



## The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Developing Akhlakul Karimah among Elementary School Students

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Islamic education teachers in developing *akhlakul karimah* among elementary school students through religious programs. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected from 35 permanent teachers at Amaliah Elementary School, Bogor, Indonesia, through open-ended questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The data were analyzed thematically with the support of NVivo 12 software. The findings showed that teachers serve as facilitators, motivators, educators, role models, guides, and evaluators in strengthening students' moral character. Their contributions occur both inside and outside the classroom through moral instruction, advice, storytelling, supervision, and exemplary behavior. Religious programs positively influence students' attitudes, worship practices, discipline, respect, politeness, and social behavior.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of teachers is very important in developing morals in elementary school students. Therefore, teachers need sufficient knowledge and skills in this matter. Some teachers may not have a good understanding of religion and morals, so they are unable to teach and guide students well (Ahmad and Kasim, 2020). As educators, teachers have an important role in shaping students' character and morals. Thus, they become better (Ahmad and Hehsan, 2022). Teachers must provide good examples and role models in everyday life, as well as teach moral and ethical values that are important for the formation of students' personalities (Efendi et al., 2022; Alamsyah and Nuralan, 2020).

In order for moral development to run well, understanding and consistency are needed from all parties concerned, including educators, teaching staff, students, and parents. Schools must have a vision, mission, programs, and facilities that support the development of student morals. Implementation of *akhlakul karimah* development involves all components, including educators, teaching staff, students, and student guardians. Students get sufficient opportunities to carry out development through familiarization with character values in the school environment and culture, especially in moral development through religious programs. Religious programs in schools are a means that can influence student morals (Rizqa et al., 2021; Erwan et al., 2023).

Religious programs are a comprehensive value education method because they involve instilling values, providing role models, and preparing the younger generation to be independent in making responsible moral decisions and other life skills. Therefore, introducing religious culture in schools is one way to strengthen the internalization of religious values in students. Teachers have an important role in providing appropriate habituation and teaching about moral and religious values that are in accordance with Islamic life (Safitri, 2019). Apart from that, to instill good morals in students, efforts are needed to create a religious environment; one way is through programs to strengthen religious activities.

There is much research on the role of teachers in improving morals. The role of Islamic religious education teachers is very important in improving students' morals (Prasetiya and Halili, 2022). Not only for normal students, but also the role of teachers is very important for children with special needs (autism) (Utari et al., 2020). Being a role model of discipline, attention, and firmness is one form of the teacher's role in improving students' morals. Apart from that, teachers providing motivation and regularly following class rules are ways that teachers can use to improve students' morals (Mujiono and Bahruddin, 2022; Fadhillah, 2020; Faishol et al., 2021; Laitupa, 2021).

There is a relationship between character traits such as good morals and sustainability (Jordan et al., 2023). Increasing understanding about the importance of values or morals can be done if someone has knowledge about the importance of social values, not only about religious knowledge (O'Siochru et al., 2023). Another review states that mindfulness has an impact on behavior related to morals (Stenmark and Van Ittersum, 2025). This shows the important role of teachers in increasing students' awareness of behaving in accordance with morals and sustainable social values.

The role of teachers is very important in forming students' morals; besides that, teachers can directly help students to form morals through example, motivation, and discipline. There has been a lot of previous research on the role of teachers in shaping students' morals, but it has not comprehensively studied how teachers do what is possible in forming morals, what

forms of students' morals are formed, and how schools and parents also collaborate in efforts to shape students' morals. This gap is the focus of this research.

This study aims to examine the role of teachers in religious programs for developing *akhlakul karimah* among elementary school students. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. The novelty of this research lies in three main aspects: (i) identifying the roles of teachers in improving students' morals, particularly as role models, motivators, and mentors; (ii) examining how these roles are carried out both inside and outside the classroom, where teachers serve as figures to be followed and emulated by students; and (iii) highlighting the importance of school-parent collaboration through religious programs in developing students' morals. The findings of this study emphasize that the role of Islamic religious education teachers must be optimized, particularly in efforts to improve students' *akhlakul karimah*.

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1. Research Design

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study method. A qualitative method is commonly used to examine natural objects or phenomena, with the researcher serving as the key instrument. Data collection is conducted through triangulation, data analysis is inductive, and the research findings emphasize meaning (Gunadi and Suherman, 2021; Suherman et al., 2025). A qualitative case study approach was used to explore in depth the role of Islamic religious education teachers in improving students' morals. The participants in this study were 35 permanent teachers (ST) at Amaliah Elementary School, Bogor, Indonesia. The school was selected because it integrates the value of monotheism as a guiding principle in its educational activities. The criteria for selecting the participants were permanent teachers who had been assigned by the school to participate in religious programs. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who met these criteria. Online questionnaires were then distributed to the selected teachers through Google Forms. **Table 1** presents the participants' profiles.

**Table 1.** Profile of participants.

	FREQUENCY	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	12	34.29
Female	23	65.71
<b>Age</b>		
41-60 years	7	20.00
31-40 years	10	28.57
20-30 years	18	51.43
<b>Educational Level</b>		
S1	33	94.29
S2	2	5.71
S3	0	0

## 2.2. Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in two stages. First, data were collected through an online survey using Google Forms. The survey contained open-ended questions about the role of teachers in religious programs. Second, data were collected through in-depth interviews to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding their roles in religious programs.

The questions were developed based on a literature review relevant to the research objectives. Data were collected from January to April 2023 and involved all selected respondents. The research instrument consisted of 13 open-ended essay questions distributed through Google Forms. These questions asked respondents to describe their understanding and concrete experiences regarding the role of teachers in shaping students' morals, both inside and outside the classroom.

The framework for examining the role of teachers in this study focused on three main aspects:

- (i) The role of Islamic religious education teachers;
- (ii) Teachers' contributions to moral development inside and outside the classroom; and
- (iii) Supporting and inhibiting factors affecting teachers' roles.

The moral development framework focused on the formation of student characteristics such as gratitude, piety, generosity, discipline, respect, improved worship quality, forgiveness, politeness, courtesy, and friendliness.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

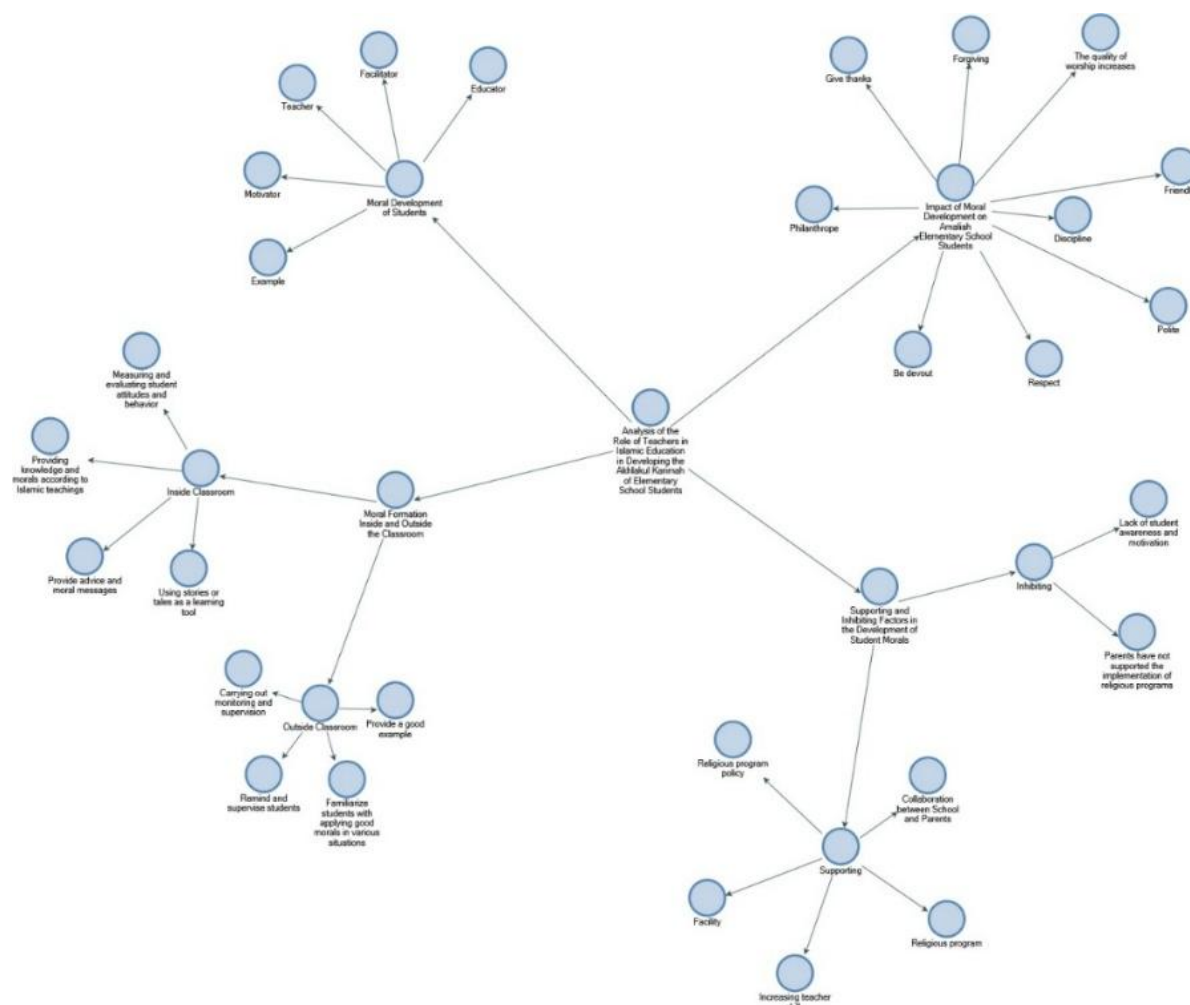
The data in this study were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis technique used to identify, examine, and interpret patterns of meaning within the data in order to generate themes (Braun and Clarke, 2023; Finlay, 2021). The analysis was conducted through several stages: data reduction, data display, and data verification.

During the data reduction stage, the responses from questionnaires and interviews were organized, reviewed, and coded. An inductive coding approach was applied, allowing themes to emerge directly from the data rather than from predetermined categories. The coded data were then grouped into relevant themes and displayed to support interpretation. Finally, data verification was conducted by reviewing the consistency of the themes with the research objectives and the participants' responses. NVivo 12 software was used to assist the coding process and organize the qualitative data systematically.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thematic analysis illustrates four main themes, namely:

- (i) The role of Islamic religious education teachers.
- (ii) The teacher's contribution to the formation of morals inside and outside the classroom.
- (iii) Supporting and inhibiting factors for the role of teachers.
- (iv) The impact of religious programs in developing the *akhlakul karimah* student. All findings are summarized in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1.** The main themes of thematic analysis (use Nvivo 12).

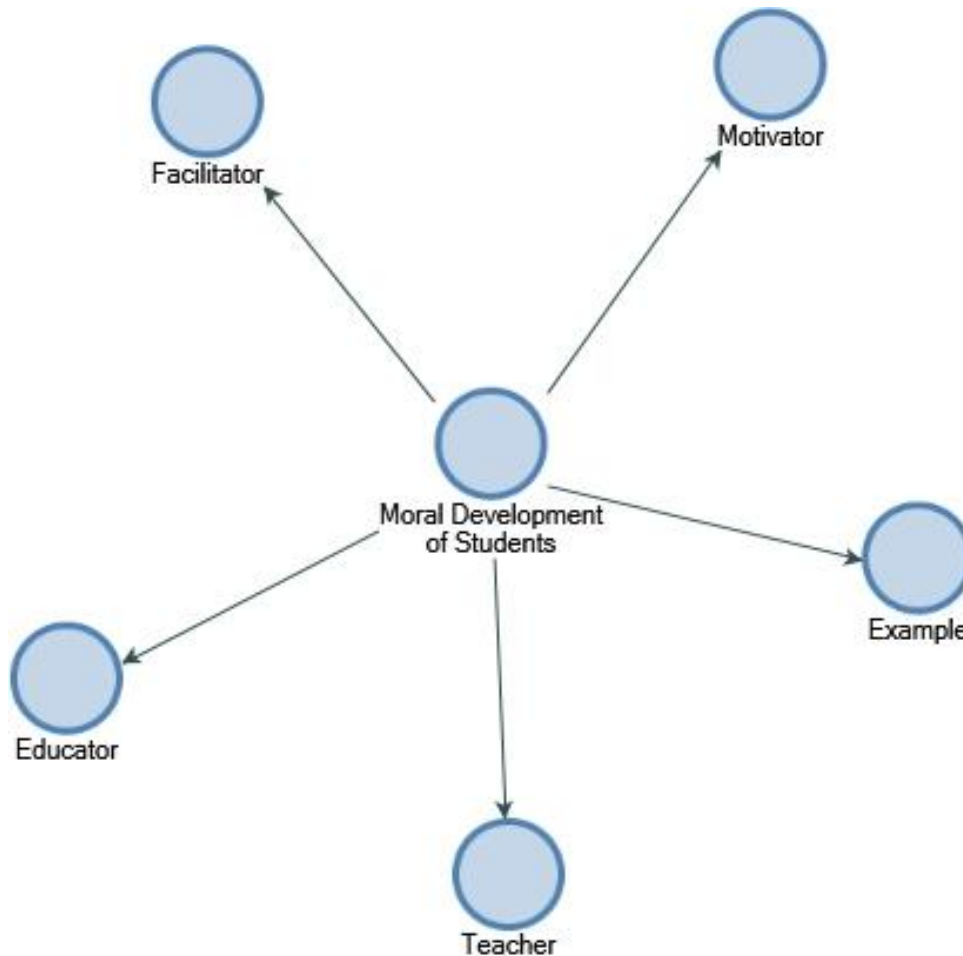
### 3.1. The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers for Developing the *Akhlakul Karimah*

The role of teachers has been identified and carefully studied. This research provides in-depth insight into the important roles that teachers must play in religious programs. Thus, they can make a significant contribution to the formation of student morals. The following are the types of teacher roles in religious programs in moral development (see **Figure 2**). The role of the teacher is not only as an educator; the role of the teacher in this religious program is as a facilitator, motivator, teacher, example (role model), educator, and evaluator. Several ST explained this opinion, namely:

*...because I teach plus material, the teacher's duties are many, such as providing religious material and facilitating students to memorize the Qur'an, hadith, and daily prayers.*

*...Teachers apply an achievement star system, so for example, if their child is often diligent and disciplined, the student is given an achievement star, but if the student is naughty or undisciplined, then their achievement star is reduced, so that at the end of the semester, there is an evaluation of the achievement star. The student who gets the most achievement stars will be given an award.*

*The teacher's responsibility is not only to educate and teach, but also to provide an understanding of morals and religion, to guide students so they can do things both at school and at home...*

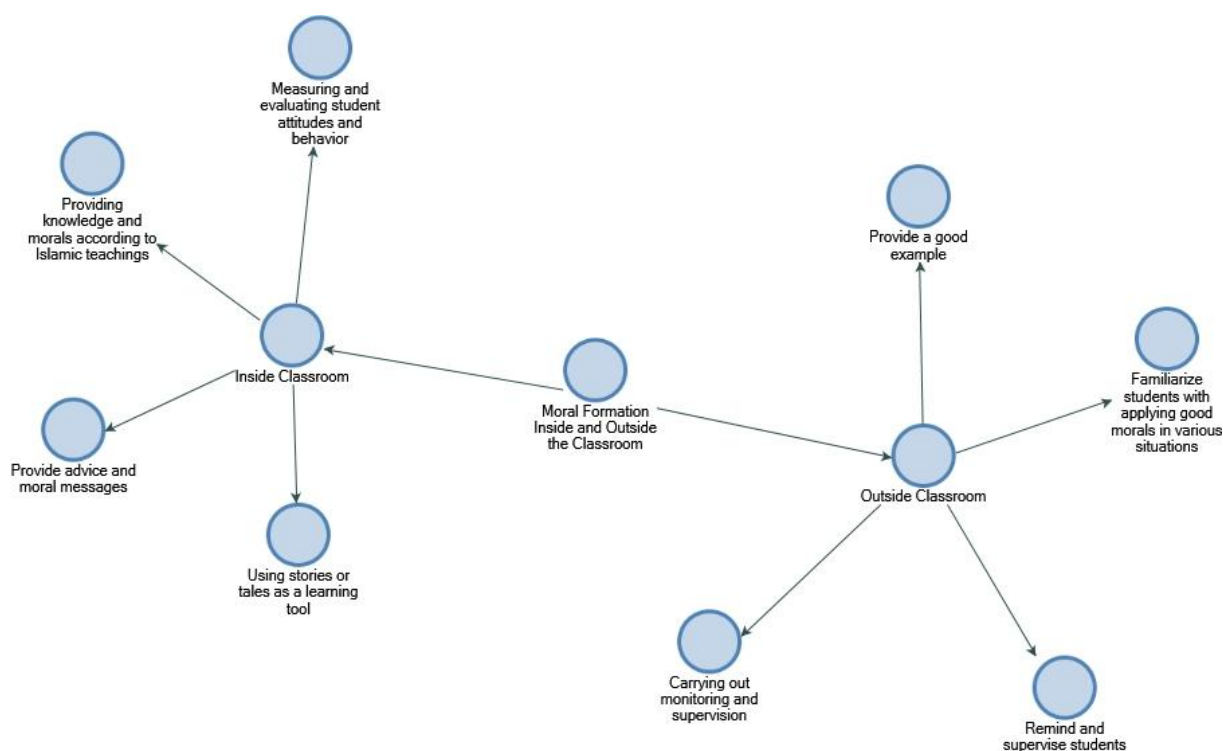


**Figure 2.** The role of teachers in religious programs in developing student morals.

Schools have the authority to design and implement school programs that are adapted to the conditions around the school, the characteristics of students, and available resources (Almafahir and Alpiansyah, 2021). Amaliah Elementary School designs a religious program to develop students' morals. A religious program is a series of activities to create an atmosphere of diversity or a process of internalizing the values of religious education (Islam) in a social community, in this case, the school environment (Ali, 2020).

### 3.2. The Teacher's Contribution to the Formation of Morals Inside and Outside the Classroom

Teachers have a very important role in forming students' morals, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers spend quite a long time with students while at school. During this time, teachers have the opportunity to form close relationships with students and understand students' needs and character in fostering student morals. Teachers can use this time to provide guidance, discuss values, and model expected behavior. Based on the research results, the teacher's contribution to forming morals in the classroom and outside the classroom is shown below (see **Figure 3**).



**Figure 3.** Contribution of teachers in the formation of morals inside and outside the classroom (use Nvivo 12).

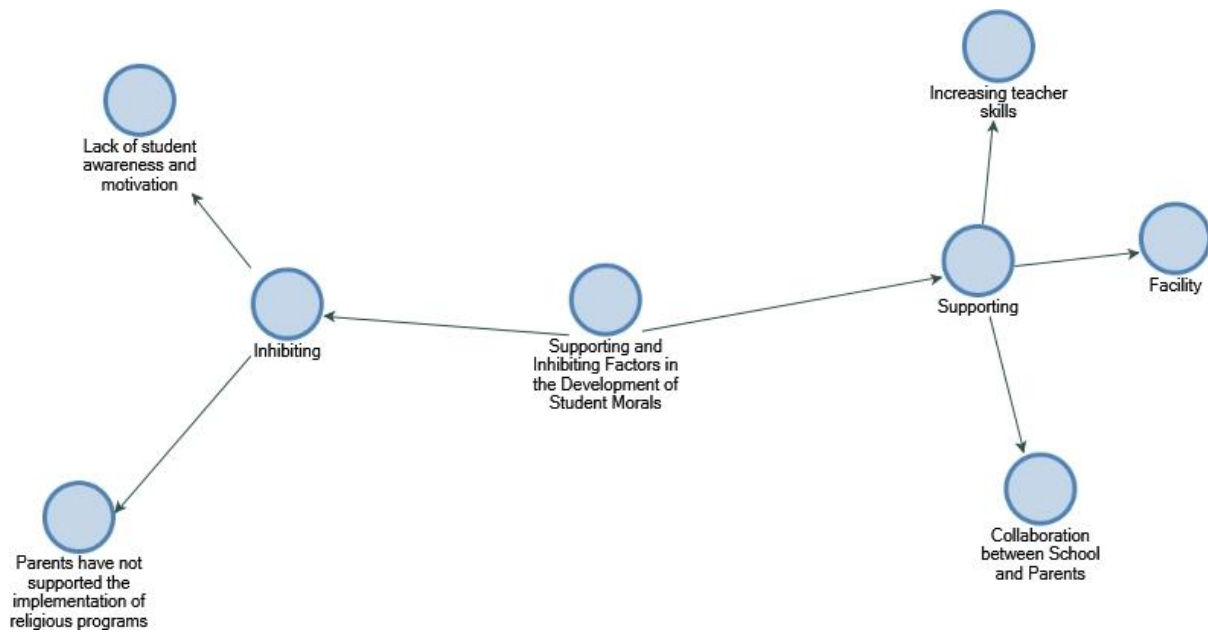
In the classroom, the teacher's contribution is providing knowledge and teaching morals according to the teachings of the Islamic religion, providing moral advice and messages to students, and using stories or narratives as a means of learning, especially in religious programs. Meanwhile, the teacher's contribution to the formation of morals outside the classroom is that the teacher monitors and supervises students, the teacher reminds and supervises students, and the teacher provides a good example for students. Several STs explain this opinion:

*Apart from being a model, teachers can shape students' morals by telling the story of a child's example to their parents and people around them, or vice versa.*

Measuring students' behavior by reprimanding them when they make mistakes is one of the ways I use to instill good morals. That's very important, because sometimes they don't behave well towards their teachers and friends. This is a form of awareness for teachers.

### 3.3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Developing Student *Akhlakul Karimah*

Developing students' morals through religious programs is an important task for teachers in the educational context. However, in its implementation, there are supporting and inhibiting factors that can influence the role of teachers in religious programs to develop student morals, especially Amaliah Elementary School students. In this research, various relevant supporting and inhibiting factors have been carefully analyzed. Based on the research, there are supporting and inhibiting factors, namely increasing teacher skills, facility, and collaboration between school and parents (see **Figure 4**).



**Figure 4.** Supporting and inhibiting factors for developing student for getting *akhlakul karimah* (use Nvivo 12).

**Figure 4** shows the supporting and inhibiting factors for the role of teachers in religious programs in developing student morals. Supporting factors for religious programs in developing students' morals are facilities, infrastructure, religious program policies, increased teacher skills, structured religious programs, and cooperation between the school and parents. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors in the role of teachers in religious programs in developing students are that some parents do not fully support the implementation of religious programs, and a lack of awareness and motivation among students. Several STs explain this opinion:

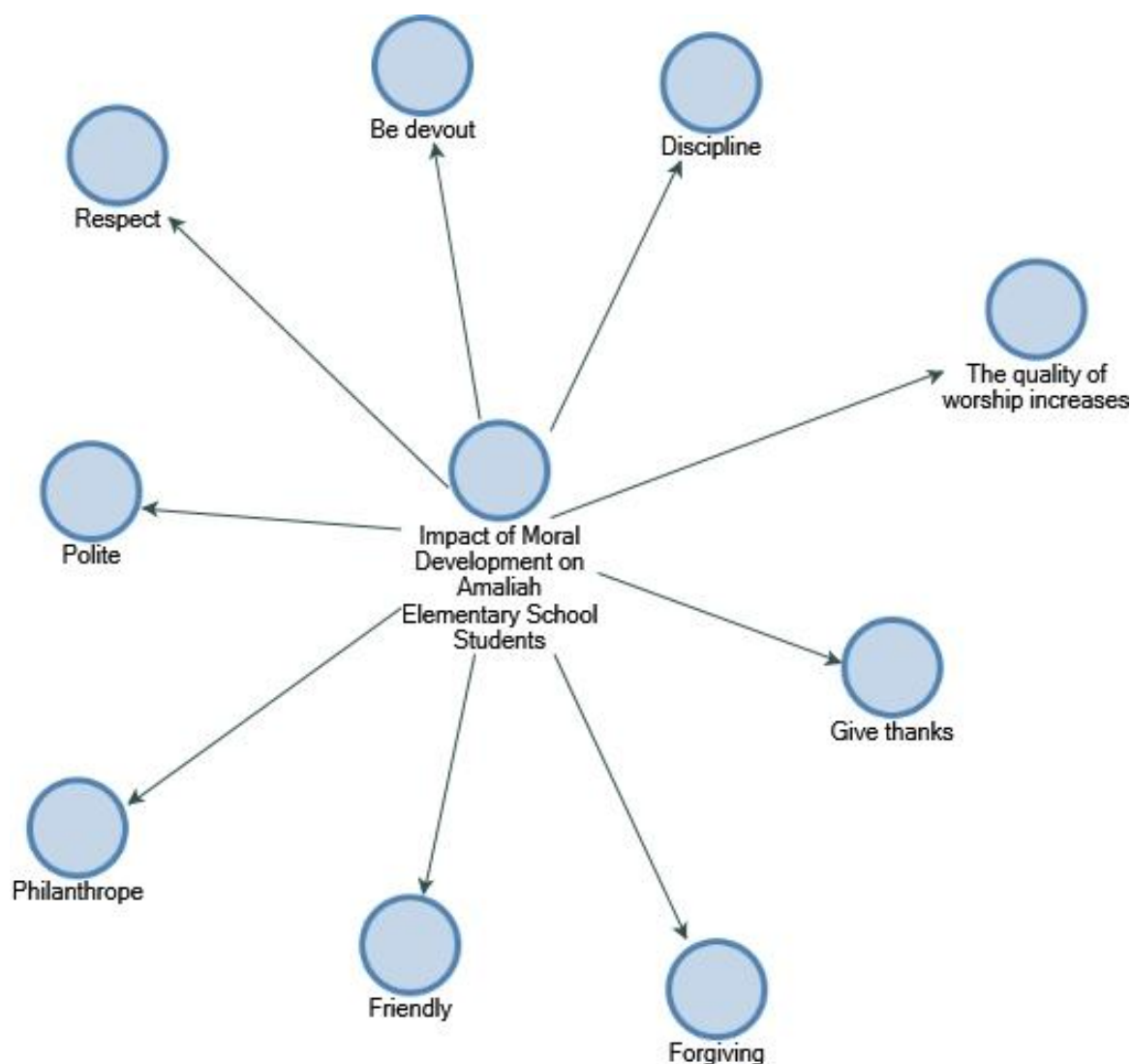
*...Teacher development from the Foundation is an important factor in improving teachers' abilities in guiding students...*

*...Weekly meetings are held to discuss student problems and the role of parents. After these meetings, we as teachers get information about what needs to be improved and corrected.*

*... some parents don't care about religious programs at school, so that becomes an inhibiting factor in implementing religion.*

### 3.4. The Impact of Religious Programs on Developing the Morals of Amaliah Elementary School Students

Religious programs have a very important role in developing students' morals, especially at Amaliah Elementary School. In this research, we explore the impact of religious programs on developing students' morals at Amaliah Elementary School. Based on the research results, after students participated in the religious program, there was a positive impact resulting from the religious program in developing the morals of Amaliah Elementary School students, including positive changes in students' behavior, attitudes, and moral values, as well as increasing understanding and application of religious values in life. Daily. The impact of religious programs on developing students' morals can be seen in **Figure 5**.



**Figure 5.** The impact of religious programs on the morals of Amaliah Elementary School students.

### 3.5. Analysis

#### 3.5.1. The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers

Teachers have an important role in education in schools. The main role is to improve students' morals, character, and behavior while at school and outside of school. The role of Islamic religious education teachers is very important in improving students' morals (Prasetya and Halili, 2020). Not only for normal students, but also the role of teachers is very important for children with special needs (autism) (Utari et al., 2020). Being a role model of discipline, attention, and firmness is one form of the teacher's role in improving students' morals. Apart from that, teachers providing motivation and regularly following class rules are ways that teachers can use to improve students' morals (Mujiono and Bahruddin, 2022; Fadhillah, 2020; Faishol et al., 2021; Laitupa, 2021). However, the role of the teacher is not the only determining factor in improving morals. The relationship between teachers and students encourages psychological and emotional growth (Ismail et al., 2024). There are still other factors that can determine whether a student's morals can improve or not. These factors include the attention of parents and schools, internal students, social environment, peers, and

other external factors. This picture shows the internal and external contributions of students, which influence the improvement of student character (*akhlakul karimah*).

### 3.5.2. The Teacher's Contribution to the Formation of Morals

The teacher's contribution to building student behavior as a reflection of morals is very large. Students imitate teachers in behaving and speaking, dressing, and interacting with other people (Susilowati et al., 2021; Susilawati et al., 2022). Thus, a very popular term emerged in Indonesia regarding the role of teachers, namely "being imitated and imitated". The teacher's perfection is reflected in his behavior and words, which are followed by the students. Thus, the supervision of the school principal becomes important in efforts to develop the quality of teachers in accordance with expectations (Suherman et al., 2023a).

A study states that teacher competence influences student character, such as learning motivation, student discipline, attitude, mentality, using psychological and social approaches (Bleazby, 2021). Teachers can also cause students to achieve or not while attending school. Student learning outcomes are also influenced by the teacher's approach when teaching, one of which is the use of language (Fauziah et al., 2021; Suherman et al., 2023b). Furthermore, student learning outcomes are greatly influenced by teacher competence in the form of pedagogical, professional, social, and personality (Blömeke et al., 2022). The role of the teacher occupies a very important position in shaping students' morals and personality, as well as student quality (*Akhklakul Karimah*). The importance of student morals is that it will influence student decision-making, which reflects ethical behavior (Chen et al., 2021).

### 3.5.3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The role of the teacher is the main factor in forming morals (Ahmad and Kasim, 2020). Efforts to shape students' character. Thus, having good personalities is not easy. The role of the teacher is a concrete manifestation of educational contribution in shaping students' personalities (Ahmad and Hehsan, 2022). However, it turns out that student development does not come from school, but starts at home. As the first space for children to have attitudes and behavior patterns similar to those of their parents. Therefore, the role of parents cannot be left to shape students' morals. The research results also show that the moral training of students through religious programs is an important task for teachers in the educational context. However, in its implementation, there are supporting and inhibiting factors that can influence the role of teachers in religious programs to develop student morals, especially Amaliah Elementary School students. In this research, various relevant supporting and inhibiting factors have been carefully analyzed. Based on the research, there are supporting and inhibiting factors, namely increasing teacher skills, facilities, and collaboration between school and parents.

### 3.5.4. The Impact of Religious Programs on Developing Morals

Religious programs are a comprehensive value education method because they involve instilling values, providing role models, and preparing the younger generation to be independent in making responsible moral decisions and other life skills. Religious programs in Islamic boarding schools, for example, have a significant impact on moral formation (Sutomo et al., 2024). Therefore, introducing religious culture in schools is one way to strengthen the internalization of religious values in students. Teachers have an important role in providing appropriate habituation and teaching about moral and religious values that are in accordance with Islamic life.

Religious programs in elementary schools have a significant impact on shaping students' morals. Habitual activities have a positive impact on the formation of morals (Budiyanti et al., 2024). Positive changes in students' behavior, attitudes, and moral values, as well as positive changes in students themselves. increasing understanding and application of religious values in everyday life. Apart from that, to instill good morals in students, efforts are needed to create a religious environment; one way is through programs to strengthen religious activities. Finally, this study adds new information regarding Islamic education as reported elsewhere (Kayode and Jibril, 2023; Darojah et al., 2024; Nurfazri et al., 2026; Adeoye, 2026; Daud, 2025; Al Husaeni and Rahmat, 2023).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Islamic education teachers play a crucial role in developing *akhlakul karimah* among elementary school students through religious programs. Teachers not only function as instructors but also as facilitators, motivators, educators, role models, guides, and evaluators. Their contribution is reflected in classroom activities, such as delivering moral and religious instruction, giving advice, and using stories as learning media. Outside the classroom, teachers strengthen moral development through supervision, guidance, reminders, and exemplary behavior. The study also found that the success of religious programs is supported by adequate facilities, clear school policies, structured religious activities, teacher competence, and collaboration between schools and parents. However, several obstacles remain, including limited parental support and low student awareness or motivation. Overall, religious programs have a positive impact on students' moral development, particularly in shaping gratitude, piety, generosity, discipline, respect, politeness, forgiveness, friendliness, and improved worship practices. Therefore, optimizing the role of Islamic education teachers and strengthening school-parent collaboration are essential for sustaining students' moral development.

#### 5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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