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Strategies of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Fostering Students' Moral Development at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School Banjarmasin

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Abstract

This study examines the strategies used by Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers to foster students' moral development at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School, Banjarmasin, and identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the process. A descriptive qualitative design was employed through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving one IRE teacher, four students from Grades 4–6, and supporting school informants. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while source triangulation and member checking were employed to strengthen the credibility of the findings. The results indicate that students' moral development was fostered through teacher modelling, habituation of religious activities, advice and motivation, behavioral supervision, educational sanctions and rewards, and continuous behavioral evaluation. Teacher modelling and school religious activities supported the process, whereas limited parental attention, peer-environment influences, and unsupervised smartphone and social-media use constrained the continuity of moral development. The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing moral development as an interconnected school-based cycle in which modelling, habituation, guidance, monitoring, consequences, and evaluation reinforce one another, while its sustainability depends on alignment among the school, family, peers, and students' digital environments.
Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Moral Development, Teacher Strategies

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji strategi yang digunakan oleh guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam membina perkembangan moral siswa di SDN Kelayan Dalam 1 Banjarmasin serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mendukung dan menghambat proses tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan satu guru PAI, empat siswa kelas IV–VI, serta informan pendukung dari pihak sekolah. Data dianalisis melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan, sedangkan triangulasi sumber dan member checking digunakan untuk memperkuat kredibilitas temuan penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan moral siswa dibina melalui keteladanan guru, pembiasaan kegiatan keagamaan, pemberian nasihat dan motivasi, pengawasan perilaku, pemberian sanksi dan penghargaan yang bersifat edukatif, serta evaluasi perilaku secara berkelanjutan. Keteladanan guru dan kegiatan

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keagamaan di sekolah mendukung proses pembinaan tersebut, sedangkan keterbatasan perhatian orang tua, pengaruh lingkungan teman sebaya, serta penggunaan telepon pintar dan media sosial tanpa pengawasan menjadi faktor yang menghambat kesinambungan pembinaan moral. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada konseptualisasi pembinaan moral sebagai suatu siklus berbasis sekolah yang saling terintegrasi, di mana keteladanan, pembiasaan, bimbingan, pemantauan, pemberian konsekuensi, dan evaluasi saling memperkuat, sementara keberlanjutannya bergantung pada keselarasan antara lingkungan sekolah, keluarga, teman sebaya, dan lingkungan digital siswa.
Kata kunci: Pendidikan Agama Islam, Pengembangan Karakter, Strategi Guru

Introduction

Education is not limited to the transmission of academic knowledge but also concerns the development of students' spiritual, social, and moral capacities. In elementary education, these dimensions are particularly important because children are still developing habits, social judgments, and patterns of interaction. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) therefore has a distinctive role because religious knowledge is expected to be translated into observable conduct.(Ghani et al., 2026) The national educational framework likewise places faith, noble character, independence, and responsibility among the desired outcomes of education. Recent Indonesian scholarship emphasizes that education becomes meaningful when knowledge, attitudes, and behavior are developed together (Abd Rahman et al., 2022). This orientation provides the conceptual foundation for examining moral development through the everyday practices of IRE teachers.

Moral development refers to the gradual formation of students' capacity to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate conduct and to act consistently with accepted ethical and religious values. At school, this development can be observed in honesty, discipline, respect, responsibility, cooperation, and care for others.('Afifah et al., 2026; Hatmiah, 2026) Moral development is therefore broader than students' ability to reproduce moral concepts in examinations. It involves the internalization of values through repeated experience and social interaction. Recent studies on moral and character education similarly stress the relationship between ethical understanding and concrete behavior (Basri et al., 2024; Putri & Wiranata, 2025). Consequently, an examination of IRE strategies needs to consider not only classroom instruction but also the moral climate created through daily school routines.

Islamic education provides a normative framework in which moral conduct is connected with faith, worship, and relationships with other people. The objectives of IRE include developing students' understanding and practice of Islamic teachings in daily life rather than separating religious knowledge from social conduct. At elementary level, such integration may appear in simple practices such as greeting others, praying, respecting teachers, maintaining cleanliness, and behaving honestly. (Sari et al., 2026). Research on IRE in elementary schools indicates that learning should accommodate students' developmental characteristics and connect religious concepts with practical experiences (Aziz et al., 2020). Rasyidi (2024) likewise emphasizes that IRE should contribute to students' understanding and application of Islamic teachings in everyday contexts. These perspectives make teacher strategy central to the translation of religious content into moral practice.

The teacher occupies a significant position in this process because students encounter moral values not only through formal lessons but also through the behavior of adults around them. Teacher conduct can communicate values more powerfully than

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verbal instruction when students observe consistency between what a teacher says and does. In this sense, the teacher becomes a model, facilitator, motivator, and supervisor of moral behavior.(Mujani et al., 2024; Nabriz, Knudstad, et al., 2026) Studies concerning IRE teachers identify these roles as important for character formation and moral strengthening (Agung, 2021; Judrah et al., 2024). Fauzi (2023) also discusses the importance of the teacher's role as a model in elementary IRE learning. Thus, moral education requires attention to teachers' everyday actions as well as their pedagogical techniques.

One strategy frequently associated with moral education is exemplary conduct or modelling. Modelling allows students to encounter abstract values in visible and repeatable forms, such as punctuality, respectful speech, honesty, cleanliness, and religious practice.(Hanafiah, 2024a; Mukhlis, 2024) The effectiveness of modelling depends on consistency because children can notice discrepancies between a teacher's verbal expectations and actual behavior. Studies of character education have emphasized that positive school culture is strengthened when adults consistently embody the values they expect students to adopt (Bhoki et al., 2025; Fauzi, 2023). This makes teacher modelling especially relevant to elementary students who learn through observation and imitation. In the present study, modelling is therefore examined as a practical mechanism of moral formation rather than simply a desirable teacher attribute.

A second strategy is habituation, particularly through routine religious activities. Habituation transforms values into repeated actions so that students gradually become accustomed to acting in accordance with those values.(Hanafiah, 2024b; Khairiyah et al., 2024; Wahyudi, Amin, et al., 2026) Praying before and after lessons, reciting short Qur'anic chapters, performing congregational prayer, and greeting teachers can become behavioral cues that connect religious identity with daily conduct. Research on IRE and character revitalization indicates that regular religious activities can support the formation of disciplined and responsible behavior (Sapitri & Maryati, 2022; Kamila, 2023). The educational significance of habituation lies in repetition, continuity, and meaningful supervision rather than in the mere existence of activities. Therefore, the present research considers religious routines as part of a broader strategy for cultivating moral habits.

Advice and motivation constitute another dimension of moral education because students sometimes need explicit explanations about why a behavior is appropriate or inappropriate. Advice can help students interpret their experiences, recognize consequences, and reconsider actions after mistakes.(Baiti et al., 2026; Hutfhi et al., 2026; Nurhidayah & Handayani, 2025) For elementary learners, the form of advice is important because language needs to be concrete, understandable, and developmentally appropriate. Research on IRE teachers' moral roles shows that teachers can strengthen moral awareness by providing guidance, encouragement, and reminders in everyday situations (Parnawi & Ar Ridho, 2023; Sya'roni, 2022). Such communication is particularly useful when students display behavior that cannot be corrected through routine instruction alone. Accordingly, this study treats advice and motivation as a dialogic component of moral development.

Supervision is also necessary because moral development occurs within real social situations in which students may experience competing influences. A teacher may teach discipline during a lesson, yet students still encounter moments of conflict, play, rule breaking, and peer pressure during recess or other activities.(Abdullah et al., 2025; Mahmoud et al., 2026) Direct supervision enables teachers to notice behavior, provide immediate feedback, and prevent small problems from becoming established patterns.

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Recent discussions of teacher roles emphasize that moral guidance requires sustained attention to student behavior beyond formal content delivery (Judrah et al., 2024; Nordian, 2024). Supervision should therefore be understood as formative rather than merely punitive. In this study, supervision is examined as a mechanism that connects moral expectations with students' actual behavior in school life.

Educational consequences and rewards can also influence moral behavior when they are applied proportionately and with a clear pedagogical purpose. A consequence can help students recognize that behavior has effects, while praise can reinforce conduct that reflects the school's moral expectations.(Fatikhah et al., 2026; Yahya et al., 2025) However, such practices should not reduce moral education to external compliance. Their educational value depends on whether students are gradually guided toward understanding and internalizing the underlying values. Character education literature emphasizes the importance of school cultures that reinforce positive behavior while maintaining developmental and humane approaches (Bhoki et al., 2025; Putri & Wiranata, 2025). The present study therefore examines the reported use of educational sanctions and rewards as one component within a wider moral-development process.

Evaluation is another important component because teachers need to determine whether moral guidance is producing observable changes in students' conduct. Unlike purely cognitive assessment, moral evaluation often requires observation of behavior across different situations and over time. Indicators may include discipline, honesty, politeness, responsibility, participation in religious activities, and relationships with peers. Research on assessment in IRE highlights the need to consider attitudes and skills alongside knowledge (Ramli et al., 2025). Continuous evaluation also enables teachers to provide additional guidance when students continue to display difficulties. Thus, moral evaluation in this study is understood as formative monitoring that informs subsequent intervention.

The family constitutes an important context because students do not leave their moral development at the school gate. Values practiced at school may be strengthened or weakened by routines, expectations, and supervision at home.(Husna et al., 2026; Yahya et al., 2025) When parents have limited time or limited involvement, children may receive less consistent guidance concerning discipline, digital behavior, and social relationships. Recent work on character development identifies the family as a foundational educational environment for children (Tamonob, 2025). This suggests that school-based moral education is more sustainable when teachers and parents communicate about students' development. The present research therefore includes parental attention among the factors that may support or constrain the teacher's strategy.

Peer relationships constitute another influential context during elementary school years. Children can imitate peers' speech, habits, attitudes, and responses to rules, especially during unstructured social activities.(Moh Al Ayat & Saputera, 2026; Wahyudi, Suraijiah, et al., 2026) Positive peer environments can reinforce school values, whereas negative peer patterns can create contradictory behavioral models. Recent research reports that peer interaction is associated with individual character formation and that children may reproduce behaviors observed in their social groups (Aulia et al., 2024). Consequently, teachers' moral strategies need to account for the social ecology surrounding students. This study examines peer influence not as an isolated student problem but as a contextual factor affecting the continuity of moral education.

Digital technology adds another layer to this moral ecology. Smartphones and social media provide children with access to language, entertainment, social interaction,

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and behavioral models outside direct adult supervision.(Husna et al., 2025; Mukhlis, Tarlam, et al., 2025) When use is unregulated, students may encounter content that conflicts with school expectations or spend time in ways that interfere with learning and family supervision. Recent discussions of digital transformation in character education identify both opportunities and challenges associated with students' digital environments (Arbi & Amrullah, 2024). The implication is not that technology is inherently harmful, but that guidance and contextual regulation are necessary. For IRE teachers, this creates a need to connect moral education with students' contemporary media experiences.

The empirical setting of this study is Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School in South Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin City. The uploaded research report identifies the school as the site for examining IRE teacher strategies in fostering students' morals and notes initial observations of generally positive practices alongside some students who remained less disciplined or less attentive. The study therefore addresses a concrete educational situation rather than a purely theoretical question. The focus is specifically on strategies used by the IRE teacher and on supporting and inhibiting factors affecting their implementation. This focus is consistent with recent Indonesian research that examines the practical role of IRE teachers in character and moral formation (Judrah et al., 2024; Hidayat, 2023). The setting also makes it possible to examine how school-based religious practices interact with students' wider social environments.

The existing literature demonstrates that teacher modelling, religious habituation, moral advice, supervision, and character-oriented learning are relevant to students' moral formation.(Abdullah et al., 2025; Ghuni et al., 2026; Mukhlis, Yazid, et al., 2025) Nevertheless, many studies discuss these strategies separately or in contexts different from the elementary-school setting examined here. The present study brings the strategies together as an interconnected process and simultaneously examines the conditions that strengthen or weaken their implementation. This is important because a strategy that works inside a classroom may have limited continuity when students encounter different expectations at home, among peers, or online. Research on positive school culture, family involvement, peer interaction, and digital transformation supports the need for a contextual perspective (Bhoki et al., 2025; Tamonob, 2025; Aulia et al., 2024; Arbi & Amrullah, 2024). The study consequently seeks to provide a grounded account of how moral education is enacted in everyday school life.

The purpose of this research is to describe the strategies of IRE teachers in fostering students' moral development at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School, Banjarmasin. It also aims to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors that shape the implementation of those strategies. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach because the research questions concern practices, experiences, meanings, and contextual conditions. Observation, interviews, and documentation are used to construct a detailed account of the phenomenon. The analytical process follows data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by source triangulation and member checking. The resulting article is intended to contribute an empirically grounded understanding of Islamic moral education at the elementary-school level.(Ghuni et al., 2025; Husna et al., 2025) The importance of this topic is heightened by the need to connect Islamic moral principles with the realities of children's everyday lives. Students encounter moral expectations in classrooms, family settings, friendships, religious activities, and digital spaces, so moral education cannot rely on one instructional moment. IRE teachers are strategically positioned to connect these contexts by translating religious values into understandable routines and responses to students' behavior. Contemporary studies of

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character education increasingly emphasize the interaction between school culture, social relationships, and changing digital environments (Arbi & Amrullah, 2024; Putri & Wiranata, 2025). A contextual examination of teacher strategies can therefore reveal not only what teachers do but also why some strategies are easier to sustain than others. This perspective is particularly relevant for elementary education, where repeated experiences and adult examples remain central to students' moral learning.

Literature Review

Recent scholarship generally conceptualizes character and moral education as a multidimensional process involving knowledge, attitudes, habits, and social behavior. Basri et al. (2024) discuss ethics and morality as normative guides for human conduct, while Basri et al. (2024) emphasize the strategic role of character education in student moral formation. These perspectives support an understanding of morality that extends beyond classroom knowledge. For elementary students, moral education is especially connected to repeated social experiences and adult guidance. The implication for IRE is that religious instruction should be connected to concrete conduct and school culture. This conceptualization provides a foundation for reading the present findings as a process of moral internalization rather than only religious knowledge acquisition.

Research on Islamic education highlights the role of IRE in integrating faith, worship, and social ethics. Aziz et al. (2020) explain that IRE learning in elementary schools should be connected with students' developmental and educational needs. Kamila (2023) specifically links Islamic Religious Education and moral education with the formation of elementary students' character. Sapitri and Maryati (2022) similarly discuss IRE as a means of revitalizing character education. These studies indicate that religious learning can contribute to moral development when its values are enacted in everyday life. The present research extends this perspective by focusing on the teacher strategies through which that enactment occurs in a particular school context.

Teacher modelling is strongly supported by character-education perspectives because students observe adult behavior in addition to hearing moral explanations. Fauzi (2023) describes teachers as models whose attitudes and actions can become examples for students. Abdullah and Lasri (2024) likewise emphasize positive school culture as a medium through which character is formed. In practical terms, punctuality, respectful communication, honesty, cleanliness, and participation in religious activities communicate moral expectations. The literature therefore provides a theoretical basis for examining teacher behavior as a central strategy. The present findings concerning modelling can be interpreted within this broader understanding of teachers as lived examples of values.

The role of IRE teachers is also discussed in relation to moral and character strengthening. Judrah et al. (2024) emphasize that IRE teachers contribute to the development of Islamic personality, religious commitment, and good social conduct. Agung (2021) similarly focuses on the role of IRE teachers in fostering students' morals. Hidayat (2023) discusses efforts by IRE teachers to foster students' akhlak in an Indonesian school context. Together, these studies demonstrate that moral formation is widely regarded as part of the professional responsibility of IRE teachers. The present study contributes a detailed elementary-school case showing how that responsibility is operationalized through several complementary practices.

Habituation is a recurring mechanism in religious and character education. Repeated actions can transform values into routines, reducing the distance between what

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students are taught and what they regularly do. Sapitri and Maryati (2022) associate IRE with the revitalization of character education, while Kamila (2023) emphasizes the relationship between Islamic education and moral formation. Regular prayer, Qur'anic recitation, greetings, and other religious routines provide concrete opportunities for such habituation. The literature suggests that continuity is essential because isolated activities are less likely to become stable habits.(Ghuni et al., 2025) The present study therefore examines not simply whether religious activities exist, but how their repetition is experienced by teachers and students.

Moral advice and motivation represent a more explicit communicative dimension of character education. Parnawi and Ar Ridho (2023) discuss the role of IRE teachers in instilling moral and ethical values, while Sya'roni (2022) examines teacher strategies for fostering students' akhlak. Such approaches are important when students need help interpreting their actions or understanding the consequences of misconduct. Advice can also be used to connect religious principles with interpersonal situations.(Ghani et al., 2026) The literature indicates that teacher communication is most meaningful when it supports students' awareness and motivation rather than relying solely on commands. The present study therefore treats advice and motivation as an integral part of moral guidance.

Supervision is related to the teacher's responsibility to observe and guide behavior in real situations. Nordian (2024) frames the role of IRE teachers in character formation as involving both strategies and challenges, suggesting that implementation occurs within complex school conditions. Judrah et al. (2024) likewise emphasize the teacher's contribution to strengthening moral conduct. Supervision allows teachers to respond when values are challenged by conflict, noise, rule violations, or peer influence. It also provides opportunities for immediate reinforcement of appropriate behavior.(Ghani et al., 2026) The present findings can therefore be understood as an extension of literature that sees moral education as continuous guidance rather than a lesson confined to scheduled instructional time.

Educational sanctions and rewards are discussed in character education as behavioral reinforcement mechanisms. Their educational purpose is to help students recognize consequences, reinforce desired conduct, and create predictable expectations. However, the literature also implies that moral development should not depend exclusively on external rewards or punishment. Basri et al. (2024) emphasize the broader strategic role of character education, while Abdullah and Lasri (2024) focus on positive school culture. Within this framework, consequences should be proportionate, educative, and connected to the values being taught. The present case is relevant because the teacher reportedly uses short Qur'anic memorization or classroom cleaning as educational consequences and praise as positive reinforcement.

Assessment in moral education requires attention to behavior and attitudes as well as academic achievement. Ramli et al. (2025) discuss the development of assessment of skills and attitudes in IRE learning. Such an approach is consistent with observing discipline, responsibility, politeness, honesty, and participation in religious activities. Moral evaluation also needs to be continuous because a single observation cannot fully represent a student's development.(Ghani et al., 2026) Formative observation can help teachers identify whether students need additional guidance. The present study adopts this understanding when interpreting the teacher's everyday observation and follow-up advice as part of moral evaluation.

Family involvement is important because moral learning takes place across educational environments. Tamonob (2025) describes the family as an early educational

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environment with a strong role in children's character formation. This suggests that school-based moral education can encounter discontinuity when parental supervision is limited. The issue becomes particularly relevant when children spend significant time outside school or have access to personal digital devices.(Aslamiah et al., 2026; Mufid et al., 2026) The literature therefore supports collaboration among teachers, parents, and other adults. The present study adds empirical detail by identifying limited parental attention as one of the reported constraints on students' moral development.

Peer interaction is another social mechanism through which students learn behavioral patterns. Aulia et al. (2024) report a relationship between peer interaction and individual character, indicating that students can be influenced by the behaviors and communication styles of peers. This is relevant to elementary students because peer relationships become increasingly important in daily school and play activities.(Arisandi et al., 2026) Teachers may therefore need to address peer culture rather than focus exclusively on individual misconduct. Positive peer practices can reinforce school values, while negative practices can compete with them. The present findings concerning imitation of friends' speech and habits are consistent with this social perspective.

Digital environments have become part of the context in which children encounter moral messages. Arbi and Amrullah (2024) describe digital transformation as producing both opportunities and challenges for character education. Students can encounter educational and religious content, but they can also encounter language and behaviors inconsistent with school expectations.(Desyulita et al., 2025; Yilmaz et al., 2025) The relevant educational question is therefore how students are guided to interpret and regulate digital experiences. IRE teachers can contribute by connecting Islamic ethical principles with responsible digital conduct. The present study highlights this issue through the teacher's concern about unsupervised smartphone and social-media use.

The role of teacher facilitation is also important because students are not passive recipients of moral instruction. Ani (2025) describes teachers as facilitators of student development, implying that students need opportunities to understand and construct meaning through interaction. This supports pedagogies that combine explanation, modelling, practice, reflection, and feedback. In moral education, such a sequence can help students move from knowing a rule to understanding and practicing it. The present findings show that the teacher combines verbal advice with direct example and monitoring. This combination is consistent with a facilitative view of the IRE teacher's role.

Planning and strategy selection influence whether educational activities are implemented systematically. Adiningrat and Albina (2024) emphasize the importance of instructional strategy planning for effective and quality learning. Harisnur (2022) similarly discusses approaches, strategies, methods, and techniques in elementary IRE learning. Although moral development cannot be reduced to lesson planning, planned routines can create consistency across school days.(Bolat et al., 2025; Mukhlis, 2026) Planning is particularly relevant when religious activities, behavioral monitoring, and evaluation need to be integrated. The present case demonstrates a practical strategy package that extends beyond a single instructional method.

Qualitative research is particularly appropriate when the purpose is to understand how educational practices are experienced and enacted. Adlini et al. (2022) discuss qualitative inquiry as a means of developing an in-depth understanding of phenomena, while Syahran (2020) emphasizes trustworthiness in qualitative research.(Bakr et al., 2025; Nabriz, Azmi, et al., 2026) Such an approach allows researchers to compare teacher

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accounts with student experiences and documentary evidence. This is important for moral education because observable behavior and reported intentions may not always coincide. Triangulation can therefore strengthen the credibility of interpretations. The methodology of the present study follows this logic by combining observation, interviews, documentation, and source comparison.

Data analysis in qualitative educational research requires systematic movement from raw information toward meaningful patterns. Qomaruddin and Sa'diyah (2024) discuss qualitative analysis through established approaches associated with Spradley, Miles, and Huberman, while Nurfajriani et al. (2024) emphasize triangulation in qualitative analysis. Reduction helps researchers identify relevant information, display organizes relationships among categories, and conclusion drawing develops interpretations.(Begum et al., 2025; Hushin et al., 2025) These stages are appropriate for identifying recurring strategies and contextual factors in moral education. They also make it possible to compare evidence across teachers, students, and documents. The present study applies these principles to construct a coherent account of moral-development practices at the school.

Previous Indonesian studies show that IRE teachers frequently employ modelling, discipline, religious routines, advice, and character-oriented activities, but the specific configuration differs by educational context. Studies at secondary level cannot automatically be generalized to elementary pupils because developmental needs and forms of supervision differ. The present study also differs by examining the interaction between school strategies and external constraints such as family attention, peer environment, and digital media. This contextual combination is important because moral behavior is shaped across multiple environments. The study therefore builds on prior literature while retaining the specificity of the Kelayan Dalam 1 case. Its contribution lies in describing an integrated, school-based moral-development cycle grounded in the voices and observations of the participants.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative field-research design to understand the strategies of Islamic Religious Education teachers in fostering students' moral development at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School, South Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin City. The qualitative approach was selected because the research focused on naturally occurring practices, participant experiences, and contextual factors rather than numerical measurement. The source document describes the researcher as the main instrument who participated directly in observation, interviews, and documentation. Such direct engagement is consistent with qualitative inquiry, in which validity depends on the correspondence between recorded data and what occurs in the field (Adlini et al., 2022). The study sought to describe the phenomenon without manipulating the educational setting. This design enabled the researcher to examine moral-development strategies as they were implemented in everyday school life.

The research site was Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School in South Banjarmasin, Banjarmasin City, South Kalimantan. The main participants were one Islamic Religious Education teacher and four students, consisting of one Grade 4 student, two Grade 5 students, and one Grade 6 student. Students in Grades 1–3 were not selected as principal informants because the researcher considered them too young for the intended data collection. Supporting informants included the school principal, other teachers, and administrative personnel. The primary object of inquiry was the IRE teacher's strategy

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for fostering student morality, including the supporting and inhibiting factors surrounding its implementation. This participant structure follows the source study's field design and is reported here without expanding the sample beyond what the original research documented.

Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to record relevant behaviors, situations, and educational activities directly in the school environment. Interviews were conducted face to face with the main informants, using a semi-structured format to maintain focus while allowing participants to explain their experiences in their own terms. Documentation was used to complement the primary information through relevant school records, notes, photographs, and other available materials. The combination of methods enabled comparison between observed practices, participant statements, and documentary evidence. This multimethod approach is consistent with qualitative trustworthiness principles and the source study's use of triangulation (Syahran, 2020; Nurfajriani et al., 2024).

Data analysis proceeded through data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During reduction, the researcher selected and focused the information most relevant to teacher strategies, moral outcomes, supporting factors, and inhibiting factors. Data were then organized into categories and displays so that relationships among recurring themes could be examined systematically. Conclusions were drawn from the organized data and remained subject to further verification during the research process. The study also used prolonged participation, persistent observation, source triangulation, and member checking to strengthen credibility. These procedures are consistent with recent discussions of qualitative data analysis and trustworthiness (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024; Husnullail & Jailani, 2024).

The analytical interpretation was guided by the distinction between strategy and contextual condition. Strategies referred to observable actions undertaken by the IRE teacher to foster moral conduct, whereas supporting and inhibiting factors referred to conditions that strengthened or constrained those actions. The researcher compared teacher accounts with student accounts to identify convergence and divergence. The interpretation also connected field findings with recent literature on Islamic education, character education, school culture, family involvement, peer influence, and digital environments. No numerical effectiveness score was assigned because the study was qualitative and descriptive. This approach preserves the empirical character of the original study while allowing the findings to be discussed in relation to contemporary educational scholarship.

Results and Discussion

The findings show that the IRE teacher at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School used a combination of six major strategies to foster students' moral development. These strategies were teacher modelling, habituation of religious activities, advice and motivation, behavioral supervision, educational sanctions and rewards, and learning evaluation. The strategies were not implemented as isolated techniques but appeared as mutually reinforcing practices in daily school life. Students described changes in their own routines and behavior that corresponded with these practices, particularly in politeness, discipline, greeting others, religious participation, and respect.(Ginoga et al., 2026; Khumaeni et al., 2026) The source study therefore presents moral development as a continuous process rather than a single classroom intervention. This pattern is consistent

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with literature emphasizing integrated teacher roles in moral and character formation (Judrah et al., 2024; Agung, 2021).

Teacher modelling was the first prominent strategy. The IRE teacher reported modelling punctuality, neatness, polite speech, greetings, respect for other teachers and students, cleanliness, and participation in congregational prayer. A Grade 4 student confirmed that the teacher regularly arrived on time, spoke politely, encouraged honesty and discipline, and participated in prayer with students. The evidence suggests that the teacher intentionally used visible behavior as an instructional medium. Students' reports that they became accustomed to greeting, speaking politely, and respecting teachers and peers indicate that modelling was experienced as behaviorally meaningful. This finding corresponds with the literature describing teachers as models whose conduct can become a reference point for students (Fauzi, 2023; Bhoki et al., 2025).

Religious habituation constituted an important component of the teacher's efforts to foster students' moral development. The teacher described daily routines including prayers before and after lessons, recitation of short Qur'anic chapters, congregational noon prayer, and greeting teachers. Students confirmed that these activities were conducted routinely and became familiar parts of the school day.(Alamsyah et al., 2026; Azzahro & Darmawan, 2026) The educational mechanism appears to be repetition combined with teacher participation rather than occasional religious events. Through repeated practice, religious values are connected to discipline, responsibility, and social courtesy. This interpretation is consistent with studies that connect Islamic Religious Education with character formation and the revitalization of religiously grounded character education (Sapitri & Maryati, 2022; Kamila, 2023).

Moral guidance was also reinforced through the provision of advice and motivation in students' everyday interactions. The teacher explained that advice was delivered in gentle and understandable language, especially concerning honesty, discipline, respect for parents and teachers, avoidance of harsh speech, and peaceful interaction. A Grade 5 student confirmed that the teacher frequently advised students to study diligently, avoid fighting, and respect parents and teachers. The findings indicate that advice was not limited to formal lesson content but was integrated into everyday correction and guidance. Motivation therefore functioned as a bridge between moral rules and students' personal awareness of their conduct. This is compatible with research emphasizing the IRE teacher's role in instilling moral and ethical values through guidance and encouragement (Parnawi & Ar Ridho, 2023; Sya'roni, 2022).

Continuous supervision of student behavior represented another significant dimension of the teacher's moral-development practices. The teacher reported monitoring students during lessons, recess, and religious activities and responding to mistakes through immediate guidance and coaching. A Grade 5 student confirmed that the teacher paid attention when students became noisy or violated rules. This pattern shows that moral expectations were reinforced in multiple school contexts rather than only during IRE lessons. Supervision also allowed the teacher to identify behavior at the moment it occurred, creating opportunities for immediate formative feedback. The finding supports the view that IRE teachers contribute to moral formation through continuous interaction and behavioral guidance (Judrah et al., 2024; Nordian, 2024).

The implementation of educational sanctions and rewards further reinforced the behavioral expectations established by the teacher. When students violated rules, the teacher reported using tasks such as memorizing a short Qur'anic chapter or cleaning the classroom, while students displaying good behavior could receive praise. A Grade 6

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student confirmed experiencing these practices and described praise as a response to positive behavior. The sanctions were therefore presented as educational rather than degrading or physically punitive. Their intended function was to help students recognize consequences, repair behavior, and remain motivated toward positive conduct. This finding is compatible with character-education approaches that emphasize reinforcement within a positive school culture (Abdullah & Lasri, 2024; Basri et al., 2024).

Ongoing behavioral evaluation provided a mechanism for monitoring students' moral development and determining the need for further guidance. The teacher evaluated students by observing everyday discipline, politeness, honesty, responsibility, and participation in religious activities. When a student continued to display problematic behavior, the teacher used additional advice and gradual coaching rather than treating a single incident as the final judgment. A Grade 6 student similarly reported that the teacher paid attention to speech, discipline, and relationships with peers and reminded students when mistakes occurred. Evaluation therefore functioned as an ongoing cycle of observation, feedback, and correction. This finding aligns with recent work emphasizing the importance of assessing attitudes and skills in IRE learning rather than limiting evaluation to cognitive achievement (Ramli et al., 2025).

Taken together, the six practices identified in this study can be understood as an integrated moral-development cycle rather than as six independent practices. Teacher modelling provides a visible behavioral standard, religious habituation provides repeated opportunities for practice, advice and motivation provide meaning and explanation, supervision enables immediate monitoring, educational consequences reinforce behavioral expectations, and evaluation identifies whether additional guidance is required. The sequence is not necessarily linear because teachers may move repeatedly among these practices according to students' needs and behavioral circumstances.(Bolat et al., 2025) This integrated pattern represents a central interpretive feature of the present case and illustrates how moral development is supported through mutually reinforcing educational practices. It also explains why the study does not attribute students' moral development to a single technique. The finding is broadly consistent with scholarship that conceptualizes character formation as a school-culture process involving multiple reinforcing practices (Abdullah & Lasri, 2024; Judrah et al., 2024).

The observed moral outcomes reported in the study included discipline, politeness, religiosity, responsibility, greeting behavior, respect for teachers and peers, and participation in religious activities. These outcomes were identified through observations and participant accounts rather than through standardized quantitative scales. The teacher perceived that students became more accustomed to polite speech, greetings, discipline, and respect. Students also described their participation in prayer and Qur'anic recitation as becoming routine. Such outcomes suggest that the strategies influenced observable school behavior, while the qualitative design does not permit a claim of causal effect size. The interpretation is therefore appropriately framed as an observed and reported contribution within the school context (Aziz et al., 2020; Kamila, 2023). The first major supporting factor was the teacher's own exemplary behavior. The teacher believed that students were more likely to imitate what they saw consistently than merely what they heard in verbal instruction. Students' statements reinforced this interpretation by describing the teacher's politeness, punctuality, greetings, discipline, and participation in prayer. The convergence between teacher and student accounts strengthens the credibility of this finding. It also indicates that teacher character is not simply a background variable but an active pedagogical resource. This finding

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corresponds with research on teacher modelling and positive school culture (Fauzi, 2023; Bhoki et al., 2025).

Table 1. Strategies, Supporting Factors, and Inhibiting Factors in Fostering Students' Moral Development

Theme	Empirical manifestation	Moral-development contribution
Teacher modelling	Punctuality, polite speech, greetings, cleanliness, respect, participation in prayer	Discipline, politeness, honesty, respect
Religious habituation	Prayer, short Qur'anic recitation, congregational prayer, greetings	Religiosity, discipline, responsibility
Advice and motivation	Gentle reminders about honesty, discipline, respect, avoiding fights/harsh speech	Moral awareness, positive motivation
Behavioral supervision	Monitoring during lessons, recess, and religious activities	Rule compliance, discipline, responsibility
Educational sanctions and rewards	Short-surah memorization, classroom cleaning, praise	Awareness of consequences, motivation
Behavioral evaluation	Observation of discipline, politeness, honesty, responsibility, religious participation	Continuous improvement and corrective guidance
Supporting factors	Teacher exemplary behavior; school religious activities	Consistency and reinforcement
Inhibiting factors	Limited parental attention; peer influence; unsupervised smartphone/social media	Discontinuity across home, peer, and digital contexts

Regular religious activities conducted within the school environment constituted an important institutional factor supporting students' moral development. The teacher identified prayer, short Qur'anic recitation, greetings, and Islamic commemorative activities as mechanisms for cultivating religious and moral habits. Students described participation in these routines and associated them with greater diligence in prayer, discipline, and efforts to behave well toward teachers and peers. These activities provide repeated occasions for values to be practiced collectively rather than taught only individually. The school environment thus reinforces the teacher's classroom guidance by creating consistent opportunities for students to enact religious and moral values in their daily interactions. This finding is consistent with literature connecting religious routines with character development in Islamic education (Sapitri & Maryati, 2022; Judrah et al., 2024).

Limited parental attention emerged as a significant contextual constraint on the continuity of students' moral development. The teacher reported that some parents were

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busy working and consequently had less opportunity to supervise children's behavior at home. A student similarly reported that parental attention was sometimes limited and that the student consequently spent more time playing or using a smartphone independently. The issue was not described as parental unwillingness in every case, but rather as a practical limitation in supervision and continuity between school-based and home-based moral guidance. This condition is important because moral expectations introduced at school require reinforcement across different social environments to develop into stable behavioral habits. The finding is consistent with research emphasizing the family as an important environment for children's character formation (Tamonob, 2025).

Peer interaction also emerged as a contextual influence that could challenge the consistency of students' moral development. The teacher explained that students could imitate peers' speech and behavior, including harsh language, poor discipline, and disruptive conduct. A Grade 5 student acknowledged sometimes following friends' behavior and copying ways of speaking or playing. The evidence indicates that peer influence operates through ordinary social interaction rather than only through major behavioral incidents. Such interaction presents a challenge for teachers because the behavioral norms promoted at school may encounter alternative behavioral models during play and other peer activities. This finding is consistent with recent research linking peer interaction with students' character development and social behavior (Aulia et al., 2024).

Unsupervised smartphone and social-media use represented another contextual challenge affecting the continuity of moral guidance. The teacher reported that some students encountered internet content containing inappropriate language or behavior and that such exposure could affect concentration and conduct. A student reported using a smartphone after school for short videos and games. The finding does not establish that smartphones inherently cause immoral behavior; rather, it identifies unsupervised digital exposure as a contextual concern reported by the research participants. This distinction is important because digital technology can also provide educational benefits when its use is appropriately guided and supervised. The finding therefore aligns with literature characterizing digital transformation as an environment that presents both educational opportunities and challenges for students' character development (Arbi & Amrullah, 2024).

The relationship among the three inhibiting factors is important for interpreting the case. Limited parental supervision may increase children's independent use of devices, while peer relationships and digital content can provide additional behavioral models. These environments can therefore create competing influences outside the teacher's direct control. The teacher's school-based strategies remain important, but their continuity depends on what students experience after leaving school. This indicates that moral education should be viewed as an ecological process involving school, family, peers, and digital environments. Such an interpretation is consistent with contemporary character-education perspectives that emphasize school culture and social context (Bhoki et al., 2025; Tamonob, 2025; Aulia et al., 2024).

The findings also indicate that the teacher's strategy is adaptive rather than purely procedural. When students display problematic behavior, the teacher may combine supervision, advice, consequences, and later evaluation. When students display positive behavior, praise and continued modelling reinforce the desired pattern. Religious routines provide a stable background against which these individual interventions occur. This flexibility is important because elementary students differ in maturity, social experience, and responsiveness to guidance. The pattern reflects the broader understanding of

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teachers as facilitators and motivators of student development (Ani, 2025; Parnawi & Ar Ridho, 2023).

From an Islamic educational perspective, the strategies reflect an integration of akhlak, worship, and social responsibility. The teacher does not treat prayer, Qur'anic recitation, discipline, cleanliness, honesty, and respect as unrelated objectives. Instead, religious activities are used as repeated contexts for cultivating conduct that is meaningful in interpersonal life. This integration is consistent with the view that IRE should support both understanding and application of Islamic teachings (Rasyidi, 2024). It also corresponds with scholarship that positions IRE as an important instrument for strengthening students' moral character (Kamila, 2023; Sapitri & Maryati, 2022). The case therefore illustrates how Islamic moral education can operate through everyday routines rather than solely through doctrinal explanation.

The findings have implications for the role of evaluation in moral education. Evaluation in this setting is not a separate examination at the end of instruction but a continuous observation of students' conduct. The teacher notices whether students are disciplined, polite, honest, responsible, and active in religious activities, then uses the observations to decide whether additional guidance is needed. This approach supports formative assessment because feedback is directly connected to subsequent action. It also recognizes that moral development may be gradual and uneven. Recent literature on assessment in IRE supports attention to attitudes and skills as dimensions of learning (Ramli et al., 2025).

The findings also contribute to the discussion of school culture. A teacher can model moral conduct, but the effect of modelling is strengthened when religious routines and behavioral expectations are shared across the school environment. The presence of prayer, Qur'anic recitation, greetings, and other religious practices creates a collective context in which individual guidance has institutional reinforcement. Positive school culture can therefore function as an extension of the teacher's moral pedagogy. This is consistent with research emphasizing the role of positive school culture in character formation (Abdullah & Lasri, 2024). The Kelayan Dalam 1 case illustrates this relationship at the level of everyday practice.

The study's novelty can be expressed as an integrated moral-development cycle grounded in a specific elementary-school context. Prior literature has discussed teacher modelling, religious habituation, moral advice, supervision, family involvement, peer influence, and digital environments, but the present case brings these dimensions together within one descriptive account. The teacher's strategies form the internal school mechanism, while family, peers, and digital media constitute external conditions affecting continuity. The resulting interpretation is that moral development is strongest when school practices are consistent and when external environments do not contradict them. This does not constitute a causal model or a quantitative effectiveness claim, but it provides a useful conceptual synthesis grounded in the field data. The synthesis extends the practical discussion of IRE teacher strategies by emphasizing continuity across contexts.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that moral education at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School is enacted through repeated interaction rather than through a single program. Teacher conduct, religious routines, advice, supervision, educational consequences, and evaluation operate together to shape students' daily behavioral expectations. Supporting conditions arise primarily from the teacher's exemplary conduct and the school's religious activities. Constraints arise from limited parental attention, peer

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influences, and unsupervised digital use. The study consequently points toward a collaborative model in which school-based IRE strategies are strengthened through family communication, positive peer culture, and responsible digital guidance. This conclusion is consistent with contemporary scholarship that treats character development as a shared educational responsibility (Tamonob, 2025; Arbi & Amrullah, 2024; Putri & Wiranata, 2025).

The table above shows that the strategies form a complementary system rather than a collection of unrelated activities. Modelling establishes the behavioral example, while habituation gives students repeated opportunities to practice the values represented by that example. Advice and motivation help students understand the moral meaning of behavior, especially after mistakes or conflicts. Supervision ensures that the teacher can respond when students depart from expectations. Educational sanctions and rewards reinforce behavioral boundaries, and evaluation provides feedback for the next cycle of guidance. This integrated reading is consistent with the broader literature on teacher roles and positive school culture (Judrah et al., 2024; Bhoki et al., 2025).

The centrality of modelling deserves particular attention because it makes moral education visible. A rule such as “be respectful” becomes concrete when the teacher consistently speaks politely, greets students, arrives on time, and respects colleagues. Students can observe the behavioral form of the value without requiring a lengthy explanation. This may be especially important for elementary learners whose moral learning is still strongly connected with concrete examples. The participant accounts in the source study support this interpretation because students explicitly referred to the teacher’s conduct when describing their own habits. The finding is aligned with research that positions teachers as models in character formation (Fauzi, 2023).

Habituation adds a temporal dimension to modelling. A single example may inspire students, but repeated practice creates opportunities for the behavior to become familiar and predictable. Daily prayers, short Qur’anic recitation, and greetings create recurring moments in which students rehearse religiously meaningful behavior. Such routines can also strengthen collective identity because students perform them together. The findings therefore suggest that religious habituation is most useful when it is consistent, participatory, and connected to interpersonal values. This interpretation is compatible with the literature on IRE and character revitalization (Sapitri & Maryati, 2022; Kamila, 2023).

Advice and motivation provide an interpretive layer that routines alone cannot provide. Students may perform a religious activity regularly without fully understanding how its values apply to friendship, discipline, or respect. The teacher’s verbal guidance helps connect religious practice with everyday moral decisions. The use of gentle and understandable language is also significant because moral correction can become counterproductive if students experience it as humiliation. The present case instead describes advice as a gradual process of reminding and coaching. This approach corresponds with scholarship that emphasizes teachers’ motivational and moral roles (Parnawi & Ar Ridho, 2023).

Supervision is especially relevant because students’ moral behavior changes across settings. A student may behave appropriately during a formal lesson but act differently during recess or peer interaction. The teacher’s reported monitoring across lessons, breaks, and religious activities therefore expands moral education beyond the classroom. Immediate reminders also allow students to connect a specific action with a moral expectation. Supervision in this sense is formative and preventive rather than

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simply disciplinary. This interpretation is compatible with contemporary discussions of IRE teachers' responsibilities in character development (Nordian, 2024; Judrah et al., 2024).

Educational consequences and praise should be interpreted within this broader cycle. The reported sanctions involve short Qur'anic memorization or classroom cleaning, while positive conduct may receive praise. These practices give immediate feedback and help students recognize behavioral boundaries. Their educational value, however, depends on proportionality and on continued explanation of the underlying moral principle. If used only as external control, they may produce compliance without deeper internalization. The source findings suggest that sanctions and rewards were embedded within advice, modelling, and evaluation, which gives them a more formative role (Basri et al., 2024).

The supporting factors show that institutional context matters. A teacher who models good behavior can influence students directly, but the effect is reinforced when the school provides regular religious activities. Such routines make the teacher's expectations visible at the collective level. Students also have opportunities to practice religious and social values with peers rather than only in individual interactions with the teacher. This creates a school culture that can support moral consistency. The pattern supports the argument that positive school culture is an important mechanism of character development (Abdullah & Lasri, 2024).

The inhibiting factors demonstrate the limits of school-only moral education. Teachers cannot directly control the amount of parental supervision available at home, the behavior of every peer group, or every digital message a child encounters. When external contexts provide conflicting behavioral models, students may experience inconsistent expectations. The appropriate response is therefore not to abandon school strategies but to strengthen communication and continuity across environments. Family engagement, peer-oriented programs, and digital-literacy guidance can complement IRE strategies. This ecological interpretation is supported by research on family character formation, peer interaction, and digital transformation (Tamonob, 2025; Aulia et al., 2024; Arbi & Amrullah, 2024).

The findings also suggest that moral development should be treated as developmental and process-oriented. Students do not necessarily adopt every value immediately, and the same student may display different levels of discipline across situations. Continuous observation allows teachers to recognize gradual improvement and persistent difficulties. This is why evaluation should be linked to subsequent guidance rather than treated only as a final judgment. Such a process is consistent with formative approaches to assessment and student development (Ramli et al., 2025). The Kelayan Dalam 1 case therefore illustrates the practical value of repeated moral feedback.

Taken together, the discussion suggests a practical framework for elementary IRE moral education: model the value, habituate the practice, explain the meaning, monitor the behavior, respond educationally, and evaluate continuously. The framework should operate within a supportive school culture and be reinforced through communication with families. Peer environments should be considered because students learn moral behavior through social interaction. Digital environments should also be incorporated into contemporary moral guidance rather than treated as entirely separate from education. This framework is an interpretation of the present qualitative case and should be tested further in different schools and with broader samples. Its value lies in connecting established

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moral-education practices into a context-sensitive cycle grounded in the lived experience of an elementary school.

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Conclusion

The study concludes that Islamic Religious Education teacher strategies at Kelayan Dalam 1 Public Elementary School operate through an interconnected set of practices consisting of modelling, religious habituation, advice and motivation, behavioral supervision, educational sanctions and rewards, and continuous evaluation. These practices were associated in participant accounts with discipline, politeness, religiosity, responsibility, respect, and positive everyday conduct. The main supporting conditions were the teacher's exemplary behavior and the availability of regular religious activities at school. The main constraints were limited parental attention, peer-environment influence, and unsupervised smartphone and social-media use. The findings therefore portray moral development as a continuous educational process rather than a one-time classroom intervention. The principal contribution of the study is an integrated interpretation of moral education as a cycle in which visible modelling is reinforced through repeated religious practice, clarified through advice, monitored through supervision, strengthened through educational consequences, and reviewed through ongoing evaluation. The sustainability of this cycle depends on continuity beyond school, especially in the family, peer environment, and digital space. For practice, schools can strengthen communication with parents, cultivate positive peer culture, and incorporate responsible digital behavior into moral guidance. Because this is a descriptive qualitative case involving a small group of participants, the findings should be understood as context-specific rather than statistically generalizable. Future research can examine the framework across multiple elementary schools and combine qualitative evidence with longitudinal or mixed-method designs.

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