# STUDENT PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IDEAL ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER (STUDY OF PAI UINSU MEDAN)

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#### Abstract

This study aims to analyze student perceptions about the characteristics of an ideal Islamic religious education teacher. The focus of the study in this study is student perceptions of the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher and student perceptions of the suitability of learning carried out by Islamic education study programs in forming the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher. The research method used is qualitative based on descriptive studies. Data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The results of this study explain according to student perceptions regarding the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher, at least the PAI teacher must have characteristics such as broad insight, communicative abilities, have morals, be a role model. Of the four characteristics are actually related to one another. To achieve all of this, the learning carried out by the PAI study program is actually appropriate to form the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher. This can be seen from the learning activities carried out by the lecturers and also the courses taught by the PAI study program which are suitable for shaping the character of the students so that they have the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher.

Keywords: Characteristics, teacher, ideal

#### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi siswa tentang ciri-ciri guru pendidikan agama Islam yang ideal. Fokus kajian dalam penelitian ini adalah persepsi mahasiswa terhadap karakteristik guru PAI ideal dan persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kesesuaian pembelajaran yang dilakukan prodi pendidikan Islam dalam membentuk karakteristik guru PAI ideal. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif berdasarkan studi deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah observasi, wawancara, dan studi dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini menjelaskan menurut persepsi siswa mengenai ciri-ciri guru PAI yang ideal, guru PAI sekurang-kurangnya harus memiliki ciri-ciri seperti wawasan yang luas, kemampuan komunikatif, berakhlak, menjadi panutan. Dari keempat ciri tersebut sebenarnya saling berkaitan satu sama lain. Untuk mencapai itu semua, pembelajaran yang dilakukan prodi PAI sebenarnya sudah tepat untuk membentuk karakteristik guru PAI yang ideal. Hal ini terlihat dari kegiatan pembelajaran yang dilakukan oleh para dosen dan juga mata kuliah yang diajarkan oleh prodi PAI yang cocok untuk membentuk karakter mahasiswa sehingga memiliki ciri-ciri guru PAI yang ideal.

Kata kunci: Karakteristik, guru, ideal

# Introduction

In essence, education is a conscious and planned effort carried out by an educator to create a learning atmosphere and learning process for students to actively develop the various potentials in them so that they have religious spiritual abilities, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills that necessary for himself and the wider society (Sham, 2021). Therefore, education has an important role in improving the quality of

Human Resources (SDM) which in the future can be the spearhead in community development. Moreover, the quality of human resources in the field of Islamic education is lacking in the quality of ideal PAI teachers.

To create a quality and highly competitive society life, higher education has a very crucial and strategic role, namely through higher education, it will produce scholar who are ready to compete and become drivers of community development, especially scholars who engaged in Islamic education. Which is no less important in educating the nation's life and shaping the character of religious students. This is as stated in UU RI number 14 article 1 point 1 of 2015 concerning teachers and lecturers, namely "teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood educators at formal education, basic education, and secondary education".

The government is very aware of the role of teachers and leactures as educators, according to what is written in article 28 of government regulation number 19 of 2005 that concerning about national education standards, stating that educators are learning agents who required four types of competencies, namely paedagogic, personality, professional and social competencies (Arifin & Muhajir, 2019). These four competencies are mandatory and must be possessed by a teacher, especially for an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher so that they are deserve to be called as a professional educator. In line with this, Yazid Al-Bustoni, Muhammad Hanif, and Zulfikar in his book the character of the ideal teacher in kitab *al-alim wa al muta'alim* say that the ideal teacher must have personality competence, social competence, professional, and paedagogic (Fitri, 2022).

Humans as social and individual beings must have their own perceptions towards the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher. According to Robin and Gibson, perception is the process by which individuals give meaning, organize and interpret impressions captured from the environment through the five senses in the form of sight, touch, hearing, feeling, and smell (Sutrisman, 2019). Based on this explanation, perception can be concluded to be a response or view that is formed in humans consciously, as a result of observations that are contained in their environment. In addition, perception is also a process needed by humans to be able to understand and interpret the things that occur around them.

Regardless, every individual has different perceptions depending on where he or she gets the information. Likewise, students of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at UIN North Sumatera have different views regarding the profile of an ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher. Moreover, at this time UIN North Sumatera has graduated many PAI students and has been accepted as educators in their respective education units. But if observed in depth from the numerous Islamic Education students who graduate each year from UIN North Sumatera Medan, it can be seen that only a few percent meet the characteristics of an ideal Islamic Education teacher. This is due to the problems that exist within the students themselves, such as many students who have difficulty in practicing the knowledge they get during lectures, students who are not proficient in speaking, lack of understanding of the theory obtained during lectures, causing these students to have difficulty in carrying out their profession as a teacher.

In spite of the internal problems of the students, another obstacles often come from the learning system implemented by each campus. So, if the campus does not have a commitment to generating ideal educators, it will usually cause several problems for the campus itself. Such as graduates from the campus are not trusted by many people, unable to compete with the outside world, the low human resources of the campus, and finally will cause a decrease of campus accreditation.

Therefore, UIN North Sumatera Medan is committed to generating ideal PAI teacher candidates. This can be observed from the faculties and departments owned by UIN North Sumatera, namely the Faculty of Tarbiyah Science and Teacher Training. In this faculty, there are also various other departments and one of them is the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) study program which specifically aims to prepare an ideal PAI educator candidates in accordance with the current time. In addition, the learning system that implemented by UIN North Sumatra which is based on wahdatul Ulum and cannot be separated from the Qur'an Hadith also supports PAI student graduates to become ideal teachers. Therefore, considering the above problems, researchers are interested in conducting further research related to the perceptions of PAI students regarding the characteristics of ideal teachers.

Research on this topic has also been conducted before, but of course this research has differences with other research. To find out the differences clearly, here are some studies that are relevant to this research, namely student perceptions of the professionalism of lecturers in the tarbiyah department of the State Islamic Religious College (STAIN) Kerinci (Zulfamanna, 2022), Student Perceptions of Lecturer Competence in IAIN Langsa's PAI Study Program (Herawati, Nazliati, 2021), Student Perceptions of Online Learning for Islamic Religious Education Courses during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Permatasari, Amirudin, & Sittika, 2021). Based on various kinds of previous research, it can be emphasized the differences and comparisons with this research. If the previous research focused on student perceptions related to lecturer competence only, it is different from this study whose research focus is on the perceptions of PAI students related to the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers.

Based on the problems mentioned above, the researchers are interested in analyzing in depth to figure out how the perceptions of students related to the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. So the focus of the research conducted has two important points, namely (1) PAI students' views regarding the characteristics of ideal teachers, (2) PAI students' views on the suitability of learning in PAI study programs in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers.

### Method

This research used a qualitative method with a descriptive study approach. This research was conducted at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan, Jalan Wiliam Iskandar pasar.V, Medan Estate, Kec. Percut Sei Tuan, Kab. Deli Serdang. This research was conducted for three months, starting from September to November 2022.

The data source of this research consists of two main points, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data are students of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan. While secondary data obtained from lecturers of State Islamic University of North Sumatra Islamic Education Study Program. In terms of data collection, the techniques used are observation, interviews and documentation studies. Observation is used to directly observe the learning system at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra Islamic Education Study Program. Interviews were used to explore in-depth information related to students' perceptions of the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. And documentation studies are used to analyze more closely the implementation of learning carried out by the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, especially the PAI study program. Data analysis uses Miles and Huberman techniques consisting of data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing.

# Result and Discussion Characteristics of PAI Teacher

The word character in (Mustoip, Japar, & MS, 2018) etymologically comes from Greek which means carving a pattern, implementing good values in an action according to moral rules, so that it is known as an individual with noble character. Meanwhile, terminologically, character is seen as a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual in everyday life. This is in line with the opinion of Thomas Lickona in (Dimyati, 2018) character is a value in action that starts from an inner awareness that can be relied upon to respond to situations in a morally good way. Character is also often associated with the terms ethics, morals, or noble values. Meanwhile, the word ideal in the Big Indonesian Dictionary means very much in accordance with what is expected (Waridah, 2017).

Thus, the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher are the distinctive traits that must be possessed by a PAI teacher in accordance with what is expected. Every teacher has different characteristics but they must have academic qualification standards and competency standards to be able to carry out learning activities professionally. The characteristics of the teacher's personality as an educator are very influential on the success of developing the character of students. The steady personality of a teacher will provide a good example to every students, so that the teacher will appear as a figure that is respected and imitated (Mustofa & Saifulloh, 2017).

# Students' Perception of the Characteristics of an Ideal PAI Teacher

In general, a teacher not only acts as an educator, but a teacher also acts as a motivator and moderator in learning activities. In this case, the teacher does not only have a role to develop the knowledge aspects of his/her students. But a teacher also has crucial role in shaping the character of his/her students. Therefore, a teacher must first have an ideal character within himself. If the teacher already has ideal characteristics or in accordance with existing competencies, the goal of shaping the soul and morals of students will be easier to achieve (Mansir & Purnomo, 2020).

Based on the results of interviews with various PAI students regarding their perceptions of the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. Then there are at least four characteristics of ideal PAI teachers, namely: 1) Insightful, 2) Having high morals, 3) Being a role model for students, and 4) Having communicative skills. The same thing was also stated by (Andriawan, 2020) in his book Ideal Teacher in Qur'anic Perspective which says that there are five characteristics of ideal PAI teachers according to the Qur'an, namely: Teaching selflessly, having communicative skills, fostering motivation to think & learn, having broad insight, and being able to use learning media.

**First,** insightful means having a view or review. Then it literally comes from the word wawas which means binoculars or a multidimensional view in seeing and describing a particular field (Andriawan, 2020). An ideal PAI teacher who is said to have broad knowledge is certainly obtained from a long education, not only formal education, but also by sharpening his insight from reading books and experiences that occur in his life to strengthen his knowledge.

Buya Hamka said in (Hamidah, Siregar, & Nuraini, 2019) that "Science basically comes from experiments and analysis carried out repeatedly giving birth to conclusions of scientific facts (truths) that are universal and temporary. Pure science always coexists with religion and vice versa pure religion will not conflict with it ". Looking at Buya Hamka's

words, it is clear that science is an important force of a nation and also by having knowledge, Allah will raise the status of a servant. As written in the Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Mujadalah verse 11:

Which means: Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is acquainted with what you do. (Al-Mujadalah: 11)

The verse indicates to all humans and especially to all PAI teachers to have broad knowledge. The same thing was also conveyed by Hasan Langgulung (Marzukhoh & Shobahiya, 2017) saying that PAI teachers are scholars. The word ulama is the plural of the word alim which means someone who has knowledge above the ability of others. Therefore, the ideal PAI teacher should have broad insight so that it is easy to provide lessons.

**Second,** having good communicative skills. According to PAI students of State Islamic University of North Sumatera, a teacher should have good communicative skills. Because if PAI teacher is able to communicate well to students, the lessons that delivered will be more easily absorbed by students and also the teacher will be easier in establishing a good relationship with students. Mulyana in (Andriawan, 2020) stated that one of the keys to teacher success in teaching in the classroom is the teacher's ability to build communication with students. No matter how smart the teacher in his/her field is, if it is not supported by communicative skills in delivering lessons, it is certain that students will experience confusion.

Furthermore, PAI students of North Sumatra State Islamic University provide an overview of how good communication should be owned by ideal PAI teachers, such as good words, making an impression on the hearts of students, and easily understood by many people. Moreover, Allah has also explained in the Qur'an regarding the ethics of effective communication. The communication ethics are contained in several terms, such as *qaulan baligha* (words that penetrate and imprint in the soul), *qaulan maisuro* (gentle speech), *qaulan karima* (good words), *qaulan ma'rufaa* (good words), *qaulan sadidaa* (good speech) (Andriawan, 2020).

Third, having high morals. Talking about morality broadly, in (Lickona, 2022) that morality is related to the way a person treats others. Having high morals means having the courage to act by being determined to act in accordance with the demands of the profession, and being aware of their obligations, and having high ideals. Teachers have moral responsibility, namely the ability to live the appropriate behavior and ethics and can practice it. As stated by PAI students at North Sumatra State Islamic University that a teacher is said to have high morals if the teacher has noble character. Where the high moral responsibility of a teacher in (Darmadi, 2015) can be seen from his attitude in understanding the abilities of his students. The same thing is also expressed by Danim in (Soviana, 2013) explained that someone who has high morale will be shown from work enthusiasm, work discipline, work participation and work initiative.

Fourth, being a role model (suri tauladan). A characteristic that must be possessed by a PAI teacher is being able to present himself as a roll model. Roll Models are those who have a leadership spirit by providing examples that can be imitated by others, meaning that all movements, actions or speech will be a model for students (Gichara, 2021). The same thing is also expressed by A. Qodri and Syafruddin Nurdin in (Julhadi, 2020) teachers are role models, who are responsible for providing guidance and direction to students in their

development, both physically and mentally so that students are able to carry out their duties as caliphs of Allah Swt. on earth.

Thus, it can be understood that role model means someone who is used as a standard or ideal figure by students because of their role. As stated by UINSU PAI students that a teacher is said to be a good role model if the teacher has good character, just like the Prophet Muhammad who became an exemplary example (uswatun hasannah) found in QS. Al-Ahzab verse 21:

Which means: There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.

# Students' Perception of the Suitability of Learning in PAI Study Program in Shaping the Characteristics of Ideal PAI Teachers

The formation of ideal PAI teacher characteristics can actually be started from the learning system implemented by each university. Moreover, the department that aims to generate future teachers. This study was conducted to see and analyze how students' perceptions of the suitability of learning carried out by the PAI Study Program of State Islamic University of North Sumatera. Based on the results of interviews conducted with PAI study program students, the data obtained that the learning conducted by the PAI study program is appropriate in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers.

The formation of PAI teachers' characteristics can be conducted through character education that can be implemented by educational units. Character education is any effort that can be made to influence the character of students (Sudrajat, 2011). For example, PAI study program students mentioned that one of the efforts and character education efforts implemented by the PAI study program is through the ethics course of the teaching profession.

The course of professional ethics and the teaching profession is one of the courses taught to students, in the course provided lessons on how later when becoming a PAI teacher who has proper ethics, has a good character. Hence, the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher are born, in accordance with the existing competencies. Among the competencies that must be possessed by a teacher who describes the characteristics of an ideal PAI teacher are paedagogic, personality, professional, and social competencies (Jajat Sudrajat, 2020).

Furthermore, the informant answered the researcher's question about the characteristics of learning applied by the PAI study program in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers, namely:

Based on what I see, there are several characteristics of learning applied by the PAI study program in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers, for example, education emphasizes aspects of normative values, educators become role models for their students, and learn actively and centered on students.

Selanjutnya, informan menjawab pertanyaan peneliti tentang ciri-ciri pembelajaran

In addition, from several questions posed to students of the PAI Study Program at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra related to the suitability of learning in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers, one of the questions asked was about the extent of the influence of learning by example in shaping the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. The majority of students answered that learning with role models has a positive impact in shaping and instilling the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. Because if the educator

(lecturer) has a good role model as exemplified by the Prophet, surely the PAI study program students will imitate the character of the lecturer.

#### Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion above, conclusions can be drawn, namely: (1) the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers according to students' perceptions are having a broad insight, having high morals, having communicative skills, and being a role model for their students. (2) The learning applied by the PAI Study Program of State Islamic University of North Sumatera is appropriate to form the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers. (3) To shape the characteristics of ideal PAI teachers, at least the role of teachers or educators is very essential, because educators are role models for students. (3) Being a teacher must have different characteristics from other teachers, but still appropriate and walk in their respective corridors.

In summary, this research is also useful for readers, especially for prospective PAI teachers in the future, so that they can prepare themselves to become professional teachers who have the characteristics expected by society, the law and the Qur'an Hadith. In conclusion, another benefit of this research is that it can be used as an evaluation material for the PAI study program of UIN North Sumatra Medan in terms of its learning process in order to form prospective PAI teachers who have ideal characteristics.

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