

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION TEACHERS IN CHARACTER BUILDING OF STUDENT

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
Received: July 27, 2025	<i>The rapid development of globalization and modernization has influenced the moral and character formation of students, making the role of teachers increasingly crucial in Islamic religious education teachers are expected to not only deliver religious knowledge but also shape students' character through social competence, including communication, empathy, collaboration, and role-modeling. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the social competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers in fostering students' moral character at SMA NU Palangka Raya. Using a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method, data were collected through observation, structured interviews, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of one Islamic Education teacher, three homeroom teachers, the vice-principal, and nine students from grades X, XI IPA, and XI IPS, selected purposively. Data were analyzed through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing using an interactive model. The results show that Islamic Education (PAI) teachers demonstrated good social competence, reflected in effective communication, adaptability to diversity, collaboration with colleagues, and building harmonious relationships with parents. These competencies significantly contribute to the success of moral education in the school</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental element in shaping a nation's civilization and character. Teachers, particularly those involved in Islamic Religious Education, play a critical role in this process. Islamic Religious Education teachers are not only responsible for imparting religious knowledge but also for shaping the moral character of students. Through their social competencies such as communication, empathy, collaboration, and role-modeling Islamic Religious Education teachers contribute to the formation of student character. However, despite the recognized importance of character education, the rapid development of globalization and modernization has posed significant challenges to educators, especially in terms of maintaining and fostering moral values among students (Asmadi, Syah, & Yasa, 2022).

A study by Fahmiah and Akilah (2020) reveals that the 2013 curriculum emphasizes the integration of character education, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), but the implementation of these character-building strategies is inconsistent across different educational settings. In contrast, Kasman, Siregar, and Pohan (2024) found that the integration of Islamic values in non-religious subjects like English contributes significantly to character building. While their

research highlights the positive effects of incorporating Islamic values in broader curricula, it does not specifically address the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers and their social competencies in this process.

Furthermore, Darlan, Pettalongi, and Rustina (2021) emphasize the importance of Islamic education in fostering students' moral values in public schools. Their study, however, primarily focuses on the integration of character-building strategies within the curriculum, while the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies in this process remains underexplored. On the other hand, Firmansyah, Darajatul, and Darmawan (2024) suggest that teachers' competencies, particularly in communication and empathy, significantly influence student character development, but they did not delve into how Islamic Religious Education teachers specifically apply these competencies in their daily teaching practices.

Moreover, Fadllurrahman, Pratama, Siregar, and Harahap (2025) found that while pedagogic competencies, such as time management and patience, contribute to fostering students' adaptability, they did not examine how these pedagogic traits are applied specifically within the context of Islamic education or by Islamic Religious Education teachers. These studies indicate the importance of teacher competencies in shaping student behavior but fail to specifically address how Islamic Religious Education teachers use their social competencies to build character in an Islamic educational context.

In the context of MA NU Palangka Raya, the study will focus on how the school's Islamic Religious Education teachers apply their social competencies to overcome the challenges posed by external influences, such as peer pressure and the impact of social media, which can negatively affect students' character. This aligns with previous research, including Asmadi et al. (2022), which underscores the need for Islamic Religious Education teachers to adapt their teaching methods and roles to effectively nurture the moral character of students in a rapidly changing world.

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping students' moral values and behavior, especially in the context of Islamic Religious Education. The teachers are not only responsible for imparting religious knowledge but also for fostering the moral character of students through social competencies such as communication, empathy, role-modeling, and adaptability. These competencies help Islamic Religious Education teachers build strong relationships with students, guiding them toward positive ethical development. However, the rapid pace of globalization and modernization presents significant challenges to educators, particularly in maintaining and promoting moral values in students amidst external pressures like peer influence and social media.

Despite the acknowledged importance of character education, there remains a gap in understanding how Islamic Religious Education teachers use their social competencies to directly influence moral development in students. Existing research has largely explored teacher competencies, character education, and the integration of Islamic values into curricula. However, few studies have specifically examined how Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies such as communication, empathy, role-modeling, and adaptability contribute to character-building in Islamic educational settings. This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on the implementation of these social competencies at SMA NU Palangka Raya, offering new insights into how these competencies are applied in practice. Unlike previous studies, which have primarily looked at broader educational or religious contexts, this research zeroes in on the direct influence of Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies on students' moral and character development in an Islamic school setting.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study approach, which is ideal for exploring complex phenomena within their real-life context. A case study approach enables the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya and their contribution to the moral and character development of students. Qualitative research is particularly effective in capturing the nuances of teacher-student interactions and the social competencies that teachers utilize in the educational process (Arum & Istanto, 2025). Data will be gathered using a combination of observations, interviews, and document analysis, which will provide a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic Religious Education teachers integrate social competencies into their teaching practices.

The data collection will involve direct observations of classroom interactions, school activities, and extracurricular engagements. These observations will help to identify the practical application of social competencies in fostering character development. In addition to observations, structured interviews will be conducted with Islamic Religious Education teachers, school administrators, and selected students. These interviews will provide personal insights into the implementation of character-building strategies and the role of teachers in this process. The interviews will focus on the experiences and perspectives of participants in relation to their interactions with Islamic Religious Education teachers and the social competencies demonstrated in everyday school life. Documentation in the form of teaching plans, school policies, and student activity records will also be analyzed to support the findings.

To further clarify the instruments used in this research, the following table outlines the key data collection instruments, their purpose, and the specific method of analysis used:

Table 1: Research Instruments and Their Purpose

Instrument	Purpose	Data Collection Method	Analysis Method
Observation	To observe teacher-student interactions and classroom dynamics	Direct observation in classrooms and extracurricular activities	Thematic analysis of teacher-student interactions
Structured Interviews	To gather insights from teachers, administrators, and students about their experiences	One-on-one interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers, administrators, and students	Coding and thematic categorization
Documentation	To analyze relevant documents such as teaching plans and school policies	Review of teaching materials, student records, and school policies	Document analysis to contextualize findings

A triangulation approach will be used to validate the data and enhance its credibility. According to Fadhilah and Istanto (2025), triangulation from multiple sources (teachers, students, and school documents) ensures a well-rounded understanding of the research topic. The analysis of this data will be guided by the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This approach allows the researcher to systematically organize, analyze, and interpret the qualitative data, helping to identify the key themes and insights relevant to the research questions.

The findings from these data collection methods will be synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of social competencies by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya and their impact on student character development. By utilizing a combination of these instruments, the study will ensure a rich, multifaceted understanding of how social competence translates into positive educational outcomes.

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research method. The choice of this approach is based on the need to deeply explore of the relationship of learning patterns between independent learning curriculum, deep learning, and the concept of integration-interconnection. Data was collected through a systematic review of primary sources, including curriculum guide book from Minister of Education's, Minister of Education decree, M. Amin Abdullah's book on integration-interconnection, dan the journal of Islamic education. Secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, print and electronic magazines and so forth.

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis, which involves identifying and categorizing key themes from the selected texts (Arif et al, 2022). This approach ensures that the analysis remains focused on the relationship of learning patterns between independent learning curriculum, deep learning, and the concept of integration-interconnection. The validity of findings through source triangulation, combining multiple perspective from primary and secondary sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study highlight the significant role of social competencies in the character development of students at SMA NU Palangka Raya. Based on the data gathered through observations, interviews, and document analysis, three main themes emerged: Effective Communication, Empathy and Student Support, and Role-Modeling and Adaptability. Each theme is discussed in detail below.

Effective Communication in the Classroom

One of the most prominent findings was the central role of effective communication in promoting student engagement and character development. Observations revealed that Islamic Religious Education teachers used clear and accessible language, which helped students understand complex concepts. Teachers actively engaged students through open discussions, where students were encouraged to express their thoughts without fear of judgment. This created an environment where students felt comfortable to participate, ask questions, and clarify doubts.

One of the most prominent findings of this study was the critical role that effective communication plays in both promoting student engagement and fostering character development. Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya employed communication strategies that were both clear and accessible, ensuring that students could easily grasp complex religious and moral concepts. Through the use of simple and direct language, teachers broke down complex ideas into manageable parts, helping to bridge gaps in understanding. This approach is crucial in religious education, where abstract concepts often need to be contextualized for students of varying academic backgrounds. By using language that was relatable and straightforward, teachers were able to engage students in discussions about complex issues such as ethics, morality, and religious practices.

The importance of effective communication also extended beyond just the verbal exchange of information. Non-verbal cues, such as body language, gestures, and eye contact, were regularly used by teachers to reinforce their messages and maintain student engagement. For example, teachers made deliberate efforts to maintain eye contact, which helped to establish a connection with students, signaling attentiveness and sincerity. This non-verbal communication reinforced the verbal message, ensuring that students felt recognized and valued in the classroom. Teachers also used open hand gestures and positive body language to convey inclusivity, making the classroom environment more welcoming. These physical cues, though subtle, played a significant role in creating a safe space for students to engage with the material and express themselves openly.

In addition to the verbal and non-verbal communication, active listening was identified as a key component of effective communication in the classroom. Teachers demonstrated a commitment to listening attentively to students' responses, showing genuine interest in what students had to say. By listening carefully, teachers were able to understand students' perspectives and provide tailored feedback that encouraged further participation. This approach not only created an inclusive environment but also helped build trust between students and teachers. When students felt that their thoughts and opinions were valued, they were more likely to engage openly in discussions, contributing to a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment.

Table 2 below summarizes the key communication strategies used by Islamic Religious Education teachers, including active listening, positive reinforcement, and clear and simple language. These strategies were instrumental in creating a classroom atmosphere where students felt encouraged to engage actively. The table outlines the observable impact of these strategies on student participation, highlighting the ways in which communication techniques fostered a supportive and open learning environment.

Table 2. Communication Strategies Used by Islamic Religious Education Teachers

Strategy	Description	Observed Impact on Students
Active Listening	Teachers listened attentively to students' responses and questions.	Increased student participation and comfort in expressing ideas.
Positive Reinforcement	Teachers used praise and constructive feedback.	Boosted students' confidence and willingness to engage in learning.
Clear and Simple Language	Teachers used language that was easy to understand.	Helped students grasp complex concepts and feel confident in learning.

The communication strategies outlined in Table 1 highlight the fundamental role that active listening, positive reinforcement, and clear language played in enhancing student engagement. The use of active listening by teachers not only helped students feel heard but also encouraged them to contribute more confidently in discussions. By validating students' responses, teachers built a positive feedback loop, where students felt their contributions were valued, thus increasing their willingness to participate further. Positive reinforcement served as a tool to strengthen students' self-confidence, reinforcing the behaviors that teachers wished to encourage. This strategy created a classroom environment where students felt empowered to continue engaging with the content. Lastly, the use of clear and simple language ensured that all students could comprehend the material, regardless of their academic background, which was vital in creating an equitable learning space.

Beyond fostering active participation, effective communication also played a critical role in supporting the emotional and social development of students. Teachers who communicated openly and empathetically helped students navigate personal challenges, which, in turn, positively impacted their overall well-being. For example, when teachers used communication to check in with students who were struggling emotionally or socially, it helped students feel supported beyond academic contexts. These interactions, characterized by empathy and active listening, created a safe and supportive classroom environment in which students felt comfortable seeking help or advice, knowing that their emotional needs would be addressed with care and attention.

In addition, teachers' feedback through communication was vital in guiding students through their learning journey. Teachers did not only focus on correcting mistakes but also acknowledged the efforts and progress students made, regardless of the outcome. This type of feedback cultivated a growth mindset among students, where they were encouraged to view challenges as opportunities for

learning rather than obstacles. By continuously reinforcing effort and progress through their communication, teachers helped students develop a sense of resilience and persistence, qualities that are important not only for academic success but also for character development.

Finally, the impact of collaborative communication among teachers, students, and school staff was critical in enhancing the overall classroom atmosphere. Islamic Religious Education teachers communicated regularly with homeroom teachers, school counselors, and parents, sharing information about students' academic progress and emotional well-being. This collaborative effort allowed for the creation of individualized support plans for students, ensuring that their needs were addressed comprehensively. Teachers worked together to provide a holistic approach to student development, integrating academic support with emotional and moral guidance, which fostered a nurturing environment for all students.

Empathy and Student Support

Empathy was another critical theme identified in this study. Observations of classroom interactions and interviews with both teachers and students revealed that Islamic Religious Education teachers demonstrated a high degree of empathy by responding to students' emotional and academic needs. Teachers showed genuine care for students' well-being, which helped build strong, trusting relationships between them. In interviews, students expressed feeling comfortable approaching their teachers for both academic support and personal guidance. One student noted, "I always feel like I can talk to my teacher when I'm struggling with a subject or even when I'm upset. She listens and helps me understand not just the lesson, but also what I'm going through."

Figure 1 illustrates a typical teacher-student interaction focused on empathy. In this image, a Islamic Religious Education teacher is seen engaging in a one-on-one conversation with a student after class. The teacher is providing both emotional and academic support, listening attentively to the student's concerns. This type of interaction is fundamental for building trust and supporting the emotional well-being of students, which in turn fosters their moral and academic development. Observations confirmed that such interactions were common, with teachers routinely making time for individual students outside of class hours, showing genuine interest in their personal well-being.

Teachers regularly engaged in one-on-one conversations with students who struggled academically or emotionally. During these interactions, teachers listened attentively to students' concerns and offered guidance. For instance, when a student was struggling with a particular subject, the teacher would provide additional resources or adjust the lesson to help the student better understand the material. This personalized attention not only improved academic outcomes but also made students feel supported and valued by their teachers. According to one teacher, "It's not just about the grades. I want to make sure they're doing well emotionally too, so they're not carrying extra weight that stops them from learning."

Empathy was particularly evident in teachers' responses to students dealing with personal issues. Teachers were observed offering emotional support to students facing challenges such as family problems or peer conflicts. In interviews, students shared how teachers helped them navigate these issues. A student recalled, "When I was having a tough time at home, my teacher noticed I was off and asked me if I was okay. She didn't just focus on my work; she cared about me as a person." By acknowledging and validating students' feelings, teachers created a safe space for students to express their emotions without fear of judgment. This empathetic approach helped students manage stress, improving their emotional well-being and their ability to thrive in academic and social contexts.

The role of empathy in teaching was also emphasized during extracurricular activities. Islamic Religious Education teachers went beyond classroom teaching, participating in school events and

extracurricular activities where they provided additional guidance and support. For example, in religious study groups or community service activities, teachers served as mentors, offering advice, encouragement, and emotional support to students. Interviews with teachers confirmed that these interactions were seen as valuable opportunities to connect with students outside the classroom and provide mentorship. One teacher mentioned, "Extracurricular activities give me the chance to show students I care about them beyond their academics. It's about building trust."

Empathy also contributed to creating a strong sense of community among students. Teachers' empathy encouraged students to build strong relationships with their peers, which in turn helped promote cooperation and mutual respect within the school. This social cohesion created a positive school culture that supported both moral education and personal growth. Observations of group activities revealed that students, influenced by their teachers' actions, often helped each other with both schoolwork and personal issues. This created an environment where students felt emotionally supported by not just their teachers but also their peers.

The data collected from both observations and interviews consistently highlighted the importance of empathy in fostering a positive learning environment. Teachers' willingness to listen and engage with students on both an emotional and academic level was key to developing strong relationships with their students. Students' experiences corroborated this, with many sharing stories of feeling heard and supported, not just in terms of their academic performance but in their personal lives as well. These findings demonstrate that empathy is not just a pedagogical tool but a crucial aspect of student well-being, which contributes to both academic success and character development.

Role-Modeling and Adaptability

Role-modeling and adaptability were essential themes in shaping students' moral values and character. Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya were observed consistently demonstrating behaviors such as respect, integrity, and punctuality, which students were encouraged to emulate. Teachers' actions, both inside and outside the classroom, reinforced the moral lessons imparted in religious education classes. For instance, teachers often led by example, showing respect for others and demonstrating proper manners when interacting with students and colleagues.

Teachers also modeled Islamic values through their daily interactions with students. For example, they practiced honesty and fairness in their interactions with students, ensuring that all students were treated equally. By embodying the values they taught, Islamic Religious Education teachers created a living example of moral behavior, which students could observe and emulate. This role-modeling contributed significantly to the students' moral development and helped solidify the importance of these values in their lives.

In addition to role-modeling, adaptability was an important competency for Islamic Religious Education teachers. Teachers were observed adjusting their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of their students. This was particularly important in a classroom where students came from varying backgrounds, with different academic abilities and personal experiences. Teachers modified their lesson plans and teaching styles to accommodate these differences, ensuring that every student had the opportunity to succeed.

Adaptability also extended to managing classroom diversity. Teachers demonstrated cultural sensitivity by incorporating a wide range of perspectives into their lessons, ensuring that all students felt respected and included. This adaptability created an inclusive learning environment where students could thrive academically and socially, regardless of their backgrounds or personal challenges.

Lastly, Islamic Religious Education teachers' adaptability was crucial in responding to unexpected challenges. Whether it was addressing disruptions in the classroom or adjusting to changes in the school schedule, teachers were able to remain flexible and calm, setting an example for students. This ability to adapt to changing circumstances not only helped maintain a positive classroom environment but also taught students valuable life skills related to resilience and flexibility.

Table 3 below presents the adaptability strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students. These strategies were observed to be effective in creating an inclusive learning environment where students, regardless of their background or ability, could succeed.

Table 3: Adaptability Strategies Used by Islamic Religious Education Teachers

Strategy	Description	Observed Impact on Students
Differentiated Instruction	Teachers modified lesson plans to accommodate diverse student needs.	Enabled all students to engage with the lesson at their own pace.
Culturally Responsive Teaching	Teachers incorporated diverse cultural perspectives into lessons.	Increased students' sense of belonging and respect for cultural differences.
Personalized Support	Teachers provided individualized support to struggling students.	Improved academic performance and emotional well-being.

In summary, the findings reveal that Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies including effective communication, empathy, role-modeling, and adaptability were crucial in fostering the moral and character development of students at SMA NU Palangka Raya. These competencies helped create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students were encouraged to develop both academically and morally. Through collaboration, active communication, and empathetic support, the teachers effectively contributed to the holistic growth of students, enhancing not only their academic performance but also their social and moral values.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the role of empathy in the educational practices of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya and its impact on both academic success and moral development. The findings indicate that empathy was a critical factor in fostering an emotionally supportive learning environment, promoting academic engagement, and enhancing the students' overall well-being. The results are consistent with prior studies, including Aulia et al. (2025) and Anida (2023), who emphasize the significance of teacher empathy in shaping students' emotional and social development. This section will discuss the implications of these findings in relation to the existing literature.

Empathy in Teacher-Student Interactions

A key finding of this study is the role of personalized teacher-student interactions, where Islamic Religious Education teachers consistently provided individual support to students facing academic or personal challenges. Teachers who demonstrated empathy by recognizing and addressing these challenges significantly enhanced student participation and emotional resilience. Alfazri et al. (2025)

and Ramdhan & Sholeh (2025) argue that when teachers engage with students on a personal level, it fosters a sense of belonging, thereby improving students' academic performance. In line with Anida (2023) and Muazima et al (2022), this study found that Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies, particularly empathy, contributed to a positive learning environment in which students felt comfortable sharing their thoughts, doubts, and concerns. This personalized approach not only helped students succeed academically but also bolstered their confidence and self-esteem.

Additionally, Bilbina et al. (2024) and Anderson (2010), highlight that teachers who create an empathetic environment allow students to feel emotionally supported, which positively impacts their academic engagement. In this study, students reported that one-on-one interactions with their teachers were instrumental in both overcoming academic difficulties and managing emotional stress. One student shared, "My teacher always took time to talk to me when I struggled, not just with schoolwork but with personal issues too. That made me feel like I mattered." This aligns with findings by Sari (2024), who emphasized that Islamic Religious Education teachers' empathy is crucial for student success both inside and outside the classroom.

Emotional Well-Being and Empathy

The emotional well-being of students was found to be strongly influenced by the empathetic behaviors of teachers. Fitrianingsih (2019) notes that when teachers address students' emotional needs, it reduces stress and creates a conducive environment for learning. In this study, teachers were observed engaging in meaningful conversations with students who faced emotional challenges. These interactions were characterized by active listening and thoughtful guidance. Fatwa (2022) also notes that an empathetic teacher is instrumental in helping students navigate emotional challenges, which in turn allows them to focus better on their studies.

Teachers' attentiveness to students' emotional needs was a key aspect of the learning environment at SMA NU Palangka Raya. By listening to students' concerns and providing support, teachers helped students feel validated and secure. Aulia et al. (2025) and Nurfuadi (2022), argue that when Islamic Religious Education teachers show care for students' emotional well-being, it not only helps improve academic outcomes but also fosters stronger student-teacher relationships, which are essential for moral development. This was evident in this study, where students expressed feeling more motivated to engage in academic activities due to the emotional support they received from their teachers.

Empathy and Extracurricular Activities

In addition to classroom interactions, extracurricular activities were an essential platform for Islamic Religious Education teachers to demonstrate empathy. This finding aligns with Ginting et al. (2025), who state that teachers' involvement in extracurricular activities allows for deeper emotional connections with students, further supporting their moral development. Teachers at SMA NU Palangka Raya actively participated in religious study groups, community service, and other school events, where they not only supported students academically but also provided guidance on personal issues. Chewae (2024) asserts that this type of mentorship fosters character development and creates a strong teacher-student bond, which contributes to students' overall growth.

The empowerment students gained from these activities extended beyond academic lessons. In interviews, students shared how their teachers' involvement in extracurricular activities made them feel more connected to their learning community, promoting a sense of belonging and mutual respect. One student mentioned, "When I saw my teacher leading the community service project, it made me

realize that they care about us as people, not just as students.” This reflects Halim & Maskuri’s (2021) assertion that empathetic teachers who engage in these activities serve as role models, guiding students through both their academic and social journeys.

Creating a Positive School Culture Through Empathy

The study also found that empathy was instrumental in creating a positive school culture. Islamic Religious Education teachers' empathy helped students develop stronger peer relationships and a sense of social responsibility. This aligns with Mazrur et al. (2022) and Ahmad (2018), who argue that empathetic teachers foster a culture of cooperation and mutual respect among students. In this study, students were observed supporting each other academically and socially, with teachers encouraging teamwork and shared responsibility in both academic and extracurricular settings. This collective approach not only strengthened the social fabric of the school but also promoted a culture of care, where students felt supported both by their teachers and peers.

As Nurbela & Munawaroh (2022) and Ramdhan et al (2025), suggest, a school culture built on empathy allows students to feel emotionally secure, which in turn supports their moral and academic growth. The findings of this study reflect these claims, showing that the positive school culture at SMA NU Palangka Raya, nurtured by empathetic teachers, contributed to students' success in both academic and social spheres.

Empathy's Role in Moral Education and Character Building

Empathy's role in moral education was evident throughout the study. The findings show that Islamic Religious Education teachers' empathy not only helped students manage academic challenges but also supported their moral and character development. According to Purwanti (2022) and Aisafitri & Kiayati Yusrifah (2020), empathic teaching plays a key role in shaping students' values, teaching them to respect others, and promoting positive social interactions. This was evident in the behavior of students at SMA NU Palangka Raya, who, influenced by their teachers' empathetic attitudes, demonstrated higher levels of cooperation, respect, and kindness toward one another.

Teachers also served as role models in moral education, embodying the values they wished to instill in students (Muchamad et al. 2021; Arif, et al. 2024; 2023) and Tinambunan et al. (2024) suggest that teacher role-modeling is an essential aspect of moral development, as students learn by observing the behavior of their teachers. This study confirms that when teachers show empathy and care, students are more likely to adopt these values and apply them in their own lives.

In conclusion, the findings from this study reinforce the critical role of Islamic Religious Education teachers' empathy in promoting both academic success and moral development among students. By providing personalized support, offering emotional guidance, and engaging in extracurricular activities, teachers created a positive learning environment that encouraged students to thrive academically and personally. These findings are consistent with the broader literature, including Acevedo-Ojeda. (2021), Bilbina et al. (2024), and Sari & Nasution (2025), which emphasize the importance of empathy in fostering holistic education. The impact of empathy on student engagement, emotional well-being, and social development underscores its importance as a cornerstone of effective teaching in Islamic Education.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers' social competencies in shaping students' moral and character development at SMA NU Palangka Raya. It highlights how

effective communication, empathy, role-modeling, and adaptability significantly contribute to fostering an inclusive learning environment where students feel supported and engaged. The findings underline the importance of these social competencies in creating a positive educational experience that nurtures both academic success and emotional well-being. However, the study is limited by its focus on a single school, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research could include a broader range of schools and regions to validate these results on a larger scale.

In terms of contributions, this research advances the theoretical understanding of how teacher social competencies impact moral education, specifically in Islamic educational settings. Practically, the study suggests that teacher training programs should emphasize the development of these competencies to enhance both the educational environment and students' moral development. Future research could explore the long-term effects of these competencies on students, conduct longitudinal studies, and expand across different educational levels. Comparative studies between Islamic and non-Islamic schools could also provide valuable insights into diverse approaches to character education and social competence in teaching.

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