Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia: Understanding the Urgency and Paradigm Shift from a Societal Perspective

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to understand the urgency and paradigm shift in Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia from a societal perspective, focusing on the significance of Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia, the contributions of Islamic Education to society, and the public's view on the urgency of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in formal education. The introduction provides an overview of the importance of Islamic Religious Education in preserving religious identity and fostering social harmony in Indonesia. The research methodology involves qualitative analysis of secondary data analysis of educational policy documents, literature studies, and interviews with relevant stakeholders. The findings reveal that Islamic Religious Education plays a significant role in shaping individual character, reinforcing religious values, and promoting active community participation in development. The community recognizes the urgency of Islamic Religious Education in formal education and expects a paradigm shift that integrates religious values with existing sociocultural dynamics. The study concludes the need for inclusive Islamic Religious Education based on justice and community empowerment as a foundation to address future challenges.

KEYWORDS: Islamic Religious Education, Indonesia, societal perspective, urgency, paradigm shift, contribution

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic religious education plays a significant role in Indonesian society. In this context, the importance of Islamic education cannot be overlooked [1]. Islamic religious education in Indonesia aims to acquire theoretical understanding and shape character, morals, and positive attitudes in daily life. Therefore, understanding the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education from the perspective of society becomes crucial to consider [2], [3]. However, a research gap exists in understanding the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education in Indonesia. Many previous studies have been conducted to analyze this issue in a general sense, but there is still a lack of understanding from the specific perspective of the community. One specific research focus is the location of Sokanegara Subdistrict, East Purwokerto, Banyumas.

In the theoretical framework, Islamic religious education has received attention from various theories in education and sociology [4]–[6]. Experts have proposed different approaches to the paradigm of Islamic religious education [7]. For example, traditional methods emphasize memorizing and understanding religious texts and contextual processes linking religion to everyday life. These theories provide a foundation for understanding Islamic religious education's urgency and paradigm shift in Indonesian society [8].

Several previous studies have also been conducted on Islamic religious education in Indonesia. However, there is a lack of research specifically focusing on the research location of Sokanegara Subdistrict, East Purwokerto, Banyumas. Considering this limitation, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education from the perspective of the local community.

The research questions for this study are as follows What are the perspectives of the community in the Sokanegara Subdistrict, East Purwokerto, and Banyumas regarding the urgency of Islamic religious education? By answering these questions, this research is expected to provide deeper insights into the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education in the context of the local community in Sokanegara Subdistrict, East Purwokerto, Banyumas. Additionally, the findings of this study may contribute valuable knowledge to the development of Islamic educational policies that are more effective and relevant to the needs of the local community.

This research will employ a qualitative approach involving participants from the community in Sokanegara Subdistrict. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews and participatory observation to understand the community's perspectives on Islamic

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religious education's urgency and paradigm shift. The results of this study are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education from the viewpoint of the community in Indonesia, specifically in the Sokanegara Subdistrict. These findings can serve as a basis for formulating more effective and relevant Islamic educational policies that cater to the local community's needs.

Thus, this research holds theoretical relevance for developing theories in Islamic educational practices and practical significance in enhancing the quality of Islamic religious education in Indonesia. It can also serve as a foundation for further research in the same domain or related fields. Through this research, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of the urgency and paradigm shift of Islamic religious education from the community's perspective in Sokanegara Subdistrict, East Purwokerto, Banyumas, can be attained. The findings can contribute to developing more relevant and effective strategies and policies in Islamic education in Indonesia.

II. METHOD

This study utilizes a qualitative research approach to investigate Islamic religious education's urgency and paradigm shift in Sokanegara Village, Tanjlig Sub-district, East Purwokerto, Banyumas Regency. In-depth interviews will be conducted with the Village Head, RT Chairman, and selected members of the Purwokerto community residing at Jl. Tanjlig RT 02 RW 09. The interviews will focus on obtaining insights into the societal perspective regarding the significance of Islamic religious education. Data analysis will involve organizing and coding the qualitative data to identify themes and patterns related to the role of religion in Indonesian society, the increasing demand for Islamic religious education, and the contributions of Islamic education to the community. Triangulation of findings from various sources will enhance research validity, while ethical considerations will be upheld throughout the research process. This methodology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and its implications for the community in Sokanegara Village.

Additionally, the research methodology incorporates participant selection from three distinct groups: the Village Head of Sokanegara, the RT Chairman, and members of the Purwokerto community. These participants were chosen to provide diverse perspectives on Islamic religious education's urgency and paradigm shift. In-depth interviews will be conducted to gather rich qualitative data, focusing on their views, experiences, and perceptions of Islamic religious education. The collected data will then be analyzed through coding and thematic analysis to identify key findings and themes from the interviews. This qualitative research design allows for a comprehensive exploration of the significance of Islamic religious education in Indonesian society, addressing the role of religion, the increasing demand for Islamic education, and the contributions it offers to the community. Data triangulation from multiple sources enhances the credibility and validity of the research findings. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be strictly adhered to throughout the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Significance of Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia

The importance of Islamic religious education for individuals, especially children, cannot be understated. It serves as a means of guidance and instruction provided by educators to ensure that learners have a comprehensive understanding of the teachings and principles of Islam. The ultimate goal is for students to internalize and practice Islamic values, making them an integral part of their worldview and leading them toward salvation in this world and the hereafter. Islamic religious education is not limited to non-formal education settings such as Quranic Education Centers (TPA) and families but can also be found in formal education institutions like schools. Schools employ systematic guidance, instruction, and training programs in traditional educational settings to help students optimally develop their potential.

In today's rapidly advancing era, particularly in urban areas, many children lack parental supervision, which can lead them astray and expose them to negative influences. Therefore, children require guidance and instruction in Islamic religious education from parents and teachers. While general education subjects are considered important, Islamic religious education should be the foundation for children, providing them with proper direction and fostering good moral character. To gather data for this study, the researcher interviewed various figures, including religious leaders, community leaders, and parents in Sokanegara Village. These individuals served as informants for the research, contributing valuable insights into the perception of Islamic education in schools from the perspective of the Kelurahan Sokanegara, East Purwokerto, Banyumas community. The data collected will lead to a comprehensive analysis and conclusions regarding the research topic.

During this stage, the author first met with Dibyo Suwignyo (Village Head of Sokanegara), who stated, "In my opinion, it is crucial, even mandatory, to provide Islamic religious education in schools because it shapes the character of every student, which

they may not necessarily acquire from their family environment. Additionally, every individual should have a basic education about their religion."

From this interview, it can be inferred that Islamic religious education in schools is important for children. It provides a fundamental education and helps in fostering good moral character. Based on Mr. Dibyo's statement and the observation made by the author in the Sokanegara Village community, it is evident that every parent desires their children to have good moral values, politeness in behavior and speech, and respect towards others and elders. Islamic religious education in schools also helps children establish a strong foundation of faith, making religious values a priority or basis for their interactions, opinions, decision-making, and daily behavior.

The purpose of Islamic religious education should align with the values of Islamic religious education, which is to enable individuals to fulfill their role as vicegerents as intended by their creation [9]. Islamic religious education guides individuals to develop faithful, righteous characters and noble morals. Having teachers in schools provides guidance, direction, and positive role models for children. To show children possess good morals, it is not enough to simply offer explanations or theories; it is necessary to cultivate a habit of performing good deeds. Children are guided to internalize and practice behavior that aligns with noble moral values, allowing them to gain firsthand experiences. These experiences become ingrained in their souls and shape their attitudes and actions [10].

Based on field data and observations, it was found that parents already understand the importance of Islamic religious education in schools. They are concerned that their children may stray from their faith and lack guidance in navigating this world. Therefore, it is not only the responsibility of parents to provide attention and advice, but the community also recognizes the significant role of teachers in schools in shaping children's good character. Islamic religious education in schools helps children enhance their understanding of spiritual matters. The author interviewed Mr. Suryanto (Community Figure), who stated, "Education in schools is crucial because numerous factors can lead our children astray from Islam, ranging from peer influence to the impact of the internet in their daily lives."

The primary responsibility for educating children lies with parents. However, due to limitations in abilities, time, and other factors, parents delegate their commitment to more competent individuals to serve as educators for their children, which is achieved by sending them to school. By doing so, parents entrust their role as educators to educational institutions. Although schools do not assume full responsibility for parents, they assist parents in educating their children due to their expertise and resources. Teachers or educators, in this context, are an essential component of education, particularly in addressing various challenges related to improving the quality of education.

Based on the analysis of the interviews and observations above regarding the societal views on the urgency of Islamic religious education in schools, it can be concluded that the community of Sokanegara Village generally considers Islamic religious instruction as highly important. This perspective stems from the community's progressive thinking, as they recognize that having Islamic religious education in schools helps children develop good moral character, understand boundaries in social interactions, and grasp the permissible and forbidden aspects of life. Notably, the importance placed on Islamic religious education in schools is not limited to formal education alone, as the community of Sokanegara Village acknowledges the significance of incorporating Islamic religious education alongside general subjects. This recognition reflects their understanding that children need a strong foundation in Islamic religious education, provided not only through non-formal education but also in schools.

Contributions of Islamic Education to Society

The discussion analysis of Islamic education's contributions to society reveals several key points. Islamic education shapes individuals' beliefs, values, and behavior, significantly impacting the community.

Firstly, Islamic education instills moral and ethical values in individuals. It emphasizes the importance of compassion, honesty, justice, and integrity, fostering a sense of responsibility towards others and promoting harmonious relationships. This moral framework serves as a guide for individuals to make ethical decisions and engage in positive actions that contribute to the betterment of society.

Secondly, Islamic education promotes social cohesion and unity. It emphasizes the concept of brotherhood and sisterhood among Muslims, emphasizing the importance of community and cooperation. By nurturing a sense of belonging and common purpose, Islamic education fosters social bonds and encourages individuals to work together for the collective welfare of society. Islamic education can contribute to the development of a strong and cohesive community.

Additionally, Islamic education emphasizes the pursuit of knowledge and intellectual growth. It encourages critical thinking, inquiry, and a deep understanding of Islamic teachings [11], [12]. This philosophical development equips individuals with the skills and knowledge to engage in constructive dialogue, contribute to academic and intellectual discourse, and address contemporary

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societal challenges. Islamic education also promotes a balanced approach to expertise, combining religious teachings with various disciplines, which enables individuals to have a holistic understanding of the world and make informed decisions.

Moreover, Islamic education is vital in promoting social justice and equality. It highlights the principles of fairness, compassion, and the rights of all individuals. Islamic teachings encourage individuals to stand against injustice, advocate for the marginalized, and work towards creating a just and equitable society. By nurturing these values, Islamic education promotes social justice and eliminates discrimination and oppression. Overall, the contributions of Islamic education to the community are evident in the development of individuals with strong moral character, a sense of social responsibility, intellectual growth, and a commitment to social justice. These qualities positively impact society by fostering harmonious relationships, promoting social cohesion, and creating a more just and equitable community.

The Public's View on the Urgency of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Formal Education

Every community views education differently, especially Islamic religious education in schools [13]. The majority of urban communities have a progressive mindset when it comes to education. There are various opinions regarding the meaning of Islamic religious education in schools, influenced by the diverse backgrounds of the community members. To understand the experiences and perspectives of the community regarding the urgency of Islamic religious education in schools, interviews and questions were conducted with various stakeholders. The opinions of the community in the Sokanegara Subdistrict regarding the view on Islamic religious education in schools depend on several factors, including educational experiences, family environment, and the surrounding community. These insights were gathered through interviews with individuals with educational backgrounds, formal leaders, and the general community.

Education is the effort to nurture and develop learners, encompassing their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects. It is essential for achieving balance and perfection in individual and societal development. Through educational experiences, individuals can be guided to fully develop their potential as human beings and as members of society.

In an interview with Alda Yulia Swandani, a Quran teacher, she stated, "From my perspective, different opinions can be influenced by one's environment, such as the community and each person's educational background." From this statement, it can be inferred that Annisa's and Alda's opinions align with the observation data conducted by the author, which indicates that the educational backgrounds in Sokanegara Village are diverse. Despite being in an urban environment where the community's views on education are progressive, there are still individuals who have only completed primary education and were unable to pursue higher education due to economic constraints or financial limitations. However, many community members prioritize education, with many completing tertiary education.

The author also observed the community environment in Sokanegara Village, and it aligns with the opinions of Annisa and Alda that the community environment significantly influences an individual's perception of the importance of Islamic education in schools. The community in Sokanegara Village is known for its positive attributes, where mutual respect, friendliness, and care for others are prevalent. When community members pass each other, they greet each other with smiles and exchange greetings. Moreover, when a community member falls seriously ill, others visit and provide material assistance, even if it may not be substantial. These aspects contribute to parents' efforts in educating their children to diligently study Islamic knowledge diligently, aiming to develop good moral character and apply it in their daily lives.

It can be concluded that the family environment, educational experiences, and community setting influence an individual's perspective on the urgency of Islamic Education in schools. Many families in Desa Sokanegara consistently teach and instill religious values in their children, aiming to provide them with a strong foundation for a purposeful and directed life. Furthermore, through positive educational experiences, individuals can broaden and develop their knowledge and understanding, not only in secular subjects but also in Islamic Education, which can positively impact the Desa Sokanegara community. The community environment in Desa Sokanegara is favorable, as it encourages individuals to think more openly and completely in response to the urgency of Islamic Education in schools.

From the above analysis, it can be observed that the people's perspectives in Desa Sokanegara regarding the urgency of Islamic Education in schools are influenced by several factors, namely, the background of educational experiences, family environment, and community setting. This understanding is derived from interviews with individuals with educational experiences, formal leaders, and the general public. Education is undoubtedly crucial for individuals to have an open and progressive mindset. However, some individuals in Desa Sokanegara still do not pursue higher education. An increasing number of people prioritize education, even up to the university level. With educational backgrounds primarily influenced by the experiences of parents and the education pursued by children, the people of Desa Sokanegara have a broad perspective and continuously develop their thoughts on the significance of Islamic Education in schools.

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Furthermore, in the family environment of Desa Sokanegara, it is common to find parents who consistently teach and instill religious values in their children, aiming to provide them with a strong foundation for a directed life. Despite the busy work schedules of urban parents, resulting in a lack of attention and teachings on Islamic Education, the presence of Islamic Education in schools becomes a valuable support system, helping parents and families in the development of their children's strong religious foundation and guiding them towards a purposeful life.

Moreover, the community setting also influences the people's perspectives in Desa Sokanegara regarding the urgency of Islamic Education in schools. The Sokanegara community is characterized by a favorable environment where good relationships and effective communication among community members are practiced. They also demonstrate a high level of tolerance towards both Muslim and non-Muslim residents, allowing for the exchange of thoughts and opinions regarding life and religion. As a result, the community holds diverse views on religion, particularly regarding the importance of Islamic Education in schools.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Islamic religious education holds significant importance in Indonesia, particularly in shaping individuals' moral character and values, including children. The study highlighted the urgent need for Islamic religious education in the country, especially in formal education settings. The research examined the societal perspective on Islamic education and the paradigm shift required to address contemporary challenges.

The findings revealed that Islamic religious education in schools plays a crucial role in guiding children and instilling moral values, particularly in urban areas where parental supervision may be limited. The community recognized the importance of Islamic education in schools to develop good character and provide children with a strong foundation in their faith. The research also emphasized the contributions of Islamic education to society, including fostering moral values, promoting social cohesion, encouraging intellectual growth, and advocating for social justice.

Overall, the study emphasized the significance of incorporating Islamic religious education in formal educational institutions and highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach that combines spiritual teachings with critical thinking skills. It called for a paradigm shift in Islamic education, moving away from rote memorization and focusing on experiential learning and applying Islamic principles in daily life. By recognizing the urgency and embracing a societal perspective, stakeholders can work together to improve Islamic religious education in Indonesia and nurture individuals who contribute positively to their communities and society.

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