

Teacher Competency Development in Improving the Performance of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Madrasah



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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the enhancement of competencies among teachers of Islamic Education (PAI) in Kabupaten Garut, focusing on the effects of professional development interventions before and after the implementation of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG). The methods used include observations and interviews with key stakeholders such as school principals, supervisors, and education officials. The study investigates the initial competencies of teachers, revealing variability in knowledge, conventional teaching skills, and professionalism, often influenced by their educational background and lack of clear incentives or structured training. The professional development interventions involved a structured and systematic approach, including training and workshops on various aspects such as curriculum depth, innovative teaching methods, character development, and classroom management. Experiential learning workshops were introduced to allow teachers to practice and reflect on new teaching methods. Continuous mentoring and guidance provided additional support to teachers, fostering both their professional and personal growth. The results indicate significant improvements in teachers' competencies, motivation, and performance post-TPG implementation, aided by comprehensive training and mentoring. The evaluation process, incorporating 360-degree feedback, highlighted areas for further development and ensured continuous support through targeted training and mentoring programs. This structured approach demonstrates a commitment to enhancing the quality of Islamic Education and shaping well-rounded, knowledgeable educators.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Competency, Professional Development, Islamic Education, Experiential Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Educational goals can be achieved depending on the success of a learning in school (Quadir et al., 2022). Learning is inseparable from the competence of teachers. We can group teacher competencies into two, namely hard competence dan soft competence. What's included hard competence is pedagogic competence and professional competition, while soft competence are personality competencies and social competencies (Scherzinger & Brahm, 2023). In the dimension of teacher competence, no less important is the aspect of emotional intelligence (emotional intelligence), and this emotional intelligence is the development of the concept of soft skills. Soft competence much more important than hard competence (Cakirpaloglu et al., 2023).

Teachers are the main element in the educational process, especially at the institutional level. Teachers are the most decisive component, because it is in the hands of teachers that the curriculum is in the hands of the teacher, and the learning climate becomes something meaningful for the lives of students (Fink, 2003). Modern learning theory implies, teachers must be skilled diagnosers, knowledge organizers, and trainers to help learners master complex information and skills (Waseem & Aslam, 2020).

The role of teachers is very important in the success of the quality of graduates. Qualified teachers are needed, because of their role in the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development of students. Teacher quality is an important component for successful education (Towers et al., 2023). The realization of quality graduates is the responsibility of education, especially in preparing students to become subjects who increasingly play a role in displaying their strengths that are tough, creative, independent and professional in their fields (Marlina et al., 2023).

Teachers in educating students are not enough to rely only on pedagogic sciences and teaching materials, but no less important are the competencies that teachers must have, namely personality competence and social competence and leadership (Nellitawati, 2017). Personality competence refers more to the personal maturity of teachers interpersonally, including moral maturity, ethics, commitment, responsibility, wisdom, authority, inclusiveness, tolerance, and discipline (Cieciuch & Strus, 2021). Social competence refers more to the maturity of teachers in building relationships with other parties in the educational context such as

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students, colleagues, parents of students, and other professional associations (Shanmugasundaram & Mohamad, 2011), and other communities in general. Leadership competence refers more to managerial, classroom management, planning, organizing, being an innovator, the ability to maintain, control and direct culture (Podgórska & Pichlak, 2019).

Social facts, Madrasah in the implementation of learning seems more dense compared to schools (M Jemat, 2021). However, it seems that we cannot deny the fact that madrasas are often positioned as second-class schools when compared to public schools of the same level. Even if there is a madrasa that is able to compete with schools, it is only casuistic. Madrasah at the beginning of its establishment emphasized more on moral and spiritual aspects, did not attach importance to diplomas and did not instill ideals in its graduates to become employees. The educational orientation developed is more aimed at studying knowledge as a form of worship to Allah in order to receive His pleasure. Along with the changing times, especially after independence, the idea of developing madrasas is continuously carried out by the government (Ministry of Religious Affairs) and the community. The need for Indonesian people, especially the Muslim community, for madrasas that can produce students who are highly knowledgeable and strongly religious, is getting higher (Riswadi et al., 2021).

The problems faced in the development of madrasas, according to Ngalim Purwanto quoted by Ahmadi, are the problem of curriculum management, improving the quality of madrasas so that they are on par with public schools, and the appointment of teachers. On the one hand, madrasas want to maintain the portion for education or religious lessons as best as possible, on the other hand, they must provide education or general lessons on par with or at the same level as public schools.

The phenomenon of madrasas that is often underestimated is even placed as a second class. This affects the low interest of the middle and upper class to continue their children's education in madrasas. In fact, there are still some of them who enroll their children because they are forced not to be accepted into public schools. This situation results in student input to madrasas that generally have not so good intelligence, especially private madrasas when compared to students who are accepted by public schools or favorite schools.

Madrasah in general is more or less than the quality of public schools. Madrasah which is often called Islamic education becomes a second-class citizen, and the school is responsible, the quality of religion when compared to the pesantren is inferior in quality, the quality of pesantren graduates is more qualified, and the general knowledge in the madrasah is also still below the public school. The comparison of these two things is indeed unfair, because Madrasah is superior in religion to public schools and more qualified in general knowledge than Islamic boarding school graduates. Mas'ud revealed, so far it is unfair if the target of criticism is only the Madrasah world which is considered too normative, rich in memorization systems, and kills reason, even though according to experience when teaching philosophy of science in universities, especially in Semarang, many students learn by prioritizing memorization and ignoring reason (even though most of the students' raw input is not from madrasas).

The condition of madrasas that are less attractive to some people needs to improve themselves from various weaknesses, as stated that the weak point of madrasas at all levels lies in all levels, lies in their management personnel, because they are less oriented towards professionalism (Habibullah, 2012). If analyzed, there are several factors that make the quality of madrasas low, namely the quality of managers, the feudalism system, the cultural conditions of the community, the country's political policies, and too many burdens that students have to bear.

The problem in madrasas is even more complex because of the quality and feasibility of teachers' academic qualifications, even before there was a tendency that anyone could become a madrasah teacher. Teachers are a very important educational factor, because in the hands of teachers, methods, curriculum, and other learning tools will live and play a role. The man who controls the weapon determines not only the man behind the gun.

Some of the things that are the background above, the effort to develop teacher competence becomes even more important (urgent), because there are still many madrasah teachers, especially in the private sector, who still have the status of non-permanent or honorary teachers. Even the educational background, the education varies greatly, even though it has been certified, there is still a miss mach, so it affects his competence as a teacher and madrasah graduate. Teacher competency development absolutely needs to be carried out, it is hoped that it will be able to boost the dignity and quality of madrasas to become superior, competitive, and dignified Islamic institutions.

Teacher competency development will be an interesting issue to be studied and researched, especially in relation to efforts to improve performance, competence will give birth to performance that will greatly affect the output. Teachers are the spearhead of the success of quality graduate competencies that are absolutely supported by teacher competencies without ignoring other components in education.

Coaching is a process that helps individuals through their own efforts in order to find and develop their abilities with the aim of obtaining personal happiness and social benefits. Coaching includes all efforts or efforts, actions and activities aimed at the best results. Coaching here means an effort that is carried out consciously, planned, orderly and directed and the responsibility to develop abilities with all aspects in a constructive and positive manner.

Coaching is an effort to educate formal and non-formal that is carried out consciously, planned, directed, orderly, and responsibly in order to introduce, grow, guide, and develop the basics of their personality balanced, intact and harmonious,

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knowledge and skills in accordance with their talents, tendencies/desires and abilities as provisions, for the next time on their own strength to add, improve and develop themselves, their fellow citizens and environment towards the achievement of optimal human dignity, quality and ability and an independent individual.

The coaching in question is a situation that allows teachers to continuously improve their insights, knowledge, and skills. Akmal Hawi explained In terminology, teacher coaching is defined as a series of assistance efforts to teachers, especially assistance in the form of professional services carried out by school principals, school research, and supervisors as well as other coaching to improve the teaching and learning process and outcomes that will be applied by the teacher. The coaching aims to improve teachers' professional abilities through the provision of assistance, especially services to teachers.

According to Mangunhardjana, to carry out coaching, there are several approaches that must be considered by a coach (Halim & Sumarsih, 2022), among others:

a. The informative approach, which is a way to run the program by conveying information to teachers of the Islamic religious studies group. Teachers in this approach are considered ignorant and inexperienced.

b. A participative approach, in which teachers of the Islamic religious studies group are used so that it is more of a joint learning situation.

The experiential approach, in which the teachers are directly involved in the coaching, is called true learning, because of personal experience and direct involvement in the situation.

Competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that are reflected in thinking and acting. Mc Ashan quoted by Mulyasa stated...is a knowledge, skills, and abilities or capabilities that a person achieves, which become part of his or her being to the extent he or she can satisfactorily perform particular cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviors (Ilyas & Armizi, 2020). In this case, competence is defined as knowledge, skills and abilities mastered by a person who has become part of him, so that he can carry out cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviors as well as possible.

According to Saud, there are at least three terms that contain the meaning of competence, namely: 1) Competence (n) is being competent, ability (to do work); 2) Competent (adj) refer to (persons) having ability, power, authority, skill, knowledge, etc. (to do what needed); 3) Competency is rational performance which satisfactory meets the objectives for a desired condition (Reba et al., 2022).

The purpose of Madrasah is to have a strategic value in developing and empowering the Muslim community in Indonesia (Anwari et al., 2023). Madrasah aims to provide basic skills as an expansion and improvement of religious knowledge and skills obtained from madrasahs which are useful for students to develop their lives as Muslim individuals, members of society, citizens and in accordance with the level of development and prepare them to take part in education in preparing for life in society.

The goals of the madrasah can be realized by the head of the madrasah as a coach and manager in developing creative and innovative programs. The head of the madrasah has a strategic role in driving madrasah activities. The head of the madrasah makes policies with consideration of internal and external analysis and evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of the policies implemented.

Decision-making of a leader always decides something in his actions. Decision-making in an organization is a barometer of the organization's progress and backwardness because the determination of a policy decision is largely determined by decision-makers. In making decisions, it is necessary to have management ethics, especially in teacher coaching, to reduce and consider in the next decision. The Impact of a Decision Some people feel benefited Sometimes some feel disadvantaged, to anticipate and reduce the turmoil of the impact of a decision, you must carefully consider the consequences that will arise as a result of a decision.

The implementation of decisions must be carried out systematically to achieve the set goals by starting with an analysis process to find out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles. Implementing a policy must involve all parties in the organization, in the sense that all parties know and implement the policy in accordance with their respective duties and authorities and then evaluate a decision. Managing and taking policies requires the ability and ability to carry out various policies on an ongoing basis by choosing which policies are prioritized and which policies are postponed, meaning that there must be priority policy determination.

The head of the Madrasah must absolutely have strategic management skills. Strategic management is a system that has various components that are interconnected, influence each other, and move together (simultaneously) towards the same goal. Nawawi stated; Strategic management is large-scale planning (called strategic planning management) that is oriented towards a distant future (called vision), and is set as a top management decision (a decision that is fundamental and principled), in order to enable the organization to interact effectively (called mission) in an effort to produce something (operational planning to produce quality goods or services and services), directed at optimization of the achievement of goals (strategic objectives) and various objectives (operational objectives) of the organization. (Size 10 & Normal) This document is a template. An electronic copy can be downloaded from the conference website. For questions on paper guidelines, please contact the conference publications

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II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach, the analysis is carried out comprehensively. The process of collecting and presenting data on the results of the research is not only on what is visible, but also seeks to see the factors behind the development of the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious education group in the tsanawiyah madrasah.

Purposive sampling, and inductive data analysis, because in that way the context will be easier to describe. The design is temporary. Nuturistic qualitative research prepares designs continuously to adapt to the reality in the field, not using designs that have been prepared strictly. This happens because the reality in the field cannot be fully predicted.

The purposive technique of determining the sample that is the key informant as a source of data includes: 1) the head of the madrasah; 2) deputy head; 3) Head of Administration; 4) teachers of the Islamic education group, and 5) supervisors. The data collection method in this study uses; observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The data analysis process is carried out through an interactive data analysis model (Interactive Models). Mills and Humberman(Olmos-Vega et al., 2023).

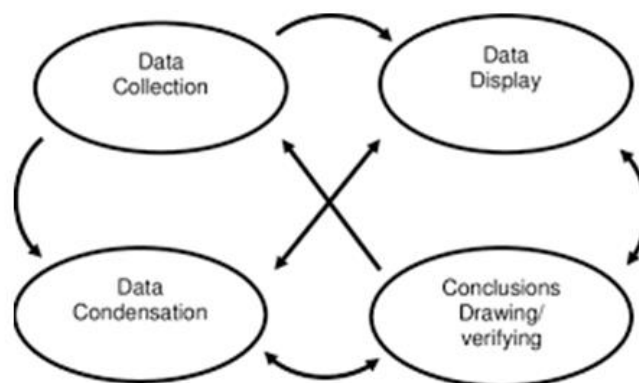


Figure 1. Data Analysis

Furthermore, to test the validity of the collected data, the researcher used an examination technique based on four criteria, namely: degree of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

III. RESULTS

1. Competence of Teachers of Islamic Religious Education Before and After Coaching

From the results of observations and interviews with the Head of Madrasah, the supervisor of development and the head of the Madrasah Education Section of Garut Regency regarding coaching activities in an effort to improve the competence of teachers of the PAI group before the implementation of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG). *"The development of teachers' abilities, competencies, and performance in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) cluster before the implementation of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG) 1), knowledge still varies, depending on the educational background.2) teaching skills have not used varied and conventional methods 3) professionalism tends to be below average, motivation is low if you do not get clear incentives or coaching, this tends to affect commitment and quality Performance. Coaching is only carried out in routine activities such as the Red Flag Raising Ceremony, routine meeting activities, and PHBI activities. The participants he fostered were all teachers and staff who included teachers from the Islamic religious education group. As for the in-depth development of competency development related to teacher competence, only 1 or 2 delegates can be included (because of limited costs), to participate in training activities if there is an outside party that organizes, then the results are investigated (dissemination)".*

2. Competency Development Planner

a. Training and Workshops

Training is a means of motivation that encourages teachers to work as teachers with optimal abilities, which is intended to improve the performance of a teacher. The provision of training is intended to be able to meet the work standards that have been set by educational institutions. Training can be interpreted as a planned effort to facilitate learning about educators related to knowledge, expertise and behavior by educators. From the results of an interview with the Head of MTs Negeri 1 Garut Regency, regarding training and workshops in the plan to develop the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious group at MTs Negeri 1 Garut Regency, he said, *" We are planning several types of training and workshops. First, there is in-depth curriculum training on Islamic religious materials, including fiqh, tafsir, and hadith. Second, we will also hold*

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workshops on innovative teaching methods, such as the use of digital media and active learning strategies. Third, we will provide training on student character development and effective classroom management. In addition, we also plan discussion sessions and share experiences between teachers to build a mutually supportive community and activate subject teacher deliberations including MGMP Islamic religious studies"

Meanwhile, according to the Deputy Head of MTs Negeri 1 Garut Regency, regarding the training and workshop in the plan to develop the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious community at MTs Negeri 1 Garut Regency, he said: *"The plan to develop the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious community is part of our efforts to improve the quality of Islamic religious teaching throughout Indonesia. Our main focus is on training and workshops designed to strengthen teachers' skills and knowledge in various aspects. In making the restra, the deputy heads of curriculum, student affairs, heads of Administrative Affairs and treasurers are involved"*

Furthermore, the results of the interview with the chairman of MGMP, regarding training and workshops in the plan for fostering the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious group, he said: *"The PAI Subject Teacher Deliberation Development (MGMP) activity plan, in the context of fostering competence and improving the performance of PAI teachers, is focused on topics that are relevant to the challenges and learning needs in the modern education era, including. Improvement of pedagogic competence for the introduction and implementation of active learning methods such as Cooperative Learning and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in PAI teaching, Based learning to integrate religious values in each PAI material. Techniques for compiling competency-based RPP-Modules that are oriented towards developing students' skills and knowledge, the use of digital learning platforms to access teaching materials, assignments, and discussions".*

b. Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning for a Teacher is an approach that invites teachers to learn through hands-on experience, both in the context of their daily profession and in the development of pedagogical and professional skills. This approach emphasizes the importance of reflection and integration of real experiences in the learning and teaching process, in order to improve the quality of education and more effective teaching practices.

From the results of an interview with the Head of State MTs, regarding experiential learning in the plan to develop the competence of Islamic religious teachers at State MTs 1 Garut Regency, he said: *"For the development of Islamic teachers' skills, we designed a more practical and applicable program. One of them is by conducting experience-based workshops, where teachers are given the opportunity to practice teaching methods in the classroom directly. For example, teachers can try to implement interactive lecture methods, thematic discussions, or faith-based projects that involve students in analyzing religious texts and relating them to daily life. After the practice session, they are given time for reflection, both individually and in groups. Here they reflect on what is going well, what needs to be improved, and how they can better connect with students in delivering Islamic religious lessons'.*

Mentoring and Guidance

Teacher competency development is one of the important aspects in improving the quality of education, especially in the context of teaching Islam. To ensure that teacher competence continues to develop, a systematic and planned strategy is needed, one of which is through mentoring and guidance. This mentoring and guidance has a very vital role in guiding teachers to master the competencies needed in their profession. The results of the interview with the Head, regarding assistance and guidance in the plan for fostering the competence of teachers of the Islamic religious community, he said: *"In our school, assistance is carried out by means of direct supervision in the classroom, as well as periodic discussions with teachers to provide feedback. Mentorship is more personal, which includes career development and moral coaching. We also plan to hold joint training for mentoring and guidance related to efforts to provide support and direction to individuals in achieving their goals, both in the context of education, career, and personal life. such as workshops on counseling guidance, the importance of the relationship between teachers as guidance and students, as well as the skills that a supervisor must have to support students' emotional, social, and academic development".*

3. Evaluation of the competency development of teachers of the Islamic religious group

1) Performance Assessment

Performance assessment in the evaluation of the competency development of teachers of the Islamic Religious community is a process carried out to measure the extent of a teacher's ability and skills in carrying out teaching duties, guiding, and transferring Islamic knowledge and values to students. This evaluation not only looks at the knowledge aspect, but also how teachers develop attitudes, behaviors, and skills that support effective learning in the classroom. From the results of the interview with the Head of MTsN, he said: *"For the performance assessment of Islamic teachers, we have several indicators that are integrated in the annual evaluation system. This process involves several aspects, such as planning, implementation, achievement of student learning outcomes, teaching skills, and teachers' professionalism in carrying out their duties, seeing involvement in participating in training, workshops and community service. We use a 360-degree evaluation model, meaning that not only the principal and supervisor provide assessments, but also peers and students provide feedback".*

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2) Feedback

The evaluation of the competency development of teachers in the Islamic religious studies group in the feedback aspect refers to the process of assessing and providing constructive information on the performance and competence of teachers in teaching Islamic religious subjects. This feedback aims to help teachers improve the quality of teaching, improve weaknesses, and strengthen their strengths in the learning process. As a result of an interview with the Head of MTsN, he said: "*Feedback is an important part of coaching. Whenever there is a class observation or evaluation activity, we always provide constructive feedback to the teacher. This feedback is not only in the form of comments regarding their strengths in teaching, but also suggestions to improve their teaching techniques that may be less effective. We also provide space for teachers to give feedback on the coaching we do*".

3) Follow-up

Evaluation of the Competency Development of Islamic Religious Teachers in the Follow-up Aspect is an important part of the process of improving the quality of education in schools. Follow-up in this context refers to the steps taken after coaching or training to ensure that the competencies that have been learned by teachers can be applied effectively in the field.

From the results of the interview with the Head of MTsN, he said: "*The follow-up of the evaluation results is very important to improve the quality of education. Teachers who are identified as needing further competency development will be directed to attend training or workshops according to their needs. For example, for teachers who need reinforcement in teaching methods, we facilitate with technology-based training or a more interactive learning approach. In addition, we also mentor senior teachers who are more experienced.*"

IV. DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted with various parties, it is clear that there is a significant difference in the competence of teachers in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) group before and after the implementation of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG). Prior to TPG, the abilities and performance of PAI teachers varied greatly and often depended on their educational background. Their teaching skills tend to be conventional and less varied, while their level of professionalism is often below average, especially if there is no clear incentive or coaching. The coaching carried out before the implementation of TPG is generally limited to routine activities and does not touch on in-depth competency development.

In an effort to improve the competence of PAI teachers, systematic and structured coaching planning is very important. One of the approaches used is through training and workshops. This training is not only intended to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers, but also to motivate them to meet the work standards that have been set. Some of the types of training planned include an in-depth Islamic religious curriculum, innovative teaching methods, student character development, and effective classroom management. The workshop is also designed to build a supportive community among teachers through discussion sessions and experience sharing.

In addition to training, experiential learning is an important approach in developing the skills of PAI teachers. By participating in experiential workshops, teachers are given the opportunity to practice hands-on teaching methods in the classroom and reflect on the results. This approach allows teachers to integrate real-life experiences in the learning and teaching process, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

Assistance and guidance are also an important part of teacher competency development. Through direct classroom supervision and periodic discussions, teachers can receive constructive feedback as well as personalized guidance for their career and moral development. This approach assists teachers in mastering the competencies required in their profession and supports students' emotional, social, and academic development.

The evaluation of PAI teacher competency development is carried out through several aspects, including performance assessment, feedback, and follow-up. Performance assessment uses a 360-degree-based evaluation model involving principals, supervisors, peers, and students. The feedback provided is constructive and aims to help teachers improve their teaching techniques. The follow-up of the evaluation is also very important, where teachers who need further competency development are directed to take part in training or workshops according to their needs, as well as get mentoring from more experienced senior teachers.

Overall, this holistic and structured coaching approach shows serious efforts in improving the competence and quality of teaching of PAI teachers. With continuous and systematic support, it is hoped that teachers can make a more significant contribution in forming a generation that is intelligent and morally good.

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Table 1. Summary of findings

Aspect	Findings
Competence Before TPG	Abilities and performance varied greatly, often dependent on educational background. Teaching skills were conventional and less varied, with professionalism often below average. Coaching was limited to routine activities without in-depth competency development.
Coaching Planning Post-TPG	Systematic and structured coaching became important. Training and workshops aimed to improve knowledge, skills, and motivation to meet work standards. Types of training included Islamic religious curriculum, innovative teaching methods, student character development, and effective classroom management. Workshops also built supportive teacher communities.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that improving the competence of teachers of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) group in Garut Regency involves several strategic and structured steps. Before the implementation of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG), the competence of PAI teachers varied and tended to be low due to the lack of in-depth coaching. However, through more targeted coaching planning, such as training and workshops, experiential learning, and mentoring and guidance, the competence of teachers can be significantly improved.

Training and workshops are designed to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and motivation, while experiential learning provides opportunities for teachers to apply hands-on teaching methods in the classroom. Mentoring and guidance also play an important role in helping teachers master the required competencies as well as supporting their professional development.

Teacher performance evaluation is carried out systematically with a 360-degree-based evaluation model, which includes assessments from principals, supervisors, peers, and students. Constructive feedback and clear follow-up are also important parts of this evaluation process, so teachers who need further development can be directed to attend training or get mentoring from senior teachers.

Overall, this holistic and structured coaching approach demonstrates a strong commitment to improving the quality of PAI teacher teaching and forming a generation of intelligent and noble character.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the participants involved in this study, including the principals, supervisors, and education officials in Kabupaten Garut, whose insights and cooperation were invaluable in conducting our observations and interviews.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the teachers of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) who generously shared their experiences and participated in the training and workshops that were crucial for this research. Their dedication and commitment to professional growth have been inspiring and essential for the success of this study.

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