

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT: A CASE STUDY AT MADRASAH ALIYAH NEGERI 2 PONOROGO

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Abstract

Teacher competency plays a critical role in shaping student learning outcomes, particularly in the context of religious education. This study explores the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo and examines how their professional skills contribute to improving student achievement. The research also investigates the challenges faced by IRE teachers, the strategies they employ to address these challenges, and the impact of their competence across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of student learning. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis. The findings demonstrate that IRE teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo meet the five key indicators of professional competence, including mastery of subject matter, pedagogical planning, instructional implementation, assessment ability, and reflective practice. However, teachers encounter several challenges, such as low student interest in religious education, managing diverse student backgrounds, and the intrusion of personal issues into the instructional process. Despite these obstacles, the professional competence of IRE teachers positively influences student learning by fostering a holistic educational experience that integrates intellectual, emotional, and behavioral development. These findings underscore the significance of sustained

professional development for IRE teachers and provide valuable insights for enhancing the quality of religious education in secondary schools.

Keywords: Professional Competence; Islamic Religious Education Teacher; Student Learning Achievement; Cognitive Development; Affective and Psychomotor Domains

INTRODUCTION

The professionalism of teachers is currently Indonesia's biggest issue with education, where there are many cases that teachers do not achieve the professionalism indicators launched by the government. The Ministry of Education and Culture's 2021 data showed that the average teacher competency score was 50.64 points. According to this statistics, one of the primary obstacles to raising the standard or achievement of education in Indonesia may also be instructors. Teachers are therefore expected to raise their own level of competency. The educational program that is implemented has a significant impact on the quality of education. If teachers are capable of performing their jobs effectively, high-quality education can be attained.

A key element in influencing how well students learn in schools is teacher competency. Teachers need to have five basic abilities, namely: pedagogic, social, professional, personality, and religious or spiritual (Ananda & Fadhilaturrahmi, 2018). The effective execution of high-quality educational activities, namely in the cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor domains of pupils, depends on the professional competence of teachers (Sulastri et al., 2020) and (Mia & Sulastri, 2023). The central challenge faced by Islamic Religious Education as an academic is not limited to the transmission of religious knowledge, but extends to the cultivation of faith, piety, and noble morals of students in a holistic and transformative manner (Fajriana & Aliyah, 2019).

Learning achievement is highly dependent on a teacher's competence in preparing for learning, starting from designing or designing a lesson plan, mastering the material, applying it in learning, managing classes, using media and conducting evaluations (Ariani et al., 2021) and (Gràcia et al., 2023) A professional teacher must be competent in compiling a syllabus or lesson plan and its implementation instructions, skilled in compiling lesson programs, skilled in carrying out the teaching and learning process and skilled in assessing

learning outcomes (evaluation) and improving learning outcomes (Ariani et al., 2021) and (Lindfors & Olofsson, 2023).

In relation to the issue that the researcher examined, there are several studies that are similar to this observation. For example, an observation made by Mohammad Rizqullah Masykur (2018) entitled "The Influence of Professional Competence and Personality of Islamic Religious Education Teachers on Student Learning Achievement at SMPN 1 Pohjentrek and SMPN 2 Kraton" shows that there is a significant and substantial correlation between student learning achievement and the professional competency of Islamic Religious education teachers (Masykur, 2018). A study conducted by Dede Zulfatin (2024) entitled "The Relationship between Teachers' Professional Competencies and the Learning Interests of Grade XI Students in Islamic Religious Education Subjects at SMK Negeri Karangpucung", demonstrates that there is a strong correlation between teachers' enthusiasm in learning Islamic Religious Education in the classroom and their professional ability (Zulfatin & Wanojaleni, 2024). Research conducted by Muaddyl Akhyar (2024) entitled "The Application of Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Students' Critical Thinking Skills", said that enhancing pupils' critical thinking abilities is significantly impacted by teachers' professional competency (Akhyar et al., 2024). It was discovered, meanwhile, that instructors of Islamic Religious Education were still lacking in their knowledge of the subject. Additionally, they rarely integrate religious content with other sciences and are less inventive when creating educational resources. The professional competence of the Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo and the effect of their professional competence on raising student learning accomplishment at MAN 2 Ponorogo are where this study and the research diverge.

Teachers are the central point in learning (Andrianto et al., 2021). Among other factors, a teacher's professional skills and personality impact how well they teach and learn, teachers must strive for creative ideas and conduct curriculum trials in their classrooms (Mahlianurrahman, 2020). This is the most important phase in curriculum development efforts (Hazmi, 2019). In this case, the teacher's job is not only to transfer knowledge but more than that, to teach children to think integrally and comprehensively, form competencies and achieve the highest meaning (Hazmi, 2019).

Based on the information obtained during observations in the field, it is known that MAN 2 Ponorogo is the best aliyah madrasah in Ponorogo Regency and is projected as an Islamic educational institution or madrasah that is widely seen and exemplified in various aspects today, both the competence of students, teachers, and even madrasah heads, including the achievements of alumni who have successfully graduated from various best national and international universities. therefore, the author conducted research on the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers who teach subjects in the Islamic Religious Education family, including teachers of Moral Faith, Hadith of the Qur'an, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History (Ilyas, 2022)

This study aims to clarify three key points: first, the professional competence of MAN 2 Ponorogo's Islamic Religious Education teachers; second, the challenges and solutions for these teachers' professional competence in raising student learning achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo; and third, the influence of these teachers' professional competence on raising student learning achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo.

METHODS

The researcher used a qualitative type of research in this study. The researcher selected this research design in order to gather comprehensive information that would provide a clear understanding of the proficiency of instructors in Islamic Religious Education, the challenges they encounter, the strategies they employ to overcome these challenges, and the impact of their professional competence on students' academic achievement. After referring to the type of research used in this study, which is qualitative, then the approach chosen is qualitative descriptive, aiming to describe, explain and test the similarity of events that are the object of research with events in the field (Moloeng Lexy, 2010).

As with the type of qualitative research used by researchers, the presence of researchers in the field is crucial because, in this case, they are the main tool and the success of the research depends on how well they carry out their data exploration and analysis tasks. Here, the researcher takes on the role of a complete observer, conducting research in the sense of organizing, implementing, collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. The object of research in this research is MAN 2 Ponorogo, chosen because it is a school that excels in both academic and non-academic achievements. The principal, the deputy

head of curriculum, an Islamic religious education instructor, and students are the data sources for this study. Researchers collected data through documentation, interviews and observations. Observation is carried out with the researcher contributing directly to the daily activities observed, both inside and outside the classroom. Students, a teacher of Islamic Religious Education, the principal, and the deputy curriculum officer were interviewed.. Meanwhile, the documentation was obtained from photos of teaching and learning activities. Data analysis was carried out by referring to the MiIes and Huberman theories, including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing (Miles, M., Huberman, M, Saldana, 2014).

The research location chosen by the researcher is MAN 2 Ponorogo which is located on Jalan Soekarno Hatta No. 381, Sablak, Keniten, Ponorogo Regency. This research was carried out from April 14 to May 8, 2025. Because MAN 2 Ponorogo is a school that excels in both academic and non-academic achievements, the researcher chose the school as the location for the research.

RESULTS

Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo

Based on PERMENDIKNAS No.16 of 2007, professional competence has five indicators that must be mastered by teachers, which in this study focuses on Islamic Religious Education teachers. The following is a summary of the research findings that the researcher has obtained through interviews and observation results at MAN 2 Ponorogo:

Table 1. Results of Interviews and Observations of Professional Competencies of Islamic Religious Education Teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo

No.	Professional Competency Indicators	Research Findings
1.	Mastering the materials, structures, concepts, and scientific mindsets that support the subject of Islamic Religious Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When teaching, The curriculum serves as a constant guidance for instructors in the Islamic Religious Education group.• Teachers in the Islamic Religious Education group make an attempt to fully comprehend the Islamic Religious Education content that will be presented by trying to grasp it thoroughly.

No.	Professional Competency Indicators	Research Findings
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of understanding and mastery of the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo is the existence of sustainable professional development.
2.	<p>Demonstrating a thorough understanding of the competency standards and core competencies within Islamic Religious Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teaching and learning activities have referred to Core Competencies/Basic Competencies with various special treatments. Teachers in the Islamic Religious Education group feel that there are no significant difficulties in understanding the Core Competencies/Basic Competencies that have been determined.
3.	<p>Design instructional materials that are delivered using innovative and creative approaches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers of Islamic Religious Education at MAN 2 Ponorogo always strive to enrich material sources. Students are invited to study events that occur in the community. The learning resources used are not only from the guidebook, but also from the Qur'an Hadith, Ijma', Qiyas and the yellow books.
4.	<p>Continuously enhance professional skills through regular self-reflection and thoughtful evaluation of one's practices</p>	<p>The Islamic Religious Education group's teachers' professional growth is carried out through the participation of teachers in AKPAI, MGMP, <i>workshop</i>, and training activities for self-development for teachers, including school meetings and internal seminars held by school principals.</p>
5.	<p>Utilizing information and communication technology to communicate and develop themselves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the learning process, the teachers of the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo do not demand to always use electronic media, but adjust the conditions of the room and the circumstances of the students and focus more on literacy intensely. The contribution of IT-based learning media is very helpful in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education even though it is not one hundred percent, such as video playing as one of the attractions for students in participating in learning and it is more imprinted and felt to provide convenience in the learning process.

Obstacles and Solutions for the Professional Competency of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Student Learning Achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo

Below are several challenges faced and corresponding solutions implemented by Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo to enhance student learning outcomes, which include:

Table 2. Findings from Interviews with Islamic Religious Education Teachers and Their Views on Challenges and Solutions to Enhance Student Learning at MAN 2 Ponorogo

No.	Constraints	Solution
1.	Teachers have difficulty in increasing students' enthusiasm in participating in the learning of Islamic Religious Education.	Teachers participate in training activities, <i>workshops</i> and seminars related to learning tips and improve their professional competence in terms of mastery of learning methods, techniques and approaches so that teaching materials are packaged creatively in order to attract students' attention to follow the process of teaching and learning activities.
2.	Teachers have difficulty understanding students with heterogeneous learning styles.	Teachers always try to get to know the character of students so that students feel comfortable in the learning activities carried out.
3.	Teachers sometimes still bring personal problems into the school environment, especially when teaching.	Teachers strive to always be professional in carrying out their duties and are able to put aside their problems outside the school environment because teachers are a figure that students pay attention to when they are in class.

The Impact of the Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Student Learning Achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo

The degree of learning achievement attained by students as a result of the professional competence of the Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo is determined by how the teachers arrange lessons, assess learning, and collaborate with one another in a responsive way when they encounter challenges in the classroom. Student learning achievement is significantly impacted by the Islamic Religious Education group's teachers' proficiency with the previously discussed professional competence indicators. Students actively participate and demonstrate their interest in taking part in teaching and learning activities during PAI learning. Student learning achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo can be raised by the Islamic Religious Education group's teachers' mastery of their

professional abilities. In the cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor areas, students' learning achievement is fairly high.

Table 3. Results of Interviews and Observations on the Impact of Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers on Student Learning Achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo

No.	Learning Achievement Indicators	Learning Achievement Indicators
1.	Cognitive Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value of student learning outcomes is already above the KKM • During KBM, students can explain and define orally the material obtained • Students are capable, give concrete examples and use the right way • Students can deduce the material they are studying • Students are able to think in general and critically
2.	Affective Aspects	Students can cooperate with each other and respect each other's opinions when discussing in class.
3.	Psychomotor Aspects	The change in learning improvement in the psychomotor aspect can be seen from the practice of demonstration of marriage materials that has been delivered by Islamic Religious Education teachers. In carrying out the demonstration, it can be seen that the students' ability to demonstrate the material that has been taught is very good.

DISCUSSION

Professional Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo

Teachers' professional competence consists of five indicators. This means that if teachers do not meet the five indicators, It has not been claimed that instructors possess professional competence; on the other hand, if teachers are able to meet five competency markers, they can be considered to be among those who already possess professional competence. These five indicators include: 1) mastering the content, structure, concept, and scientific mindset that underpin Islamic religious education subjects; 2) mastering the fundamental competencies and competency standards of Islamic religious education; 3) creating innovative teaching materials; 4) developing professionalism in a sustainable way through reflective actions; and 5) using ICT for self-development and communication (UGM, 2021).

Based on the findings of the research results of the professional competency of teachers in the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo, among others:

1. Mastering the materials, structures, concepts, and scientific mindsets that support the subject of Islamic Religious Education

As an educator who will teach and transfer his knowledge to students, he must establish himself in mastering the concept of material and continuous learning. When teachers have mastery of the material that will be taught well, it will also have an impact on their confidence when teaching and can arouse students' motivation in learning (Setiawan, 2017).

Based on the study's findings, it was determined that the Islamic Religious Education group's teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo possess professional competence in their ability to thoroughly understand the subject matter. This is demonstrated by learning activities that support the approaches, strategies, and techniques that the group's teachers employ during the teaching and learning process. Islamic Religious Education teachers understand professional competence very well, Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo are able to understand the curriculum well, know the order of the material taught, are able to transform the material to students, convey scientific concepts that are easily absorbed by students, and are able to empower students through a meaningful learning process. This is in line with Dudung's opinion that good teachers have in-depth knowledge of school curriculum and other standards. They do their best to ensure that their teaching meets these standards (Dudung, 2018).

2. Demonstrating a thorough understanding of the competency standards and core competencies within Islamic Religious Education

Islamic Religious Education Teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo have mastered professional competencies, demonstrated the capacity to oversee educational initiatives which include the ability to formulate competency standards and basic competencies, formulate syllabus, learning objectives, the ability to use teaching methods, or models, The capacity for creating learning activities, conducting assessments, identifying students' potential, and organizing and carrying out improvement exams.

As done by the teachers of the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo, teachers' understanding of the condition of students, both psychological,

student learning needs, and student learning styles is a separate subject, the Islamic Religious Education group is extremely attentive to this given the circumstances of the kids who just so happen to have a range of comprehension levels, so that in the implementation of the teaching and learning process which is one of the keys to success is to know and map Student's level of understanding.

The findings of the study are in accordance with Kunandar's theory, that professional teachers must have the capacity to grasp the fundamental competencies and competency standards of Islamic religious education, among others (Kunandar, 2019):

- a. Mastery of methods, learning techniques (the ability to choose, apply methods, develop new methods and appropriate learning techniques).
 - b. Recognize the fundamental and core competencies in Islamic Religious Education courses.
 - c. Understanding the potential of students (always paying attention to the level of student developmental ability, identifying the potential of students individually and in groups).
3. Design instructional materials that are delivered using innovative and creative approaches

Teachers in the Islamic Religious Education family enhance the source of material, including knowledge and information that will be taught to pupils, through the material development initiatives mentioned above. According to Black, fostering an environment in the classroom where teachers and students feel free to study and explore significant curriculum issues can help to encourage creativity in the learning setting. The teacher asks questions that make students think hard, then chases the students' opinions on big ideas from a variety of perspectives. Teachers also encourage students to demonstrate/demonstrate their understanding of important topics in the curriculum in their own way (Murdiana et al., 2020).

In carrying out the learning program, Islamic Religious Education learning materials have been developed by the instructors of the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo using learning resources and learning media. The learning resources used are subject guidebooks, supporting handbooks including Hadith of the Qur'an, Ijma', Qiyas and yellow books.

With the availability of adequate learning resources, Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo also balance with learning media that facilitate the presentation of learning materials to students, namely smartgames, as well as additional reading documentation, and audio visuals such as clippings, photography/images, learning video playbacks, research findings, and others so as to create learning conditions that are able to foster enthusiasm in students, reduce boredom, and so on in following the teaching and learning process in order for pupils to effectively assimilate the presented content.

4. Continuously enhance professional skills through regular self-reflection and thoughtful evaluation of one's practices

Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo as professional teachers always try to develop their professionalism in realizing quality education by reflecting on the teachers themselves and the process of teaching and learning that has been implemented. Self-reflection by making corrections to one's abilities, learning activities carried out with teachers in the Islamic Religious Education group who are more senior or peers. Reflect on student learning by examining what has been conveyed to students and understanding what students have gained and what changes have occurred to students related to the learning that has been done.

The study's findings support Kunandar's theory, which holds that professional educators must be able to grow their careers in a sustainable way by engaging in thoughtful activities, such as (Kunandar, 2019):

- a. Considering the lessons that have been learned (utilizing the results of the evaluation as a basis for improvement and enrichment for both teachers and students)
- b. Participating in seminars, *workshops*, and training activities to improve professional competence
- c. Have limitations on educational research (especially classroom action research).

Regarding the study of Islamic Religious Education, Islamic Religious Education instructors group use reflective actions by conducting research on classroom actions to determine learning styles, models, strategies and techniques to be used in teaching. This is due to the heterogeneous learning character of students so that if when the teacher teaches there are still shortcomings in the overall delivery of the material or a teaching

style that is not suitable, then the teachers of the Islamic Religious Education group immediately carry out a more appropriate learning plan. So that during the teaching and learning process, students can get meaningful learning with the right teaching.

The findings of this study are in line with the results of M. Nur Rohim 's analysis (M. Nur Rohim, 2019), namely that action research in the classroom is an important part of efforts to develop the teacher profession, because teachers may learn how to write and analyze critically and methodically by doing action research in the classroom. Consequently, in order to enhance their own learning in the classroom and further their professional development as educators, instructors must keep trying to do research on classroom activities. Additionally, the principal of MAN 2 Ponorogo fully supports the self-development of Islamic Religious Education instructors in order to enhance their professional competence. For the teachers of the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo for self-development are accommodated in one forum of MGMP activities, many teachers from various schools, various mapel teachers are accommodated in one forum for MGMP which discusses the development of educational issues. In addition, Islamic Religious Education teachers can participate in development programs carried out by schools independently or by attending seminars, trainings, *and workshops* held outside the school by first submitting to the principal.

5. Utilizing information and communication technology to communicate and develop themselves

Applicatively, Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo in carrying out their professional duties are very aware of the development of science and technology, so that these two elements go hand in hand in supporting the teaching and learning process activities in comprehensive education.

From the results of the study, it was found that Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo have utilized the latest communication and information technology. In fiqh material on marriage, Islamic Religious Education teachers direct students to practice directly in front of the class, one example of students practicing the marriage contract procedure. Media commonly used by Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo include Power points, interactive learning videos, Smartgames, *Google Forms*, and others. In accordance with what was expressed by Siti Rohmatun (Rohmatun et al., 2024) that the use of technology media in Islamic Religious

Education learning contributes to the enhancement of Islamic Religious Education instruction. Technology media not only facilitates the delivery of instructional materials by teachers, but it also enhances classroom learning activities.

However, teachers in Islamic Religious Education do not fully use the media in their learning process by adjusting their learning materials. However, indeed learning media with video playback is one of the attractions for students in participating in learning and is more memorable and feels like it provides convenience in the learning process, because students demand interesting learning and students can enjoy learning, it is not enough to just learn media but students are directed to practice. The results of this study support Kunandar's idea, which states that among other things, professional instructors need to be able to communicate and grow personally using information and communication technologies (Kunandar, 2019):

- a. To follow the changes and developments of their profession based on the development of science and technology
- b. The application of cutting-edge communication and information technology in education.

Obstacles and Solutions for the Professional Competency of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Student Learning Achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo

In improving student learning achievement, it is undeniable that there will be obstacles during the process of implementing the improvement. With the existence of obstacles, solutions will definitely emerge to overcome these obstacles. Likewise, in the process of improving student learning performance at MAN 2 Ponorogo. The obstacles faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo while teaching are:

1. Teachers of Islamic Religious Education at MAN 2 Ponorogo struggle to overcome the lack of interest students have in learning Islamic Religious Education.

It was discovered that the teachers of Islamic Religious Education at MAN 2 Ponorogo struggled to overcome the students' lack of interest in learning Islamic Religious Education. Many pupils still fail to pay attention during the teaching and learning process while Islamic Religious Education teachers are presenting the course materials. It was discovered that Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2

Ponorogo frequently take part in training exercises, workshops, and seminars pertaining to learning strategies in order to help pupils who are less motivated to learn overcome their challenges and improve their professional competence in terms of mastering learning methods, techniques and approaches so that teaching materials are packaged creatively to attract students' attention to follow the process of teaching and learning activities. Teaching materials are something that teachers must master because teaching materials are the most important aspect of the learning process. Without mastery of the teaching material, a teacher will face many difficulties when carrying out the learning process, besides that a teacher will feel confused when he has to teach without mastering the material which results in the material delivered not being channeled optimally.

2. Islamic Religious Education Teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo have difficulty understanding heterogeneous students

Each student has their own learning character so that the treatment of students when teaching will also be different. The results of the research findings at MAN 2 Ponorogo during the Islamic Religious Education lesson, there were students who enthusiastically listened to their teacher's explanation, there were also students who even slept and did not pay attention. Students will not give their attention and enthusiasm to learn if students feel uncomfortable with their teachers, so Islamic Religious Education teachers must take approaches, find the right methods, techniques, or ways in order to foster motivation to learn and students feel comfortable in the learning activities carried out. Mutual understanding between teachers and students will result in good interaction between the two, so that it can make students pay more attention to the three teachers described, in addition to an interesting learning model that makes students not easily bored during the learning process.

3. Islamic Religious Education teachers sometimes still bring personal problems into the school environment, especially when teaching.

Based on research, it was discovered that instructors of Islamic Religious Education at MAN 2 Ponorogo sometimes do not rule out personal problems outside school with their profession as a teacher will make teaching and learning activities will not run and achieve learning goals optimally. To overcome these obstacles, It was discovered that instructors of Islamic Religious Education make an effort to always conduct themselves

professionally. and are able to put aside their problems outside the school environment. Because teachers are figures that students pay attention to when they are in class.

Obstacles and Solutions for the Professional Competency of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Improving Student Learning Achievement at MAN 2 Ponorogo

The competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers affects the improvement of learning outcomes, reflected in changes in student behavior as a result of the learning process. The learning achievement obtained by students based on the results of the research findings is in line with the indicators of learning achievement conveyed by Muhibbin Syah (Muhibbin, 2014), which includes three aspects, namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

1. Cognitive Learning Achievement

Cognitive learning achievement is a behavioral change that occurs in the field of cognition. The cognitive learning process includes activities such as receiving external stimuli through the senses, storing and processing this information in the brain, and retrieving it when needed to solve problems (Wisman, 2020). According to research findings on students' cognitive achievement in Islamic Religious Education, most students achieve scores above the Minimum Competency Criteria, with some even achieving near-perfection scores. These results are in line with Hasan's research, which found that teacher competence contributes to improving students' cognitive learning outcomes (Hasan et al., 2024).

2. Affective Learning Achievement

One area that is connected to attitudes and values is the emotive aspect (Pipit, 2024). The study's findings regarding the learning objectives of the affective domain of students at MAN 2 Ponorogo show that students at MAN 2 Ponorogo have different affective learning achievements, but the learning outcomes of the affective domain in the Islamic Religious Education course at MAN 2 Ponorogo show good results, students can cooperate with each other and respect each other's opinions when discussing in class.

3. Psychomotor Learning Achievement

The psychomotor aspect is the aspect that deals with the skills and capacity to take action following a particular educational experience. Learning achievement in the

psychomotor realm is stated by Qodat who states that this psychomotor learning achievement is seen in the form of individual skills and acting abilities (Qodat, 2020). (Qodat, 2020) Based on the results of the research on learning achievement in the psychomotor realm in the Islamic Religious Education group at MAN 2 Ponorogo, it is known that changes in learning improvement in psychomotor aspects can be seen from the practice of demonstration of marriage materials that have been delivered by teachers in the Islamic Religious Education group. In the implementation of the demonstration, it was seen that the students' ability to demonstrate the material that had been taught was very good.

The professional competence of the Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo is fairly good and in line with the indicators of teacher professional competence, according to the findings of the research that was done there. The research findings are consistent with Kunandar's theory (Kunandar, 2019) Mastery of learning materials in a broad and comprehensive way, including subject curricular materials in schools and the scientific substance that underpins the material, as well as mastery of its scientific structure and methods, is what is meant by professional competence.

Concerning the ability of Islamic Religious Education instructors to enhance students' academic performance, it was found that there were three obstacles, namely Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo encountered challenges in overcoming pupils' lack of interest in pursuing Islamic Religious Education. The spirit of learning is a reaction that arises from within a person, according to Santosa (Santosa, 2018) saying that enthusiasm is feelings, confidence and understanding that arise and start from each individual so that it can make him believe in human relationships with the source of strength that can make him achieve goals, positive and enthusiastic in speaking, and in acting. In overcoming these obstacles, teachers must be more creative so that students are interested in learning. These findings are in line with research conducted by Sriyulianti (Sriyulianti et al., 2021) that to increase students' enthusiasm for learning, teachers need to learn and use creative learning media and methods, as well as continue to develop their ability to update learning media and methods. The next obstacle is that teachers have difficulties when facing different student attitudes. This finding is in line with research conducted by Umayrah and Wahyudin (Umayrah & Wahyudin, 2024) which said that one of the difficulties teachers in carrying out the learning process is understanding different student attitudes and methods. The last obstacle found is that Islamic Religious Education

teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo sometimes do not rule out the possibility of personal problems outside the school with their profession as a teacher will make teaching and learning activities will not run and achieve learning goals optimally. Based on research conducted by Rahmanda (Rahmanda et al., 2023), it was found that a teacher's attitude has a significant influence on students' interest and success in learning.

Based on the findings of the research on the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving student learning achievement, it was found that students' teaching achievements get quite good results from cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, this is in line with the research of Ida Ayu Putu Oka (Oka, 2021) who stated that student achievement in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor realms is influenced by teachers' professional abilities. When teachers demonstrate strong professional competence, student learning performance tends to improve.

In addition to offering suggestions for overcoming challenges instructors encounter in raising student learning accomplishment, the study's findings offer insightful information about how Islamic Religious Education teachers' professional competence might enhance learning achievement. This discussion not only affirmed the professional competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at MAN 2 Ponorogo in improving student learning achievement, but also inspired other educational establishments to enhance the proficiency of Islamic Religious Education instructors and assess their professional competency in raising student learning outcomes. However, this research has some limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the focus on one educational institution may not reflect the conditions in another institution with a different context. Second, due to the qualitative and case study nature of these studies, the results may not be broadly generalized.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the role of professional competence among Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in enhancing student learning achievement, based on a case study conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Ponorogo. The findings indicate that all five indicators of professional competence, mastery of subject matter, pedagogical ability, personal development, communication skills, and professional ethics are fulfilled by the IRE teachers at this institution. Despite their overall high competence, the teachers encounter persistent challenges, including difficulties in increasing student enthusiasm for

IRE subjects, limited understanding of diverse student needs, and occasional intrusion of personal issues into the teaching environment. These challenges are addressed through ongoing teacher training, efforts to develop deeper student-teacher relationships, and a commitment to maintaining professionalism in the classroom.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on teacher competence by providing context-specific insights into the professional capabilities of IRE teachers within the framework of Islamic education. It affirms the relevance of professional teacher standards in shaping holistic student development across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Practically, the findings offer actionable strategies for IRE teachers, school administrators, and education policymakers, particularly regarding the importance of continuous professional development and contextual understanding of student diversity. The ability of competent teachers to foster meaningful learning outcomes underscores the value of targeted interventions aimed at enhancing teacher capacity within religious education settings.

By directly addressing the issue of student achievement, this study demonstrates how professional competence serves as a foundational factor influencing educational outcomes. The case of MAN 2 Ponorogo illustrates that when teachers possess the requisite knowledge, pedagogical skills, and ethical commitment, student achievement improves across multiple learning dimensions. This reinforces the importance of teacher quality as a determinant of student success and highlights the need for a supportive institutional environment that enables teachers to perform their roles effectively, even when facing external pressures or personal challenges.

Nonetheless, the scope of this research is limited by its focus on a single institution and its qualitative case study design. While the findings offer rich, contextually grounded insights, their generalizability to other educational settings remains limited. Future research is recommended to explore the professional competence of IRE teachers across a broader range of schools, including those in different geographical, cultural, and institutional contexts. Comparative studies between institutions could yield valuable insights into the variability and effectiveness of teacher competencies in diverse environments. Additionally, the incorporation of mixed-method approaches would allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the correlation between teacher competence and student achievement, thereby strengthening the empirical basis for educational policy and practice.

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