

# Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Efforts to Improve Learning Achievement of Junior High School Students

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## Abstract

This research aims to describe what efforts have been made to improve student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The primary data sources in this research are the principal, deputy principal, and Islamic religious education teacher. From the results of the research carried out in this study, PAI teachers' efforts to improve student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan include, among other things, providing motivation, varied strategies, and methods appropriate to the situation and conditions as well as media that is interesting and appropriate to the material. In the PAI teacher's efforts, there are several obstacles, including students with low abilities, limited supervision, and a lack of student awareness of the importance of learning. The solutions to these obstacles include the school providing exceptional guidance to students with low abilities; there is cooperation between parents and the school to provide supervision and raise students' awareness of the importance of learning.

**Keywords:** Learning achievement, islamic religious education, motivation, student, teacher



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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic religious education is a conscious, purposeful, systematic, and directed effort to change knowledge, behavior, or attitudes that align with Islam's teachings. Religious education in Islam is an endeavor that takes the shape of guidance and care for students to ensure that once they have completed their education, they can comprehend and practice the teachings of the Islamic faith and ultimately make it a way of life (Daradjat, 2002). Teachers of the PAI are trained professionals who are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that students and members of the community have a comprehensive comprehension of Islamic religious content (Daulay, 2022).

One interpretation of Islamic religious education is that it is the purposeful guiding of educators towards the physical and spiritual growth of pupils, to form a personality that is both good and leading (Zuhairini & Ghofir, 2003). Islamic religious education requires students with a strong faith foundation and devotion to Allah. Faith is a spiritual potential that must be actualized through pious deeds, resulting in achievements called piety. Enhancing the professional capabilities of educators is a necessary step that must be performed to realize the goal of providing quality education. To begin, educators who specialize in Islamic religious education (Agustina & Alban, 2024).

One of the problems faced is the inability of students to follow and understand the subject matter, especially Islamic Religious Education taught by their teachers (Utami et al., 2023). Talking about education cannot be separated from the role of the teacher. Teachers are professionals who understand philosophical and conceptual matters and must know technical issues, especially concerning implementing learning management in the classroom.

The management and implementation of teaching and learning activities are significant (Sardiman, 2004). In teacher education it is known that teacher education is based on competency with ten teacher competencies, which are the basic ability profile for a teacher, specifically, mastering materials, managing teaching and learning programs, working with classes, using media or resources, understanding educational foundations, and managing connections between teaching and learning. The evaluation of the academic accomplishments of students for instruction, the familiarity with the activities and programs of guidance and counseling services, the familiarity with and administration of school administration, and the comprehension of the principles and findings of educational research for instruction are all included.

A teacher needs to know and master various teaching and learning methods and strategies used in teaching and learning activities. The position of the teacher is very significant in education as a facilitator and guide. Teachers have a more difficult task, not only holding the function of transferring knowledge, but teachers must be able to facilitate their forging and development. Moreover, the educational orientation has changed from teacher-centered to student-centered, accompanied by intensive guidance. Therefore, teachers must be more creative, effective, selective, and proactive in accommodating students' needs. Teachers are also more sensitive to the physical and psychological characteristics of students. In all educational activities at the operational level, teachers determine success through their operational, institutional, instructional, and expressive performance (Surya, 2003). This is where the critical role of teachers in education.

In the PAI teaching and learning process, it is hoped that changes will occur in children, both in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. These three aspects are expected to influence students' behavior, where ultimately, the way of thinking, feeling, and doing things will become relatively permanent and form better behavioral habits based on religious education.

The problem often encountered in the learning process, especially PAI subjects, is how to present material to students well so that effective and efficient results are obtained. Apart from that, another problem often found is the teacher's lack of attention in managing the classroom effectively and efficiently, so that the learning objectives cannot or cannot be maximally accepted by students.

In this study, researchers chose schools as research locations because schools have a strategic role in meeting the needs for knowledge of the general public and religious knowledge simultaneously amidst the current moral degradation. Parents' hopes that their sons and daughters obtain religious and general knowledge in a balanced manner also influence their views on school. A good relationship between the school and parents of students must continue to be maintained because parental support can positively advance the quality of growth and development of students, as has been attempted by SMPN 1 Grobogan.

There are several objectives that researchers want to achieve in this research, including: (1) Describe what efforts PAI subject teachers have made to improve student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan. (2) To determine the factors that hinder and support teachers' efforts to improve student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan. (3) Describe the PAI subject teacher's solution to overcome inhibiting factors in improving student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan.

## **METHOD**

By the research focus, this type of research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. This research was carried out at SMPN 1 Grobogan. Qualitative research is a comprehensive research concept to reveal the secrets of something, carried out by collecting data in appropriate conditions, so that it does not lose its scientific nature (Nawawi & Martini, 1994). Qualitative research uses natural settings to interpret events that take place. It accomplishes this by utilizing a variety of well-established procedures (Moleong, 2005).

In the field of research, qualitative research is a method that generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observable behavior during the research process (Margono, 2000). Qualitative research is descriptive, namely data collected in the form of images, written or spoken words from people, and observable behavior and not in the form of numbers or statistical data (Moleong, 2005).

The researcher himself was the instrument used to collect data. Researchers as key instruments or main research tools (Moleong, 2005). Natural seekers in data collection rely more on the researcher as a data collection tool. This means that research must be able to reveal meaning and interact with local values, which cannot be done with questionnaires, questionnaires, or anything else. Therefore, the presence of researchers at the research location is

necessary to the principles of qualitative research, namely that researchers must create a good relationship with the research subjects.

A good relationship between researchers and research subjects is created from the initial assessment of the research setting, during the research, especially in collecting data in the field. Good relationships between researchers and research subjects are built in the form of mutual guarantees of trust and understanding so that the necessary data can be obtained entirely and, as far as possible, avoid things that could be detrimental to the information.

This research was conducted at SMPN 1 Grobogan, Jalan Terminal Regional Air Sebakul, Pekan Saturday Village, Selebar District, Bengkulu City. The data source in research is the subject from which it can be obtained. According to the source provided, research data may be divided into primary and secondary. To gather information primary data refers to information collected directly from research participants by using measuring equipment or data-collecting technologies that are directly on the subjects themselves. On the other hand, secondary data refers to information collected through third parties and not directly gathered by researchers from the people who are the objects of their research (Azwar, 2009). Secondary data in this research was obtained through documents issued by the institution under study, such as reports.

The primary data source in qualitative research is the words or actions of observed or interviewed people. The rest is additional data, such as documents and others (Moleong, 2005). The data source in the form of words in this research was obtained through interviews with people who could be trusted to validate the information, such as school principals, PAI teachers, and vice principals. Meanwhile, the data source is in the form of actions obtained by researchers by directly observing the learning process at SMPN 1 Grobogan.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **PAI Teachers' Efforts to Improve the Quality of Student Learning Achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan**

To enhance the effectiveness of PAI teachers, they should cultivate the capacity to articulate and actualize their cognitive abilities to generate novel and distinctive ideas or to integrate existing concepts into new forms that are more captivating. According to Hamzah, teaching is a specialized career that requires specific abilities and can only be performed by those within the area of education (Uno, 2008).

The learning process determines whether students successfully understand the subject matter; it is proven that during learning, the teacher combines something that already exists, such as media, into something more interesting so that students pay attention while learning. PAI teachers' efforts to improve student learning achievement are as follows:

#### ***Motivating students***

Students' motivation to learn is essential for development and successful learning outcomes (Edwards et al., 2024; Kubsch et al., 2023). According to Uzer Usman, there are two types of motivation: motivation from within a person (intrinsic motivation) and from outside (extrinsic motivation). Intrinsic motivation can be created by encouraging and stimulating feelings of

curiosity, trying new things, and the desire to progress. In learning, extrinsic motivation can be achieved through other stuff outside the student. Providing external motivation to students can be done by offering rewards, for example, through praise, prizes, or punishment (Usman, 2008).

According to Mulyasa (2007), learning motivation can be seen from the characteristics of student behavior, which include interest, attention, activity, and participation of students in the teaching and learning process. Students who are motivated to learn will develop great interest and full attention in the learning process. In that way, students' learning motivation can be interpreted by the theories of these experts. This is where the role of PAI teachers is needed to form students who excel.

### *Using varied learning strategies*

Learning strategies are different ways to improve the learning achievements (Wu et al., 2021) of other students under various conditions. Learning strategies are used according to the conditions and situations of students when the learning process takes place in the classroom.

### *Use learning methods that are appropriate to the situation and conditions of students*

The aim of using appropriate methods in education, according to Arifin, is to obtain effectiveness from the use of the process itself (Arifin, 2003). When a teacher uses a particular method, it is considered appropriate and effective. If the students feel happy and not burdened, interest and attention arise to be more active in the learning process.

### *Using engaging learning media according to the learning material*

Learning media also determines whether the teacher is successful in the learning process. If learning achievement increases, it indicates that the learning process is successful and can attract students' interest in paying attention to the material taught in class.

Teachers are required to find out how students should learn continuously. So, if a student fails, the teacher is called to find the cause and look for a solution with the student, not ignore it or even blame it (Kunandar, 2009). The teacher always introduces himself and is willing to send his teacher. I want to learn by taking the time to become a teacher. A teacher who is not ready to learn cannot possibly be at home and proud to be a teacher. Hard work and pride in one's teaching are steps towards becoming a professional teacher so that PAI teachers' efforts to improve students' learning achievements will increase

## **Inhibiting and Supporting Factors for PAI Teachers' Efforts in Improving the Quality of Student Learning Achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan**

The inhibiting factors for PAI teachers' efforts to improve the quality of learning achievement of students at SMPN 1 Grobogan are:

1. There are students whose abilities are lower than others. Students with lower abilities. In this situation, the teacher must provide unique training for these students because these students include students who experience learning difficulties.

2. Limited supervision from the school to supervise students, because at home, it is the responsibility of the parents,
3. There is a lack of awareness among students about the importance of learning so that they obey the rules when they are at school. When they leave the school environment, they are free to play with technology, so students' learning achievement decreases.

Supporting factors for PAI teachers in improving the quality of student learning achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan, 1) The use of computer/laptop media helps make learning easier for students and makes teaching easier for educators, 2) Provides more real experience, 3) attracts attention and students' interest in learning, 4) All students' senses can be activated, 5) The length of teaching time required can be shortened.

### **PAI Teacher Solutions for Overcoming Inhibiting Factors in Improving the Quality of Student Learning Achievement at SMPN 1 Grobogan**

The PAI teacher's solution in improving the quality of learning achievement of students at SMPN 1 Grobogan is:

*The school provides unique guidance to students, which is carried out during breaks in the prayer room*

In determining alternative solutions to problems with students' learning difficulties, teachers are recommended first to identify phenomena that indicate the possibility of learning difficulties affecting students. In diagnosing students' learning difficulties, it is necessary to take steps as follows the procedure from Weener and Senf, quoted by Winarni, quoted by Muhibin Syah as follows:

1. Conduct classroom observations to see students' deviant behavior while participating in learning
2. Check students' eyesight and hearing, especially those suspected of having learning difficulties
3. Interview the student's parents to discover things in the student's family that might cause learning difficulties.
4. Providing diagnostic tests in specific skill areas to determine the nature of learning difficulties experienced by students.
5. Give IQ tests, especially to students suspected of having learning difficulties.

The steps mentioned above can generally be carried out easily by teachers except for IQ tests. For IQ testing purposes, parents and teachers can contact a psychology clinic. That's where you will find students who are far below average or brilliant and talented children, which affects learning difficulties and students' learning achievement.

*There is cooperation from parents and schools to provide supervision, hoping students will improve their learning achievements*

Collaboration between parents and the school to provide supervision is very important, considering that in this information era, students are faced with situations surrounded by

technology; there are televisions, laptops, gadgets, and internet cafes, all of which attract students to be involved with technology at all times.

*Raising students' awareness so that they like reading subject books rather than watching television, gadgets or going to internet cafes*

To raise students' awareness that they like reading, it must be fostered (Kammerer et al., 2016), and for the first time, it must be forced, which will then become a positive habit so that students' learning achievements will increase; similarly, Masnur stated that an environment that creates motivation, learning motivation will also change. Likewise, if the environment that influences the students disappears, then the students' motivation will also disappear. However, motivation from the external environment can be firmly and firmly embedded in students so that what was previously motivation from the outside eventually becomes motivation from within.

## CONCLUSION

PAI teachers at SMPN 1 Grobogan diligently strive to enhance student learning outcomes through various means. Firstly, they bolster motivation among students, fostering a conducive environment for active engagement. Secondly, they employ diverse and dynamic teaching strategies tailored to students' needs, ensuring a multifaceted approach to learning. Moreover, these educators adapt teaching methods to suit their students' unique circumstances and capabilities while integrating captivating learning resources that align with the curriculum. Despite these commendable efforts, several obstacles impede their endeavors.

The challenges PAI teachers face in elevating student learning achievements at SMPN 1 Grobogan are multifaceted. Among these obstacles are students with varying levels of academic proficiency, limited oversight from the school administration, and a lack of awareness among students regarding the importance of their studies. These impediments hinder the realization of optimal learning outcomes, necessitating concerted efforts to overcome them through collaborative solutions and strategic interventions.

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