

**TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES THROUGH
MOBILE PRAYER ACTIVITIES**

Nur Fitria Ningsih¹, Syaikhu Rozi², M. Syarif³

¹²³Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Agama Islam, Universitas Islam Majapahit,
Mojokerto, Indonesia

Correspondence Email: nurfitria010103@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Teachers not only serve as transmitters of academic content but also play a vital role as moral and ethical guides for students. This study aims to describe and evaluate the strategies implemented by Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in developing religious activities. The background of this study is based on the strategic role of IRE teachers in shaping students' religious character through well-organized religious activities. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of what is happening in the field. This research employs a case study approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the strategy of habituating students to participate in religious activities such as collective prayers conducted by visiting students' homes has been effectively implemented. This success is supported by the collaboration among teachers, the school, and parents. The strategy has proven to increase student engagement in religious activities and strengthen the development of religious character. The study recommends innovation in the types of activities and improvement in supporting facilities to further optimize students' spiritual development. This study shows that the strategy of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers in developing religious activities is carried out through the planning and implementation of a joint prayer program. This strategy includes stages of discussion among teachers, program determination by the principal, and structured implementation of activities. The primary objective of these activities is to strengthen students' religious foundations, improve the fluency of reciting istighotsah and tahlil, and seek smoothness ahead of exams. Additionally, these activities serve as a means for the school to introduce itself to the surrounding community, with the primary target being ninth-grade students. The positive impacts of this program include the smooth conduct of exams and good student graduation rates, an increase in the number of new students each year, and improved school image and relations with the community.

Keywords: Teacher Strategies; Islamic Religious Education; Religious Activities.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a crucial role in shaping students' personalities and character in accordance with Islamic values. The internalization of these religious values cannot be achieved solely through theoretical teaching in the classroom; it must also be realized through practical activities that directly involve students. Effective religious education enables students not only to understand Islamic teachings but also to practice them in their daily lives. One effective way of conveying Islamic values is through religious activities regularly organized within the school environment. MTs Al-Ikhlas Karangkedawang Sooko Mojokerto is an example of a school that actively develops religious activities as part of its religious education strategy. In addition to activities such as congregational *Dhuha* prayer, Qur'an recitation, and *Tahlil* reading, the school has a unique program that has become its hallmark: a rotating prayer gathering (*doa bersama keliling*) held from house to house among students, especially prior to school examinations.

This activity not only aims to strengthen the students' spirituality but also serves as a means to strengthen the bond between the school, the students, and the surrounding community. Through this activity, Islamic values are not only taught but also practiced and instilled directly into the students' daily lives. This strategy reflects how Islamic Religious Education teachers play a vital role in designing relevant and meaningful religious programs. By involving students in activities that touch upon aspects of faith, worship, and morality, religious learning becomes more contextual and has a long-term impact.

However, in practice, not all schools are able to design effective religious activities that have a direct impact. Therefore, it is important to explore in more depth how teachers' strategies in implementing this rotating prayer gathering can serve as a model for developing Islamic religious education that is more contextual and relevant to students' real lives. This study aims to explore the strategies used by teachers in planning and implementing such religious activities, as well as to understand their impact on students and the school environment.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with the type of field research. The purpose of this approach is to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena occurring in the field, particularly related to the strategies of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in guiding students' religious activities. Qualitative research is descriptive and analytical in nature, emphasizing meaning, experience, and the participants' perspectives within a specific context. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. This approach is used because it offers flexibility in developing theories based on data obtained directly from the field. This study uses a case study approach, which is an approach employed to investigate a specific phenomenon or case in depth within a particular time frame and context of activity (such as a program, event, process, institution, or social group). Data are collected in a detailed and in-depth manner over a certain period using various data collection techniques. Data analysis in qualitative research is conducted continuously, starting before entering the field and continuing through to the end of the research process. There are three main stages in data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas enhance religious activities through several structured steps, namely: designing a *rotating prayer gathering* program (*doa bersama keliling*) that involves the community, discussing the idea with the school principal, conducting coordination meetings with all teachers, obtaining collective approval, and finally establishing and implementing the *rotating prayer gathering* as a means to strengthen religious values within the school and the surrounding community. The *rotating prayer gathering* at MTs Al-Ikhlas serves several purposes, including: introducing the school to the community, helping students memorize *istighotsah* and *tahlil* prayers, and praying for the smooth administration of exams for ninth-grade students. In general, this activity also aims to strengthen students' religious foundations and increase community interest in the school. In addition, Islamic education aims to pass down Islamic values to the next generation (Encep, 2024).

This program has proven effective in encouraging students' participation in positive activities and embedding these habits into their subconscious routines (Nasrul, 2024). The main target of this activity is ninth-grade students who are preparing for their final school exams. This will support

students in preparing for exams and other learning challenges (Chaniago Kerin Ari, 2025). The *rotating prayer gathering* at MTs Al-Ikhlas has brought positive impacts, including: the smooth execution of examinations and the graduation of all ninth-grade students, an increase in new student enrollment each year, as well as improved recognition and acceptance of the school's programs by the community.

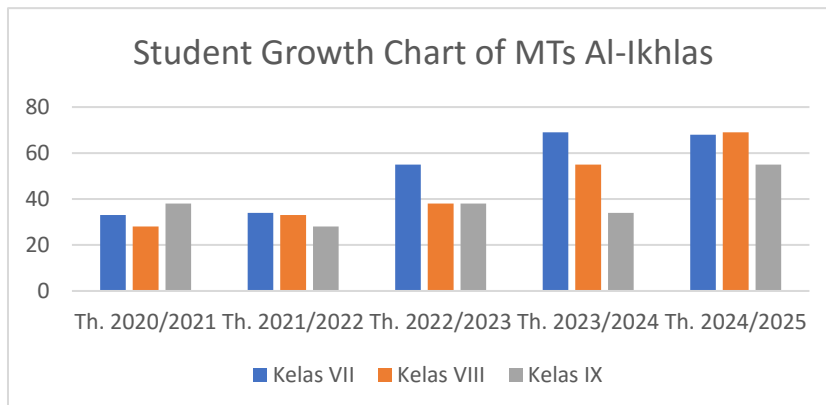


Table 1. Student Growth Chart of MTs Al-Ikhlas

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas implement systematic and collaborative steps to improve the quality of religious activities. PAI teachers play an important role in spreading these values through the learning process at school (Ainunajip Muhammd Nur, 2025). One of the flagship programs designed is the *rotating prayer gathering (doa bersama keliling)*, which begins with joint planning, is approved through a deliberative forum, and is ultimately formalized as an official school program. This activity aims to instill Islamic habits, strengthen students' religious character, and introduce the school to the surrounding community. Education plays a fundamental role in shaping and developing the character of students (Akbar Zulfikar Nur, 2024).

These findings differ from several previous studies (Saputra et al., n.d.), which focused more on in-class learning strategies, such as the inquiry method, contextual learning, integration of character values into lesson content, and the teacher's exemplary conduct. In contrast, this study highlights the direct participation of teachers and students in non-academic activities, which have a tangible impact on character development and the school's public image (Efendi & Fitriani, 2023).

The strengths of the approach used at MTs Al-Ikhlas include:

1. The activities are designed to match the needs of students and the local context.
 2. The prayer program expanded from an internal school event into a community-involving social activity.
 3. Teachers provide real examples by actively participating in the implementation of the activities.
- However, some limitations were noted, such as:
- The school bears responsibility if any incidents occur during the activity.
 - Not all students' parents have the facilities to support the event.
 - The need for meals and equipment can become an additional burden.

Despite these challenges, the activity has proven effective in fostering students' religious spirit, encouraging noble behavior, and strengthening the relationship between the school, students, and the community. From another perspective, religious behavior reflects an appreciation for an individual's level of obedience and commitment to the teachings of their faith (Sholihah Siti Aminatus, 2024). This study reveals that the *rotating prayer gathering* at MTs Al-Ikhlas is a well-structured religious program, involving careful planning and collaborative implementation between the PAI teachers and the school principal. This process is carried out as an effort to formulate and achieve the predetermined objectives (Rohimah, 2024). This program serves dual purposes:

1. Spiritual goals: Equipping especially 9th-grade students with the understanding and ability to recite *istighotsah* and *tahlil*, and preparing them spiritually for final exams.
2. Social and institutional goals: Introducing the school to the wider community, building strong social relationships, and increasing public trust in the institution.

PAI teachers are not only material deliverers but also act as facilitators, motivators, and role models who encourage students' active involvement in religious activities (Fadli, 2024). The program also functions as a promotional strategy that has contributed to an annual increase in student

enrollment and class expansion. Education plays a strategic role in shaping individuals' moral character and social development (Ixfina Ficky Dewi & Rohma Siti Nur, 2025).

This program offers advantages over previous approaches, as it is not limited to classroom based learning but also integrates community based religious activities. This program represents an exemplary educational model in shaping a young generation that is intelligent, confident, and capable of making positive contributions to society (Aji Arif Pramana, 2023). The *rotating prayer gathering* has become a distinctive hallmark of the school rarely implemented due to its logistical complexity and the responsibilities it entails. Discipline plays a crucial role in various aspects of human life; therefore, cultivating discipline in students requires a range of strategic efforts. One such effort is the habituation program, which aims to instill a sense of discipline within the students (Nurul, 2022).

Nevertheless, the activity faces challenges such as:

- Safety risks during off-campus activities,
- Limited facilities provided by some parents,
- Logistical needs like meals and prayer equipment.

Even so, the school remains committed to carrying out the program sustainably with full support from all school stakeholders. Overall, the activity serves as a model of spiritual and community-based educational innovation, which not only strengthens students' religious character but also increases the school's visibility, trust, and popularity among the public (Indriani et al., 2021).

The *rotating prayer gathering* at MTs Al-Ikhlas has had significant impacts in two main areas:

1. Spiritual readiness of 9th-grade students, which positively affected the smooth conduct of exams and a 100% graduation rate.
2. Increased new student enrollment (PPDB) year after year, marked by the growth from one to two classes per grade level.

This activity functions as character-building through religious habituation, such as the recitation of *tahlil*, *istighotsah*, and *yasin*. Moreover, by being held at students' homes, the program also serves as religious outreach (*syi'ar*) and an effective institutional promotion strategy, making the school more well-known and trusted in the community (Rahman et al., 2024).

Information from the informants indicates that the school's involvement in the social life of the community strengthens the institution's positive image. The planning carried out to strengthen the school's positive reputation creates opportunities for the development of innovative programs that support the enhancement of the school's image in the eyes of the community (Lieyani Yanezra, 2025). Documented activities shared on social media have expanded the program's promotional reach. Its function resembles that of a non-formal madrasah, playing a key role in religious learning and the internalization of spiritual values (Aulia et al., 2025).

This activity represents a spiritual and community-based educational innovation that successfully integrates academic, religious, social, and institutional dimensions. The spiritual dimension has a significant influence on the development of students' character and moral values (Qona'ah Indah, 2024). Individuals with strong spiritual intelligence tend to develop holistically intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually resulting in a balanced and complete personality (Mawardi Amirah, 2023). The program demonstrates that a collaborative approach among teachers, school leaders, students, and the community can foster sustainable institutional growth, both in terms of student religious quality and public appeal. The success of an educational program is determined by strong collaboration and mutual support among the relevant stakeholders (Nufus Elok Aulia Bilawatin, 2022). The school principal acts as a facilitator, bridging collaboration among teachers and ensuring that policies align with the needs and aspirations of the educators (Mufidah Zahrotul et al., 2024). Consequently, it is expected that students will exhibit noble character through their active participation in religious activities, both within the school and in the community (Maulidya et al., 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The efforts of Islamic Religious Education teachers at MTs Al-Ikhlas to enhance religious activities were realized through the establishment of a rotating prayer gathering (*doa bersama keliling*), initiated through teacher discussions, approved by the school principal, and officially implemented as a school program. This activity aims to introduce the school to the surrounding community, help students become more fluent in reciting *istighotsah* and *tahlil*, and pray for the success of 9th-grade students in their final exams. Overall, the purpose of this religious program is to strengthen students' religious foundation and increase school enrollment. The implementation of the rotating prayer

gathering has yielded positive results, including the smooth completion of final exams with all students graduating, a significant rise in new student enrollments, and greater community recognition of the school's religious programs.

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