media, gadgets, and unfavorable peer environments. These factors demonstrate that moral formation is affected by conditions beyond the teacher's direct control.

Analytical Table

Teacher Role	Main Practices at SDN Bahalayung	Moral Values Targeted	Evidence/ Observed Manifestation	Main Challenge
Role Model	Greeting, shaking hands, polite speech, neat behavior, knocking before entering classrooms, saying greetings	Politeness, discipline, respect, responsibility	Students imitate teacher's etiquette and interaction patterns	Some students do not consistently imitate the model
Guide	Advice, correction, warnings, direct guidance, educational sanctions	Honesty, politeness, responsibility, respect	Students are reminded and guided after inappropriate behavior	Different levels of student awareness
Motivator	Encouragement, attention, positive advice, habituation	Discipline, honesty, politeness, respect	Students are encouraged to repeat positive behavior	Motivation is not equally internalized by all students
Supervisor	Monitoring behavior, correcting violations, providing direction	Discipline, responsibility, respect	Teacher intervenes when students violate moral or school norms	Limited time and broad behavioral influences
School–Family–Environment Response	Communication and cooperation are needed to reinforce school-based moral education	Consistency of moral behavior	Moral formation extends beyond school	Limited parental support, gadgets, social media, peer environment

The findings demonstrate that the role of the IRE teacher at SDN Bahalayung is multidimensional. The teacher does not function only as a transmitter of Islamic knowledge but simultaneously acts as a model, guide, motivator, and supervisor. These roles are interconnected rather than isolated. Modeling provides students with concrete examples, guidance helps them interpret appropriate conduct, motivation encourages continued practice, and supervision reinforces consistency. This integrated structure supports the argument that effective moral education requires multiple forms of teacher intervention (Mbagho et al., 2021).

The role-model dimension appears particularly fundamental because it provides the behavioral foundation for other interventions. When a teacher says that students should greet others politely but does not practice such behavior, the moral message loses credibility. At SDN Bahalayung, the teacher instead demonstrates etiquette through actual behavior, including greeting and classroom-entry practices. Such behavior represents an implicit curriculum through which students learn by observation. This finding corresponds with contemporary research identifying teacher modeling as a central component of character education in elementary schools (Aini & Ramadhan, 2024).

The teacher's modeling practices also reflect an important principle of Islamic education: moral instruction should be embodied in the educator. Students at elementary age are highly responsive to concrete examples. Therefore, demonstrating rather than merely explaining appropriate behavior can make moral values easier to understand. The teacher's practice of saying greetings, knocking before entering, and expressing gratitude offers students specific behavioral scripts. These scripts can gradually become habits when repeatedly practiced.

The guidance role demonstrates that moral formation requires dialogue and correction. Students who engage in mocking or harsh speech need more than a statement that their behavior is wrong. They need to understand why it is wrong and what behavior should replace it. The teacher's use of gentle advice is significant because it maintains the educational relationship while addressing misconduct. This approach is consistent with qualitative research showing that PAI teachers contribute to moral development through guidance and corrective interaction (Aulia et al., 2022).

The motivational role further indicates that moral development should not depend exclusively on external control. If students behave well only because a teacher is watching, moral internalization remains weak. Motivation attempts to develop awareness so that students gradually choose appropriate conduct independently. The teacher's use of encouragement and habituation provides opportunities for repeated moral practice. This finding corresponds with studies showing that PAI teachers can support students' spiritual and emotional development through continuous encouragement and interpersonal assistance (Parhati et al., 2022).

The supervisory role is necessary because moral habits develop through repetition and reinforcement. The teacher cannot assume that one explanation will permanently change student behavior. Continuous observation allows the teacher to identify whether students apply the values taught during IRE lessons. Supervision also provides opportunities for immediate intervention when inappropriate conduct occurs. In this sense, supervision becomes a form of formative moral assessment.

The findings also show that moral formation is not completely successful or uniform. Some students still demonstrate low awareness and require repeated intervention. This finding is important because it prevents an overly idealistic

interpretation of religious education. Teaching Islamic values does not automatically eliminate undesirable behavior. Students possess different personalities, family experiences, levels of maturity, and social influences. Consequently, moral education should be understood as a gradual developmental process rather than an instantaneous outcome.

The influence of parents constitutes a major external factor. The school may teach students to speak politely, respect teachers, and control their behavior, but these habits need reinforcement at home. If students experience contradictory behavioral expectations outside school, internalization may become difficult. The source identifies insufficient parental support as one of the obstacles to moral formation. This finding is consistent with contemporary research emphasizing collaboration between school, family, and community in character education (Nazilah et al., 2024; Sarah et al., 2024).

Digital technology represents another important challenge. The source specifically identifies gadgets and social media as having substantial influence on student behavior. Digital content can expose children to language, attitudes, and interaction patterns that may conflict with school-based moral expectations. This does not mean that technology itself is inherently harmful. Rather, the problem concerns uncontrolled exposure and insufficient digital literacy. Recent Islamic education research therefore emphasizes the integration of adab and akhlaq into digital literacy education (Komalasari et al., 2025).

The peer environment also affects moral formation. Children frequently imitate the language and behavior of their friends, particularly when those behaviors receive social reinforcement. The source indicates that students who associate with peers accustomed to harsh or inappropriate language may adopt similar patterns. This demonstrates that moral education needs to address peer culture rather than focusing solely on individual students. Teachers can strengthen positive peer norms by encouraging mutual respect, cooperative activities, and immediate correction of humiliating or aggressive behavior.

The combination of limited instructional time, parental inconsistency, peer influence, and digital exposure demonstrates that the IRE teacher cannot carry the entire burden of moral formation alone. The teacher's role remains strategic, but it must be supported by school-wide policies and family involvement. Character education is strongest when students receive consistent messages across different environments. The present findings therefore support a collaborative rather than teacher-centered model of moral education.

A significant contribution of this study lies in demonstrating the relationship among the four teacher roles. The teacher's role as a model provides the behavioral example, the guide provides interpretation and correction, the motivator develops willingness, and the supervisor reinforces consistency. If one dimension is absent, the effectiveness of the others may be weakened. Modeling without supervision may not address repeated misconduct, while supervision without motivation may produce only external compliance. The integrated operation of the four roles therefore represents the central analytical insight of this study.

The findings also reinforce the importance of moving from knowledge transmission toward moral habituation. Students need opportunities to practice greetings, respectful speech, honesty, responsibility, and discipline repeatedly. The teacher's everyday actions create these opportunities. This perspective is consistent

with systematic literature concerning character education in Indonesian Islamic elementary schools, which identifies habituation and school culture as important mechanisms for character formation (Arif et al., 2024). Moral education therefore becomes more effective when values are transformed into routines.

The research additionally highlights the importance of context. SDN Bahalayung is a public elementary school in a local community setting, and its moral challenges cannot simply be interpreted through findings from urban Islamic schools. The students interact with their families, peers, community, and digital environments in ways that shape their behavior. Therefore, the teacher must respond contextually rather than merely apply generic moral education strategies. This contextual dimension contributes to the significance of the present case.

The findings are also relevant to the concept of teacher professionalism. A professional IRE teacher requires not only mastery of religious content but also interpersonal competence, moral credibility, emotional sensitivity, and classroom management skills. The teacher needs to know when to advise, when to motivate, when to correct, and when to involve other adults. Professionalism therefore includes the capacity to translate religious principles into developmentally appropriate educational practices. Recent studies of PAI teachers support this broader understanding of professional responsibility (Khairat et al., 2025).

The results indicate that educational sanctions should remain corrective rather than punitive. The source describes a sequence in which the teacher initially provides a warning and advice before applying an educational sanction when necessary. Such an approach is more consistent with the objective of moral formation because it emphasizes learning from mistakes. The purpose of correction should be behavioral improvement, not humiliation. This is especially important at the elementary level, where students are still developing their emotional regulation and moral reasoning.

The findings further suggest that teacher-student relationships are important for successful moral education. Students are more likely to accept correction when teachers communicate respectfully and show concern for their development. The teacher's use of relatively gentle language when correcting students indicates an effort to maintain trust while addressing misconduct. This approach allows moral correction to function as guidance rather than confrontation. It also reinforces the idea that Islamic moral education should itself be conducted through morally appropriate educational relationships.

Another implication concerns school leadership. Although the IRE teacher is the central actor in the present study, the principal and other teachers can strengthen the moral environment through consistent school policies. If discipline, politeness, and respect are promoted only by the IRE teacher, the process may become fragmented. School-wide reinforcement would make the values more visible and consistent. Character education therefore needs institutional support rather than dependence on an individual teacher.

The study also suggests that parents should be regarded as educational partners rather than merely recipients of information about student behavior. Communication between school and home can help identify recurring behavioral problems and coordinate appropriate responses. Parents can reinforce school-based expectations concerning language, respect, discipline, and digital behavior. This is particularly important because several of the identified obstacles occur outside school. Stronger school-family cooperation can therefore increase the continuity of moral habituation,

the novelty of the study lies in its integrated and contextualized analysis of the four teacher roles in a public elementary school setting. Rather than examining teacher modeling, guidance, motivation, or supervision independently, the study shows how these functions operate as an interconnected moral-educational system. It also connects internal student factors with external family, peer, and digital influences. This provides a more realistic explanation of why teacher efforts can be effective while still encountering persistent obstacles. The finding contributes to the literature by positioning the IRE teacher as a strategic actor within, rather than separate from, the broader moral ecology surrounding elementary students.

Conclusion

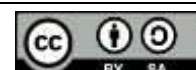
The study concludes that the IRE teacher at SDN Bahalayung plays a significant role in the formation of students' morality through four interconnected functions: role model, guide, motivator, and supervisor. The role-model function is demonstrated through concrete daily behavior such as greeting, polite communication, appropriate classroom etiquette, discipline, and respect. The guidance function is implemented through advice, correction, direction, and educational sanctions when necessary. The motivational function is realized through encouragement, attention, advice, and habituation, while the supervisory function is demonstrated through continuous monitoring and correction of student behavior. These roles contribute to the development of politeness, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and respect toward teachers and peers. The study further concludes that the effectiveness of moral formation is influenced by factors beyond the teacher's direct control. Internal obstacles include students' varying levels of moral awareness and differences in personal characteristics. External obstacles include limited instructional time, insufficient parental support, peer influences, gadgets, and social media. Therefore, strengthening students' morality requires a collaborative strategy involving the IRE teacher, school leadership, classroom teachers, parents, and the wider community. The principal practical implication is that moral education should be implemented continuously across classroom instruction, school culture, family life, and students' digital environments. The integrated model of exemplary behavior, guidance, motivation, and supervision identified in this study provides a contextual framework for strengthening Islamic moral education at the elementary school level.

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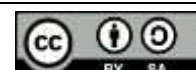
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