Interpersonal Communication of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Teachers in Developing Students' Spiritual and Social Attitudes

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Abstract:
Interpersonal communication is a fundamental component of the educational process, particularly within the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), as it serves not only to transmit knowledge but also to developing students' spiritual and social attitudes. This study aims to analyze the forms and strategies of interpersonal communication implemented by Islamic Religious Education teachers in fostering students' spiritual and social attitudes at SMP Shofa Marwa Jember. This research is a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. The results of the study indicate interpersonal communication among PAI teachers as a medium of da'wah and moral cultivation. Teachers perceive communication not merely as a tool for transferring knowledge but as a means to build emotional and moral connections with students. The communication model applied is two-way, empathetic, and reflective, fostering a dialogical and religious learning atmosphere. This strategy effectively increased students' spiritual attitudes, such as worship discipline, honesty, and responsibility. Increased students' social attitudes including empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect. Teachers' exemplary behavior (uswah hasanah) plays a central role in the internalization of Islamic values. In conclusion, PAI teachers' interpersonal communication contributes significantly to increasing religious education more meaningful and transformative. Through empathy, dialogue, and modeling, teachers help students develop balanced spiritual and social character.

Keywords:
interpersonal communication, Islamic religious education teacher, spiritual attitude, social attitude

INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication is the process of exchanging messages between individuals that occurs directly, openly, and with mutual understanding (DeVito, 2016). Interpersonal communication is a crucial foundation in educational interactions, particularly in the context of Islamic religious education, for shaping students' spiritual and social development (Kusman, 2019). A teacher's communication skills not only reflect politeness but also play a crucial role in instilling the values of spirituality, ethics, and morals that are integral to national education goals (Devi & Irham, 2022).

Islamic Religious Education, particularly in the context of SMP Shofa Marwa Jember, plays a crucial role in shaping student discipline and religious character (Amin et al., 2021). This is particularly important considering that Islamic Religious Education in secondary schools often focuses more on cognitive aspects and memorization, thereby limiting students' ability to apply

religious values in their daily lives (Firmansyah et al., 2025). This context is highly relevant at Shofa Marwa Junior High School in Jember, an educational institution based on Islamic values and committed to shaping a generation with noble character. In today's modern and digital era, there is a growing tendency toward a decline in social sensitivity and spiritual discipline among teenagers. Therefore, effective interpersonal communication from PAI teachers is essential to support the development of students' potential, both in expressing opinions and in fostering a caring attitude toward others (Hambali & Atim, 2024; Rahmah, 2023). This study will specifically examine how interpersonal communication strategies implemented by PAI teachers at SMP Shofa Marwa Jember contribute to the formation of students' spiritual and social attitudes (Pertiwi, 2020).

Spiritual attitude refers to a person's internal dimension, encompassing beliefs, transcendent values, and a relationship with God, whereas social attitude refers to an individual's behavior and interactions with their surrounding environment (Shofia et al., 2023). This spiritual attitude is reflected in behaviors such as being diligent in worship, showing gratitude, and having moral integrity, while social attitude is manifested through empathy, mutual cooperation, and respect for diversity (Azima et al., 2025). Thus, interpersonal communication by PAI teachers serves as a catalyst in facilitating the internalization of these values, which in turn will influence students' learning motivation and character development (Amin et al., 2022).

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach to thoroughly analyze the forms of interpersonal communication used by PAI teachers at Shofa Marwa Junior High School and their impact on the development of students' spiritual and social attitudes at Shofa Marwa Junior High School in Jember. The data collection process in this study involved participant observation, in-depth interviews with PAI teachers, students, and school staff, as well as the analysis of relevant documents to obtain comprehensive data (Ningsih & Fitria, 2023). This approach allowed the researchers to understand the social context and dynamic interactions that shape the process of religious value internalization in students (Biantoro & Rahmatullah, 2025). The collected data will be analyzed using an interactive model that includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions to provide a comprehensive overview of the research subject (Firmansyah et al., 2025).

RESULT

The results of data reduction from observations, interviews with teachers, students, and the curriculum vice principal of SMP Shofa Marwa Jember. The analysis revealed the following findings regarding the form of interpersonal communication of PAI teachers at SMP Shofa Marwa and its impact on the development of students' spiritual and social attitudes at SMP Shofa Marwa Jember, presented in descriptive form as follows:

1. The Meaning of Interpersonal Communication in Islamic Religious Education Learning

The teacher interprets interpersonal communication as a means of building positive emotional relationships between teachers and students, not just cognitively delivering material. This indicates that the teacher views communication as a humanistic and affective approach that emphasizes the reception of Islamic values through the heart, rather than just the mind. Interpersonal communication is seen as a medium for character formation, in line with the education of the heart approach in Islamic education.

2. Influence on the Formation of Spiritual and Social Attitudes

The teacher stated that the influence of interpersonal communication is very significant on students' spiritual and social development. When teachers are able to listen, appreciate, and set an example, students become more open to religious values and learn to be polite, empathetic, and respectful of others. This shows that interpersonal communication serves a dual function: promoting the internalization of spiritual values (faith) and building social intelligence (social morals) through interactive relationships.

3. Objectives of Teacher-Student Communication

The main goal of teacher-student communication is to instill Islamic values completely (faith, worship, and morals). Teachers view communication not just as a tool for transferring knowledge, but as a medium for building Islamic character. This approach aligns with the goals of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the Merdeka Curriculum, which is to shape individuals who are faithful and of noble character.

4. Form of Interpersonal Communication in the Classroom

The teacher employs two-way communication, providing a space for students to actively ask questions, express their opinions, and share their experiences. Feedback in the form of praise, motivation, or correction is given in a constructive manner. The teacher's communication style reflects a participatory and empathetic approach, capable of fostering a democratic classroom atmosphere that promotes value formation.

5. Communication Style Adjustment

The teacher adjusts their communication style to the students' characters and backgrounds. A gentle approach is used for quiet students, while an active approach is directed toward more expressive students. This demonstrates the teacher's ability to apply differential communication, where interpersonal sensitivity is key to effectiveness in value-based learning.

6. Media and Approaches Used

Teachers use dialogical and reflective approaches, such as group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and shared reflections. This approach fosters horizontal communication between teachers and students, thereby strengthening students' sense of belonging and emotional engagement with Islamic Religious Education (IRE) material.

7. Impact on Students' Spiritual Attitudes

The teacher observed an improvement in spiritual attitudes: religious discipline, responsibility, honesty, and awareness of doing good. This indicates the effectiveness of interpersonal communication in fostering the internalization of religious values, which is evident in behavior.

8. Impact on Students' Social Attitudes

Interpersonal communication fosters social attitudes such as empathy, mutual respect, and solidarity. Teachers serve as role models (uswah) in social interaction. PAI learning through interpersonal communication plays a role in building an Islamic social culture in the classroom, in line with the values of brotherhood and noble character.

9. Challenges in Communication

Teachers face challenges such as differences in students' characters and backgrounds, as well as students who are difficult to open up due to environmental factors. This challenge underscores the importance of empathetic communication skills and patience in educating a socially and emotionally diverse generation.

10. Efforts to Overcome Obstacles

The teacher addressed this by creating a safe and open learning environment and demonstrating empathy and a non-judgmental attitude. This strategy demonstrates the teacher's

ability to apply the principles of therapeutic interpersonal communication, which supports the formation of trust.

11. Emphasized Islamic Values

Teachers often emphasize the values of honesty, trustworthiness, courtesy, responsibility, compassion, and helping others. These values are the core of Islamic moral education, which is effectively transmitted through daily communication, not just verbal instruction.

12. The Role of Examples (Uswah Hasanah)

The teacher emphasized that role modeling is the main element that strengthens the communication message. Students find it easier to imitate real behavior than just listen to advice. This highlights teachers' awareness of the example-based communication model (modeling communication), where the teacher's behavior serves as the primary message in character education.

Overall, the interview results suggest that interpersonal communication by PAI teachers is at the heart of the value education and character development process. Through an empathetic, dialogical, and exemplary approach, the teacher successfully made PAI learning not only informative but also transformative. Good communication between teachers and students can build a positive atmosphere, foster spiritual attitudes, and strengthen social solidarity within the school environment.

DISCUSSION

Interpersonal communication, as applied by PAI teachers at Shofa Marwa Junior High School in Jember, plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and ethics, aligning with the goals of Islamic religious education, which focuses not only on cognitive but also affective aspects (Firmansyah et al., 2025). Through effective interpersonal communication, PAI teachers can awaken students' spiritual awareness, encourage critical thinking, and facilitate deep reflection on religious values for application in daily life (Gustina et al., 2025). This is crucial considering that interpersonal communication skills are a primary foundation for educators in delivering material and shaping students' character (Rufi'ah et al., 2019). This approach also allows teachers to internalize Islamic values holistically, encompassing moral and social dimensions, which is highly relevant for addressing the challenge of moral degradation among students (Biantoro & Rahmatullah, 2025).

Through an empathetic, dialogical approach and real-life examples, such as uswah hasanah, it significantly influences students' learning motivation and the development of their emotional and spiritual intelligence. Effective communication skills for PAI teachers are crucial for instilling spiritual and social values, such as politeness and noble character, which are the essence of Islamic religious education (Devi & Irham, 2022). Students' spiritual and social attitudes can develop optimally when PAI teachers employ various communication methods, such as interactive lectures, group discussions, and individual guidance, tailored to students' needs and learning styles (Suryantoro et al., 2025). These methods not only transfer knowledge but also cultivate empathy, patience, and self-awareness, which are essential for developing an Islamic character (Qohar & Widyaningrum, 2025). Through interactive and personal interpersonal communication, PAI teachers can encourage students' active participation in learning activities, such as group discussions and worship practices, which contribute to improved retention and the transfer of religious values into their daily lives (Azima et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

The interpersonal communication of PAI teachers at Shofa Marwa Junior High School in Jember uses an empathetic, dialogical, and real-life example or uswah hasanah approach. This makes PAI learning not only informative but also transformative. Effective interpersonal communication between teachers and students can foster spiritual and social attitudes in students at Shofa Marwa Jember Junior High School.

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