

## **Implementation of the Exemplary Method in Forming the Morals and Character of Class VII Students at SMP IT Ar Rojaq**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to determine how the application of the exemplary method in shaping the morals and character of grade VII students at SMP IT Ar Rojaq. The research method used is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that teachers at SMP IT Ar Rojaq actively apply the exemplary method in the educational process, both through attitudes, speech, and real actions in everyday life in the school environment. The exemplary behavior shown by teachers includes aspects of discipline, honesty, responsibility, politeness, and social concern. From the results of statements given to students as many as 50 respondents, it was found that exemplary behavior had a very good effect of up to 90%. The impact of implementing this method can be seen in changes in student behavior that are better in terms of morals and character. Supporting factors for the success of implementing this exemplary method include teacher commitment, a conducive school environment, and ongoing character development. Thus, the exemplary method has proven to be effective as a strategy in shaping students' morals and character, and can be used as the main approach in education based on Islamic values.*

**Keywords: Exemplary Method, Morals, Character, Students, Islamic Education**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The formation of students' morals and character is one of the main goals of education, as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which emphasizes that national education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe, fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. In this context, the right learning method is very necessary to support the achievement of these goals. In the realm of education, every teacher has goals that they want to realize in the process of educating their students, such as instilling knowledge, forming noble morals, and educating the next generation of the nation. However, some of these goals are difficult to achieve if an educator does not have good scientific and moral competence in carrying out his role at school.(Sutrani et al., 2022)

Teachers have an important role as one of the determining factors for the success of education. Therefore, teachers are required to be able to demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that can be role models in forming the noble morals of students. All forms of educational innovation and improving the quality of human resources resulting from the educational process ultimately rely on the role and quality of a teacher.(Yasyakur, 2018)

One method that is believed to be effective in shaping students' morals and character is the exemplary method (uswah hasanah). This method emphasizes the importance of the role of teachers and adults as role models in everyday speech, attitudes, and actions. Exemplary behavior is not only conveyed through theory or advice, but also through real behavior that can be observed and imitated by students. In Islamic education, the Prophet Muhammad himself is the main example in educating people with noble morals(Erin, 2019).

The importance of character education in Indonesia is increasing along with the increasing moral decline, especially among teenagers. Phenomena such as brawls, drug abuse, promiscuity, and reduced respect for teachers are now increasingly common. Various recent data

show that the decline in morals of teenagers in Indonesia is at an increasingly concerning level. The need for quality resources is urgent today, not limited to scientific quality, but also quality in terms of character and good behavior. (Saifullah Ammar, 2024).

Role modelling is one of the methods in Islamic education that is considered very effective when applied by teachers in the learning process. This is because education through role models can influence a person's habits, behavior, and attitudes. In the Qur'an, the term "role model" is known as the word *uswah*, which is often juxtaposed with adjectives such as *hasanah*, which means good (Saepurrohman & Erihadiana, 2024). The combination of these words forms the term *uswatun hasanah*, which means a good example. The term *uswah* is mentioned in the Qur'an three times, with examples taken from the figures of the prophets, such as the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the Prophet Ibrahim, and people who have strong faith in Allah (Mustofa, 2019).

SMP IT Ar Rojaq as an integrated Islamic educational institution has a moral and spiritual responsibility to not only deliver learning materials, but also to shape the Islamic character of students from an early age. Grade VII, as the initial level of junior high school education, is an important phase in the formation of students' identity and personality. Therefore, the application of the exemplary method in the learning process is very relevant and strategic to build a strong foundation of morals (Lady Angela & Fathoni, 2022). However, in practice, the application of the exemplary method faces various challenges, such as inconsistency of teacher behavior, the influence of the environment outside the school, and the lack of student awareness in emulating good behavior. This is an important concern to be studied further so that the exemplary method can be applied optimally and have a positive impact on the formation of students' morals and character. Based on this background, this study aims to determine how the application of the exemplary method in forming the morals and character of grade VII students at SMP IT Ar Rojaq and to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in its application.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive study type, which aims to describe in depth how the application of the exemplary method in shaping the morals and character of class VII students at SMP IT Ar Rojaq. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on understanding the meaning, process, and situation that occurs in the educational environment naturally. The subjects of the study were teachers and class VII students at SMP IT Ar Rojaq, while the object of the study was the application of the exemplary method in the learning process and its impact on the formation of students' morals and character.

Data collection techniques are carried out through: Direct observation of teacher and student activities inside and outside the classroom. Interviews with teachers, students, and the school to obtain information about exemplary practices applied (Qibtiyah et al., 2024). Documentation, such as school activity records, regulations, and character building programs. Data analysis techniques are carried out descriptively qualitatively, namely by reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions (Lady Angela & Fathoni, 2022). Data are analyzed continuously during the research process to obtain a complete and accurate picture of the phenomena being studied. To ensure the validity of the data, researchers use triangulation techniques, both source triangulation and technique triangulation, to verify the truth of the data from various perspectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Exemplary Method

The exemplary method is an Islamic educational method that is effective in forming children's habits, behavior and attitudes. (Hidayat, 2020). According to Abu Bakar Baraja, the educational pattern is the most important focus and is an education that leads to the process of self-development. Teacher exemplary behavior is carried out by teachers giving examples through good actions so that they can be role models for students. For example, teachers must maintain cleanliness, come early, and act honestly, independently, work hard, and be disciplined. Teacher exemplary behavior is also carried out by teachers giving examples in various aspects of life, such as praying before and after lessons are finished. Thus, teacher exemplary behavior can form positive characters in students in accordance with Islamic values.(Palunga & Marzuki, 2020). This method is in line with several theories that are the basis for its application in character education, including: a. Social Learning Theory: This theory was put forward by Albert Bandura, who explains that a person's behavior can be influenced by what is seen and done by other people.(Nurul Wahyuni, 2022). In the context of Islamic-based character education, this theory can be used to understand how students learn and develop Islamic values through observation and imitation of teachers and friends who have good Islamic behavior.(Muhsinin, 2013).

This theory explains that a person's belief in their own abilities to achieve goals can influence their behavior. (Imaniyati & Fadhillah, 2023). In the context of Islamic-based character education, this theory can be used to understand how students build their own beliefs in developing Islamic values and how teachers can help students increase these beliefs.(Nurfiati et al., 2025). A person's motivation to do something can be influenced by the level of freedom and choice given, in the context of Islamic-based character education, this theory can be used to understand how students are influenced by the level of freedom and choice given in developing Islamic values and how teachers can help students increase their motivation to develop these values. Student Character Education Student character education is a learning process that aims to develop good moral values and personality in individuals.(Ngitung et al., 2023).

### Character building

Student character education not only teaches what is right and what is wrong, but also instills good habits so that students understand, are able to feel, and want to do good.(Dalmeri, 2014). SMP IT Ar Rojaq applies the exemplary method in shaping the character of its students. Among the habituation programs that are carried out are: 1. Dhuha prayer in the prayer room every 08.00 - 08.15. 2. Reading Al Maturat in the school field 07.20 - 08.00 3. Every Friday reading Surah Al Kahfi, salawat and donating from 07.30-08.00. 4. Dhuhur prayer in congregation in the prayer room. 5. 5S program (Smile, Greet, Greeting, Polite, Courteous), which is to accustom students to greet teachers or friends properly 6. English apperception 07.30 - 08.00 7. Arabic apperception 07.30 - 08.00 WIB.

Research shows that the role model method is proven to be effective in educating students' character. This method plays an important role in instilling positive values and building a noble personality in the younger generation. Teachers as role models that are always conveyed by teachers are what students must follow. Role models are real examples for students in applying character values in everyday life. Teachers at school become role models for students by showing behavior that reflects the character values that they want to instill. The combination of habituation and role model methods has been proven to be able to produce positive character changes in students. Students who are accustomed to positive behavior and have good role models will find it easier to develop noble characters and become responsible, disciplined, and noble individuals.

### Implementation of the Role Model Method by Teachers

Based on the results of observations and interviews with teachers and students, the exemplary method has been consistently applied in learning activities and activities outside the

classroom. Teachers not only deliver moral material theoretically, but also exemplify commendable attitudes in everyday life, such as time discipline, being honest, being friendly, and maintaining a clean environment. Teachers at SMP IT Ar Rojaq also provide real examples through their attitudes of respecting students, not using harsh words, and showing sincerity in worship. This can be seen from the teacher's habit of performing congregational prayers with students, greeting each time they enter the classroom, and using polite language.

### **Student Response to Teacher Exemplary Behavior**

Most of the seventh grade students showed a positive response to the role model shown by the teacher. From the interview results, many students stated that they felt comfortable, motivated, and encouraged to imitate the teacher's good behavior. The role model was considered more touching and easier to accept than theoretical advice or punishment. In addition, the observation results also showed changes in student behavior, such as being more disciplined in attending on time, being more respectful of fellow students and teachers, and starting to get used to using polite language in communicating. The following are the results of student responses to role models.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

Several factors that support the implementation of the exemplary method at SMP IT Ar Rojaq include: A religious and conducive school environment. Teachers' commitment to playing their role as role models. Support for character building programs from the school. However, there are also several obstacles, such as: Lack of control over students' social interactions outside the school environment. Not all teachers are consistently role models in all aspects. There are still students who require a special approach due to their less supportive family backgrounds.

### **Formation of Student Morals and Character**

The exemplary method has been proven to have a positive impact on the formation of students' morals and characters. Students become more aware of the importance of being honest, responsible, polite, and respectful of teachers and friends. Teacher exemplary behavior is an effective medium in conveying moral values that are applicable and easily accepted by students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the application of the exemplary method by teachers at SMP IT Ar Rojaq has proven effective in shaping the morals and character of grade VII students. Teachers not only convey moral values verbally, but also exemplify them directly in their daily attitudes and behaviors, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers' exemplary behavior in terms of discipline, honesty, responsibility, politeness, and social concern has a positive influence on changes in student behavior. Students become more polite, obey the rules, and show respect for teachers and friends. In addition, a supportive school environment and an integrated character building program also strengthen the success of the implementation of this method. With the results of the statements given to students, it turns out that exemplary behavior is very supportive in the formation of values and character in students. Thus, the exemplary method is a relevant and strategic approach in fostering noble morals and positive character of students at the junior high school level, especially in the context of education based on Islamic values.

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