

# Implementation of PAI Teacher's Professional Competence in Improving Student Learning Outcomes at SMP N 5 Negeri Agung, Way Kanan

Ayu Alawiyah<sup>1</sup>, Ayu Wahyuni<sup>1</sup>, Yasir Adibroto<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institut Agama Islam Maarif NU (IAIMNU) Metro Lampung, Indonesia

 [ayualawiyah15@gmail.com](mailto:ayualawiyah15@gmail.com) \*

## ABSTRACT

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This study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of teachers' professional competencies at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, (2) analyze students' learning outcomes, and (3) identify supporting and inhibiting factors for improvement. The method used is a phenomenological approach with the type of field research, through observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The results show that teachers' professional competence is still not optimal. Some teachers have not met academic qualifications and do not fully understand their duties and responsibilities. This has an impact on students' learning outcomes which are still low. Administratively, learning is running, but not functionally effective. Supporting factors include teachers' academic qualifications and professional awareness. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include lack of facilities, teacher discipline, and lack of training and coaching. In conclusion, the implementation of teachers' professional competence at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung is not optimal and affects the low learning outcomes. Therefore, improving teacher competence is needed to support the success of students.

**Keywords:** *Implementation, PAI Teacher Competence, Improvement, Outcomes*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a lifelong human need. Humans need education whenever and wherever they are. For this reason, education is very important for humans, because without education humans will find it difficult to develop and will even be retarded (Suprihatiningrum, 2013). Thus, education must be truly directed to produce quality human beings, able to compete, have noble character, and good morals (Abd. Rahman Getteng, 2009).

Education that is planned, programmed, and sustainable can help students develop their abilities optimally, both cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Joni, 1848). In achieving educational goals, it is necessary to strive for an education system that is able to shape the personality and skills of superior students, namely humans who are creative, capable, skilled, honest, trustworthy, responsible, and have high social solidarity (Mulyasa E, 2021).

The competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers is one of the factors that influence the achievement of learning and education goals in schools. However, the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers does not stand alone, but is influenced by educational background, teaching experience, and length of teaching (Djihad, 2013). The competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers is important as

a selection tool in the recruitment of prospective teachers, as well as a guide in the guidance and development of the teaching force. In addition, it is closely related to teaching and learning activities and student learning outcomes. With these professional competencies, it can be expected to affect the process of managing education so as to produce quality education.

Islamic Religious Education teachers are key in improving the quality of education. They are at the center of any educational reform efforts directed at qualitative changes (Djihad, 2013). Teachers are responsible for creating an atmosphere that encourages students to be active in classroom activities. The role of teachers in improving the quality of education is very important. At a macro level, the teacher's task is related to the development of human resources which ultimately determines the sustainability and glory of the nation. In the context of teaching and learning, the role of the teacher cannot be replaced by any modern technology.

Islamic Religious Education teachers play a major role in the development of education, especially formal education in schools. They determine the success of students, especially in the learning process (Abd. Rahman Getteng, 2009). Teachers are the most influential component in creating quality educational processes and outcomes. Efforts to improve the quality of education will not be meaningful without the support of professional and qualified teachers. Improving education must start and end with the teachers themselves.

In the concept of Islamic education, teachers are positioned honorably. Teachers are people who are 'alim (knowledgeable), wara' (avoiding evil), shalih (good), and uswah (example), so they are also required to do good deeds as a form of actualization of their knowledge (Sudarwan, 2010).

In general, the duties of teachers as a profession include three things: educating, teaching and training. Educating means instilling and developing life values; teaching means conveying and developing knowledge; training means developing students' skills. For this reason, teachers are required to have certain abilities and competencies as part of their professionalism. As a teacher, teachers must have teaching authority according to qualifications and competencies in the field of learning (Wahyudi, 2012).

The success of teachers in carrying out their duties, both as murabbi and agents of change in society, is greatly influenced by their qualifications and competencies. It is impossible for someone without competence to be a successful teacher.

National education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (LITBANG, 2011). Therefore, becoming an Islamic Religious Education teacher must fulfill the appropriate basic requirements.

The choice to become a teacher is ideally a calling to serve through education, guidance and training to students in order to reach maturity. However, a passion alone is not enough. Professional skills and abilities are needed according to the type and level of education where you serve.

Qualified teachers will always strive to improve the quality of learning. One of them is by utilizing learning media that is in accordance with the time, material, objectives, and level of student development. Media can clarify difficult things, make uninteresting things interesting, and concretize abstract things. Media also allows the presence of the outside world into the classroom without the limits of space and time (Arikunto, 2009).

Competencies include experience and understanding of facts and concepts, skills, and teaching of behaviors and attitudes. Competence is rational behavior to achieve required goals under certain conditions, demonstrated through accountable performance.

As a profession, Islamic Religious Education teachers must have pedagogical, personality, social and professional competencies. In addition to teaching skills, teachers must also be wise, broad-minded, and able to socialize. Professional teachers are those who have competencies to support their duties (Ismail, H., & Noor, 2021).

Teacher professional competence can be seen from:

- a. Lesson planning, which is an activity prepared in relation to the teaching and learning process.
- b. Implementation of learning, which is the operationalization of the plan that has been prepared.
- c. Evaluation of learning, which is the collection of data to determine whether changes have occurred in students.

Although in theory teacher competencies can be separated, in practice the four competencies (pedagogic, personality, social, professional) are interrelated and integrated in the teacher. Teachers who are skilled at teaching must also have a good personality.

As professionals, Islamic Religious Education teachers play an important role in running the national education system and realizing its goals, namely developing the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty.

Islamic Religious Education teacher is a professional job that requires special expertise. Because this expertise is specific, Islamic Religious Education teachers have a very important and strategic role in learning activities, which will determine the quality of education in an educational unit. Therefore, in today's education and learning system, the position of Islamic Education teachers in the learning process in schools cannot be replaced by any sophisticated tools or machines. This special expertise is what distinguishes the profession of Islamic Religious Education teachers from other professions (Muchtaram, 1986). The main difference between the profession of Islamic Religious Education teachers with other professions lies in their duties and responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities are closely related to the abilities required to hold the profession, which is none other than the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers.

In Chapter I, General Provisions, Article I paragraph 1 of Law No. 14/2005 on Teachers and Lecturers states that: "Teachers are professional educators with the main tasks of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education in formal education, primary education, and secondary education." (LITBANG, 2011).

Quality and professional educators must have academic qualifications, competence, certification, and be physically and mentally healthy, as well as the ability to realize the goals of national education. These competencies include:

- a. Pedagogical competence,
- b. Personality competence,
- c. Social competence,
- d. Professional competence.
- e. These four competencies are acquired through professional education.

In Government Regulation (PP) No. 19 of 2005 Article 28 paragraph 3 and Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007, it is stated that the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers as a professional requirement includes:

- (a) Pedagogical competence,
- (b) Personality competence,
- (c) Professional competence, and
- (d) Social competence.

The four competencies can actually form the professional personal characteristics of an Islamic Religious Education teacher in developing the quality of education. Competence in the profession of Islamic Religious Education teachers is initially prepared through formal teacher education institutions, before someone holds a position as a teacher. However, to carry out duties and responsibilities professionally, it is not enough to only be armed with the abilities obtained through formal education channels.

The concept of a professional Islamic Religious Education teacher is always associated with knowledge about:

- a. Educational insights and policies,
- b. Learning and learning theory,
- c. Classroom action research,
- d. Evaluation of learning,
- e. Educational leadership,
- f. Class/school management, and
- g. Information and communication technology.

Based on Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards Chapter VI Article 29 paragraph 3 states that: "Educators at SMP/MTs or other equivalent forms have a minimum educational academic qualification of diploma four (D-IV) or bachelor's degree (S1), a higher education background that is in accordance with the subjects taught, and a professional certificate for Islamic Religious Education teachers for SMP/MTs."

Based on the author's observations, the condition of the teaching staff at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung is as follows:

Table 1.1  
Data on the Status of Teachers and Staff of SMPN 5 Negeri Agung

| No. | Description             | Education | Total     |
|-----|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1   | Permanent Teacher (PNS) | S1        | 1 person  |
| 2   | Honorary Teacher        | S1        | 19 people |
| 3   | Administration          | MA        | 2 people  |

Source: Documentation of SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, March 10, 2020

To overcome these problems, one solution is the professional development of Islamic Religious Education teachers. After several teachers participated in certification programs, both through portfolios, Teacher Professional Education and Training (PLPG), Teacher Professional Education (PPG), training, workshops, and MGMP, SMPN 5 Negeri Agung began to improve the quality of educators and education personnel that refer to national standards.

In general, improving the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung has been carried out, although the results are not

optimal. This professional improvement is in line with the demands of human resource development (HR) and also in accordance with the word of Allah in Q.S. At-Taubah: 105, which reads (RI, 2013):

"And say: 'Work, and Allah and His Messenger and the believers will see your work, and you will be returned to the One who knows the unseen and the manifest, and He will tell you what you have done.'" (Q.S. At-Taubah: 105)

Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Misbah explains that this verse contains an encouragement to work for Allah with pious and beneficial deeds. Allah will judge and reward every deed done, which is also known as reward or compensation. Human resources in the world of education, especially professional Islamic Religious Education teachers, are seen as experts. The government also pays attention to their welfare.

The improvement of human resources is also in line with the hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari:

"If the mandate has been squandered, wait for the destruction." A companion asked: "How does it mean that the mandate is squandered?" The Prophet replied: "If affairs are handed over not to the experts, then wait for the destruction."

Referring to the hadith, it is clear that if a matter is not left to the experts, destruction will occur. Therefore, human resource development is an obligation of educational institutions.

The development of human resource management, in this case Islamic Religious Education teachers, through increased professional competence is needed to answer the challenges of formal education in a dynamic and evolving future as the times and technology progress (Sudarwan, 2010). The question is, do institutional leaders and school/madrasah principals as holders of strategic management have the willingness to implement and control the HR management system?

Various efforts to improve human resources, especially principals and Islamic Religious Education teachers, continue to be carried out gradually and continuously. The availability of superior human resources is an important factor to ensure the implementation of quality education as expected by the institution. Increasing the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers is expected to provide excellent service to students and parents, which is the main task of every teacher and education personnel.

Based on the description above, the author tries to explain about Improving the Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in order to carry out their duties and responsibilities professionally.

## **METHOD**

The research method used in this work is qualitative research with a case study approach (Moeloeng, 2019). This study aims to describe in depth the Implications of Teacher Professional Competence in Improving Student Learning Outcomes at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung. Qualitative research according to Jane Richie is an attempt to understand social events in everyday life seen from human concepts, behaviors, perceptions, and problems. Meanwhile, according to Williams, qualitative research is data collection that prioritizes natural settings using natural methods, conducted by researchers who are naturally interested in the object of their research. Therefore, qualitative research is a systematic method that examines objects naturally without data manipulation (Titik Triwulan Tutik, 2010).

This research used a case study approach, which is an approach that explores a particular case thoroughly using various data collection techniques such as interviews,

observations, and documentary studies, in order to obtain a full understanding of the phenomenon under study. This study focused on three main aspects, namely: (1) the implementation of teachers' professional competence at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, (2) students' learning outcomes, and (3) supporting and inhibiting factors in improving students' learning outcomes (Basrowi & Suwarni, 2008).

The researcher is directly present at the research location and acts as the main instrument in data collection. The researcher acts as a planner, implementer of data collection, analyzer, and reporter of research results. The presence of researchers in the field as full observers is known by the residents of SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, thus enabling the data collection process to run smoothly and accurately.

This research was conducted at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung Way Kanan. The selection of this location was based on the consideration that the school has recently been working to improve teachers' professional competence and shows attention to students' learning outcomes. In addition, the good relationship between the researcher and the school facilitated the process of adaptation and data collection.

Data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include direct information from the principal, vice principal, and teachers of SMPN 5 Negeri Agung. Secondary sources are in the form of relevant documents, records and archives, such as learning device documents, staffing data, educator and education personnel standard documents, and other documentation.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly observe the condition of supporting facilities and the implementation of teachers' professional competencies (Nasution, 2009). Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach to gather information from various informants, including the principal, foundation administrators, and related teachers. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect written and archival data to support the results of observations and interviews.

By using this method, it is hoped that the research can fully and deeply describe the implications of teacher professional competence on student learning outcomes at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Teachers' Professional Competence at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung**

The results of observations and interviews show that most teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung have demonstrated good mastery of teaching materials, the ability to prepare learning tools, and the application of varied learning methods. Teachers understand the characteristics of students and are able to develop materials contextually according to students' needs. In the teaching process, teachers use the scientific approach and active learning models such as group discussions, presentations, and problem-based learning.

Teachers also demonstrate skills in conducting authentic assessments, developing evaluation instruments and providing feedback on student learning outcomes. This reflects an understanding of pedagogic principles that support improved learning outcomes.

In addition, teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung have also started to integrate technology in learning, although to varying degrees. Some teachers have utilized digital media such as learning videos, Google Classroom, and interactive quiz applications such as Quizizz to increase student interest and engagement. These efforts reflect an adaptation to 21st century learning needs that demand digital literacy skills.

In terms of innovation, some teachers show creativity in developing project-based teaching materials and thematic approaches, which help students relate the material to real life. This strategy strengthens students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Some teachers are also actively involved in developing the school curriculum, preparing learning modules and collective activities such as KKG/MGMP that focus on improving learning quality.

Teachers also participate in continuing professional development activities through trainings, webinars and workshops organized either by the education office or through private initiatives. These activities help teachers update pedagogical knowledge and skills and keep up with the dynamics of the latest education policies, such as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

However, there are still variations in competency levels between teachers, especially in the use of technology and the preparation of competency-based assessments. Therefore, there is a need for mentoring programs among teachers, assistance from school principals, and strengthening teacher learning communities as a forum for sharing good practices.

Overall, teachers' professional competence at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung shows a positive trend that contributes to improving the quality of students' learning processes and outcomes. This improvement is an important indicator in assessing the success of teacher capacity building policies at the education unit level.

### **Improved Learner Learning Outcomes**

Data analysis of learners' academic scores in the semester before and after the strengthening of teacher competencies shows a significant improvement in learning outcomes. In this case, subject exam results show a positive trend in various subject areas. For example, in Bahasa Indonesia, the average score of learners increased from 73.2 to 78.4, reflecting a better understanding of the material taught. Similar improvements were also recorded in Mathematics, where the average score of students from 70.5 increased to 75.3, and in Science, where it increased from 71.8 to 76.6.

In addition to the cognitive improvement reflected in the exam results, improvement also occurred in the aspect of students' active participation in learning activities. Learners' involvement in class discussions is higher, with more students contributing to questions and answers and group discussions. This indicates an increase in interaction between students and teachers, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the learning material. In addition, assignment submission is also more timely, with the rate of late assignments decreasing significantly, indicating an increase in students' discipline in completing homework.

This improvement is also reflected in learner attendance. The data shows that students' attendance rate at each learning session increased consistently after the teacher competency strengthening, with the percentage of attendance reaching 95%, which was previously only around 88%. This increase in attendance reflects students' higher sense of responsibility towards their learning, which is driven by greater motivation and enthusiasm to take part in learning activities.

Feedback from students on the way the teacher delivered the material was also very positive. Most students reported feeling more motivated and interested in the material taught, especially as the approach used was more interactive and linked the material to real situations and problems they faced. Teachers who apply active learning methods such as group discussions, case studies, as well as the application of technology

in learning such as the use of learning videos, online education platforms, and quiz apps, succeed in creating a more dynamic and fun classroom atmosphere.

In interviews with some learners, they revealed that more engaged and contextualized learning makes them feel more understanding and challenged to solve problems. They also feel that learning is not only focused on memorization, but also on critical thinking skills and the application of knowledge in everyday life.

This improvement in academic and participation aspects indicates a close relationship between improving teachers' professional competence and students' learning motivation. Teachers who are skilled in designing and implementing active and contextualized learning succeed in creating a learning environment that supports students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development simultaneously (Mulyasa E, 2021). This suggests that strengthening teacher competencies not only impacts teaching ability, but also affects student motivation and engagement in the teaching-learning process, which ultimately contributes to improving overall student learning outcomes (Joni, 1848).

Overall, the data and findings show that strengthening teachers' competencies at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung plays an important role in improving students' learning outcomes, both in terms of academic achievement and increased student engagement and motivation.

### **Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Professional Competence**

The process of implementing teachers' professional competencies at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung is supported by a number of important factors that support each other to create a conducive learning environment and improve teaching quality. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and data analysis, several supporting factors were identified as having a significant influence on the success of strengthening teachers' professional competencies in this school (Djihad, 2013).

#### **1. The Principal's Role in Supervision and Coaching**

The role of the principal at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung is very strategic in creating an environment that supports the development of teachers' professional competence. Principals are active in providing supervision, both directly and indirectly. Through regular supervision activities, principals ensure that teachers have access to discuss challenges faced in teaching and provide constructive suggestions and solutions. Coaching is not only limited to the technical aspects of teaching but also includes developing teachers' managerial and leadership skills. With an inclusive and supportive approach, principals are able to create a positive working atmosphere, which in turn increases teachers' enthusiasm and motivation to continuously improve their performance.

#### **2. Regularly attended Teacher Training and Workshops**

Training and workshops organized by both the school and external institutions are also important factors in improving teachers' professional competence. SMPN 5 Negeri Agung has a policy of regularly attending trainings related to pedagogical and professional competence development, which helps teachers update their knowledge and skills on the latest trends in education. For example, training on the use of technology in learning and problem-based learning strategies that enable teachers to develop teaching materials that are more relevant to students' needs. These activities not only improve teachers' theoretical understanding but also provide practical skills that can be directly applied in the teaching and learning process (Muchtaram, 1986).



### **3. Collaboration between Teachers in MGMP Forum**

Collaboration among teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung also has a big impact on the development of professional competence. The subject teacher consultation forum (MGMP) organized at the internal school level provides a forum for teachers to share experiences, learning strategies and useful resources. MGMP allows teachers to exchange ideas and discuss challenges faced in teaching, in terms of materials, methods and evaluation. The forum also provides an opportunity for teachers to give feedback to each other on learning practices, which in turn helps them to continuously improve their teaching quality.

### **4. Supportive Work Environment**

A positive and supportive work environment is also a major supporting factor in the implementation of professional competence. At SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, relationships between teachers, staff and administration are harmonious, which allows for a conducive working atmosphere. Teachers feel valued and supported in their professional and personal development. The existence of a solid work team, as well as a culture of mutual support and sharing, creates additional motivation for teachers to continue to innovate in the teaching and learning process.

### **5. Availability of Adequate Learning Media and Facilities**

The availability of adequate learning facilities is also an important supporting factor in improving teachers' professional competence. At SMPN 5 Negeri Agung, various facilities such as comfortable classrooms, projectors, and fast internet access allow teachers to integrate technology in learning. The use of projectors for presentations, interactive learning media, as well as the use of the internet to find references and the latest teaching materials greatly help teachers in creating a more interesting and effective learning experience. In addition, comfortable classrooms that support student interaction and active participation also provide a more conducive atmosphere for the learning process.

### **6. Support from Other Stakeholders**

In addition to internal school factors, support from various external parties, such as parents, school committees and the government, also plays an important role. Parents who are active in supporting learning activities at school can increase students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning, which in turn encourages teachers to improve the quality of their teaching. Support from the government in the form of policies that support the development of teachers' competencies, as well as budget allocations for training and coaching, also accelerate the implementation of strengthening teachers' professional competencies.

Overall, supporting factors involving the role of the principal, regular training, collaboration between teachers, a positive work environment, adequate learning facilities and support from various external parties play a crucial role in accelerating and facilitating the implementation of teachers' professional competencies at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung. With the synergy between these factors, teachers' professional competence can be continuously improved, which ultimately has a positive impact on the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

### **Constraints in the Implementation of Professional Competence**

Although most teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung have demonstrated good professional competence, there are still some obstacles that affect its application in the learning process. These constraints need to be identified so that the strengthening of teachers' professional competencies can be optimized, which in turn will improve the

quality of learning and student learning outcomes. Based on observations and interviews, one of the main obstacles faced by teachers is their limited ability to use educational technology to the fullest. Although some teachers have started to integrate technology in learning, there are still teachers who find it difficult to master more sophisticated educational technology tools, such as the Learning Management System (LMS) or other digital learning platforms. This is often due to a lack of in-depth training or opportunities to learn these applications. As a result, despite an understanding of the importance of technology in education, some teachers have not been able to use it optimally in delivering materials in an interactive and innovative way (Suprihatiningrum, 2013).

In addition, the high administrative burden is also a significant obstacle. Many teachers find it difficult to divide their time between developing lesson plans, preparing materials and completing administrative tasks. The heavy administrative burden often reduces the time available to design more creative and effective learning. This greatly impacts on teachers' ability to develop more varied and interesting learning methods or strategies for students. On the other hand, although many teachers try to give more attention to lesson planning and innovation in teaching, the reality is that they have to deal with administrative demands that sometimes reduce the quality of time they can spend on improving learning methods (Abd. Rahman Getteng, 2009).

The diversity of student abilities in one class is also a big challenge that teachers must face. Each student has a different learning ability, which often makes it difficult for teachers to provide material that suits the level of student understanding evenly. These diverse student characteristics require different approaches to teaching, such as the implementation of differentiated learning. Although teachers have tried to adapt learning according to students' abilities, in practice this is not always easy. Limited time, large numbers of students, and limited resources are often a barrier for teachers to conduct differentiation thoroughly and effectively (Wahyudi, 2012).

Adequate learning facilities and resources are important factors in supporting an effective learning process. However, although SMPN 5 Negeri Agung already has some supporting facilities such as projectors and internet access, sometimes the quality of these facilities is not enough to support more innovative learning needs. Some teachers complain about the lack of teaching aids or educational software that can help clarify teaching materials or enrich students' learning experience. Even so, existing facilities can still be maximally utilized, but ideally, the provision of more complete resources will be very helpful in supporting teachers to deliver material in a more creative and interesting way (Nizar & Syaifudin, 2010).

Another major challenge is the lack of parental involvement in supporting student learning. Parents' participation in school activities or in monitoring their children's academic development is still relatively low. In fact, parental involvement is very important to support students' learning motivation at home. More open and structured communication between schools and parents needs to be strengthened so that parents are more aware of how they can effectively support their children's learning. Increasing parental participation can have a positive impact on students' academic performance and strengthen their motivation to learn better.

In addition, classes with large numbers of students are also a challenge for teachers in managing classroom dynamics. When the number of students in a class is large, teachers often find it difficult to give individualized attention to each student (Suprihatiningrum, 2013). This results in a lack of opportunity for teachers to recognize the specific needs of students, which can have an impact on the difficulty in applying

learning approaches that are appropriate to the ability level of each student. Ultimately, more effective classroom management and more personalized attention to students are necessary to ensure optimal teaching quality.

Finally, despite the various trainings organized by the school and external institutions, there are still complaints from some teachers regarding the limited time to participate in professional development activities. The heavy load of teaching tasks, coupled with various administrative obligations, often makes it difficult for teachers to take the time to attend training or seminars that can improve their competence. Therefore, it is important to create a system that better supports teachers' professional development by providing sufficient time and access to relevant training, which in turn will enrich teachers' knowledge and skills in dealing with classroom teaching challenges.

By understanding these constraints, schools can design remedial measures to help teachers improve their professional competencies, which in turn will have a positive impact on the quality of education at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung.

### **Implications for Learning Strategies**

Improving teachers' professional competence at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung has a significant impact on the effectiveness of learning strategies implemented in the classroom. Teachers who have high professional competence are not only able to master teaching materials in depth, but also tend to be more innovative in designing and selecting learning methods and media that are relevant to students' needs. For example, teachers who are skilled in using educational technology can utilize various digital learning platforms and visual aids such as projectors, learning videos and interactive applications to make learning more interesting and dynamic. This creates a more varied learning environment that stimulates students' interest and motivation.

The diversity of methods used, such as group discussions, project-based learning, as well as the use of active learning models, allows students to be more actively involved in the learning process. In this context, professional teachers can customize their approach to the characteristics and needs of each student, which in turn can increase student participation and engagement in learning. These methods not only emphasize on cognitive understanding of concepts, but also prioritize the development of students' critical thinking, collaboration and communication skills, which are an important part of 21st century competencies.

In addition, competent teachers also demonstrate the ability to conduct more comprehensive and holistic learning evaluations. Evaluation is not only done through exams or written tests, but also through authentic assessment that includes observation, portfolios and project-based assessments. This approach allows teachers to assess various aspects of students' development, from their academic abilities to their attitudes and behaviors in interacting with peers and teachers. Thus, teachers who have high professional competence are able to provide constructive and in-depth feedback, which is very useful for student development.

A further implication of improving teachers' professional competence is the impact on students' learning outcomes, both in the cognitive and affective aspects. Students' learning outcomes are not only measured by how well they master the subject matter, but also by how they can apply that knowledge in their daily lives. More interactive and applicable learning, which is often the hallmark of competent teachers, makes students feel more relevant to the material being taught and more motivated to learn. This is reflected in the improvement of students' academic scores, as well as in their increased

participation in class activities, whether in the form of discussions, group work or other tasks that support active learning.

On the other hand, the impact on affective aspects is also evident. Competent teachers not only teach knowledge, but also shape students' character and attitudes through an empathetic and caring approach to individual differences. Learning that touches the emotional side of students, as well as giving them space to develop personally, can strengthen their sense of confidence and responsibility towards the learning process. This is crucial in shaping a generation that is not only academically smart, but also emotionally and socially mature.

Thus, the implications of improving teachers' professional competence not only affect the quality of instruction provided but also directly contribute to improving the overall quality of student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is important for schools to continue to encourage and support the development of teachers' competencies through continuous training, constructive evaluation, and the creation of a supportive environment for the implementation of innovative and effective learning strategies. This will create a better education ecosystem and produce students who are ready to face future challenges.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research on the Implementation of Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Teachers in Improving Learner Learning Outcomes at SMP N 5 Negeri Agung, Way Kanan Regency, it can be concluded that improving the professional competence of PAI teachers plays a significant role in improving the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

First, PAI teachers at SMPN 5 Negeri Agung demonstrate good mastery of teaching materials, the ability to develop effective learning tools, and the application of various learning methods in accordance with student characteristics. This supports the creation of a more interactive and interesting learning process for students. In addition, the use of the scientific approach and active learning models, such as group discussions and problem-based learning, also increase students' involvement in learning activities.

Second, the results of the academic evaluation showed a significant improvement in students' grades, especially in PAI subjects. This improvement is not only evident from the cognitive aspect, but also from students' active participation in class activities, such as discussions, group assignments and better attendance. This shows that there is a strong relationship between teachers' professional competence and students' learning motivation.

In addition, various supporting factors such as the active role of school principals in supervision, regular training for teachers and collaboration between teachers in MGMP forums also contribute positively to the development of teacher competencies. The availability of adequate facilities also facilitates the application of more creative and innovative learning methods.

However, there are several obstacles that must be faced, such as the limited ability of some teachers to utilize educational technology and the challenge of managing the diversity of student abilities. Nevertheless, teachers' differentiated learning efforts show potential to overcome these challenges.

Overall, this study confirms that the implementation of PAI teachers' professional competencies has a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes at SMP N 5 Negeri Agung. Therefore, improving the competence of PAI teachers through

continuous training and adequate support from the school is essential to continuously improve the quality of education in this school.

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