

The Islamic Religious Education Teacher as a Living Positive Model: Discipline, Responsibility, and Honesty

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Abstract

Keywords:

Islamic Religious Education; living positive model; teacher modelling; character education; student character.

Character education remains a major challenge in Islamic Religious Education, particularly in transforming values such as discipline, responsibility, and honesty into consistent student behaviour. This study aims to examine how teachers function as living positive models in supporting students' character development and to identify the factors that support and inhibit its implementation. Using a qualitative case study approach, this research involved one Islamic Religious Education teacher and five eighth-grade students at SMP Diponegoro Depok, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom and school-activity observations, and documentation, then analysed using data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings show that the teacher enacted the living positive model through consistency between words and actions, discipline, responsibility, honesty, respectful communication, personal guidance, and value-based practices. Students observed these behaviours and engaged in opportunities to practise discipline, responsibility, and honesty within classroom and school contexts. Supporting factors included teacher commitment, school culture, religious habituation, and educational support, while inhibiting factors involved peer influence, digital media exposure, family differences, and students' varying levels of readiness. Unlike role modelling frameworks that treat exemplary conduct as a fixed teacher trait, this study frames the living positive model as a relational process in which value embodiment must be followed by structured observation, guided practice, and reflective reinforcement before internalisation becomes possible. The study concludes that teacher modelling becomes more meaningful when educators not only demonstrate positive values but also provide structured opportunities, reflective guidance, and consistent reinforcement that support students' value-based practices.

Abstrak

Kata kunci:
Pendidikan Agama Islam;
living positive model;
keteladanan guru;
pendidikan karakter;
karakter siswa

Pendidikan karakter masih menjadi tantangan utama dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam, khususnya dalam mentransformasikan nilai-nilai seperti disiplin, tanggung jawab, dan kejujuran menjadi perilaku siswa yang konsisten. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana guru berperan sebagai living positive model dalam mendukung pengembangan karakter siswa serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mendukung dan menghambat implementasinya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan satu guru Pendidikan Agama Islam dan lima siswa kelas VIII di SMP Diponegoro Depok, Sleman, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi kegiatan pembelajaran di kelas dan aktivitas sekolah, serta dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menerapkan living positive model melalui konsistensi antara perkataan dan tindakan, kedisiplinan, tanggung jawab, kejujuran, komunikasi yang santun, bimbingan personal, serta praktik berbasis nilai. Siswa mengamati perilaku tersebut dan memperoleh kesempatan untuk mempraktikkan nilai disiplin, tanggung jawab, dan kejujuran dalam konteks kelas maupun lingkungan sekolah. Faktor pendukung implementasi meliputi komitmen guru, budaya sekolah, pembiasaan keagamaan, dan dukungan lingkungan pendidikan, sedangkan faktor

penghambat meliputi pengaruh teman sebaya, paparan media digital, perbedaan latar belakang keluarga, serta variasi kesiapan siswa. Berbeda dari kerangka role modelling yang memandang perilaku keteladanan sebagai karakteristik tetap yang melekat pada guru, penelitian ini memandang living positive model sebagai suatu proses relasional, di mana perwujudan nilai oleh guru perlu diikuti dengan observasi yang terstruktur, praktik yang dibimbing, serta penguatan reflektif sebelum proses internalisasi nilai dapat terjadi. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keteladanan guru menjadi lebih bermakna ketika pendidik tidak hanya menunjukkan nilai-nilai positif, tetapi juga menyediakan kesempatan yang terstruktur, memberikan bimbingan reflektif, dan melakukan penguatan secara konsisten yang mendukung praktik nilai dalam diri siswa.

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Introduction

Education is not solely directed toward the mastery of academic knowledge and skills but also plays an essential role in shaping students' character. Educational success should therefore be reflected not only in cognitive achievement but also in students' ability to apply moral values in everyday life (Sunardi et al., 2025). Discipline, responsibility, and honesty are particularly important because they influence students' compliance with rules, fulfilment of obligations, and consistency between words and actions. These values require continuous development at the junior secondary school level because students face increasing academic responsibilities, peer influences, and expectations for independent behaviour.

Character education cannot achieve optimal outcomes when values are communicated only through normative explanations, verbal advice, or classroom instruction (Hasan et al., 2025; Hasan & Aziz, 2023; Hasanah & Asrori, 2024). Students require concrete examples that can be observed through daily interactions and applied in real-life situations. Character formation is therefore influenced not only by the content being taught but also by the personal qualities and behaviour of educators. Teachers' words, attitudes, decisions, and habits may become direct sources of moral learning because students develop character partly through consistent behavioural examples provided by significant adults in their educational environment (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). Therefore, teacher modelling should be understood not merely as the presence of positive behaviour but also as the process through which educators embody and communicate values through their everyday educational practices.

This study employs Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, (2025) concept of the *living positive model* to understand teacher modelling as a process that extends beyond merely displaying positive behaviour observed by students. The concept emphasises that values should not only be communicated verbally but also embodied through educators' actions,

decisions, interactions, and habitual practices in everyday educational life. Muqowim distinguishes between a *man of discourse*, who understands and communicates values, and a *man of action*, who incorporates values into consistent behaviour. Within this perspective, teachers function as *positive generators* and *positive transmitters* who do not merely teach values but also create educational experiences through which students encounter those values. Therefore, the *living positive model* extends the understanding of teacher modelling by highlighting the relationship between how teachers embody values, how students observe them, and how teachers provide opportunities for students to practise values through continuous educational interaction.

To examine how the *living positive model* operates in educational practice, this study identifies several observable forms of teacher behaviour that represent the embodiment and transmission of values in daily interactions with students. The living positive model in this study is reflected in the teacher's consistency between words and actions, disciplined and responsible performance of duties, objective assessment, respectful communication, personal guidance, consistent rule enforcement, and involvement in religious practices. These behaviours provide observable examples through which students learn discipline, responsibility, and honesty. Thus, role modelling represents not merely an instructional strategy but the teacher's overall personal presence throughout the educational process.

The process through which students learn from teachers' behaviour can be explained through social learning theory and character education theory. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) explains that individuals acquire behaviour through observation, retention, reproduction, and motivation involving significant models within their social environment. However, observing a model does not automatically produce behavioural change because responses are influenced by individual interpretation, previous experiences, and environmental conditions. Meanwhile, (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) argues that character development involves the integration of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*, meaning that understanding values must gradually develop into consistent moral practice. In this study, the concept of the *living positive model* connects these perspectives by emphasising that teachers are not merely models observed by students but active agents who embody values through educational practices that enable students to observe, experience, and practise those values within the school context.

Existing accounts of teacher modelling, including social learning theory and conventional role-modelling literature, tend to treat exemplary conduct as a fixed teacher trait or a linear sequence of observation and reproduction, without specifying the conditions under which observed values become sustained practice rather than momentary imitation. The living positive model addresses this gap by proposing a staged progression, value embodiment, observation, guided practice, and potential internalisation, in which each stage depends on specific pedagogical and environmental conditions rather than occurring automatically once a model is observed.

The role of the *living positive model* becomes increasingly relevant in Islamic Religious Education because Islamic Religious Education teachers are not only responsible for transmitting religious knowledge but are also expected to represent Islamic values through their everyday behaviour. Values such as discipline, responsibility, and honesty should not

only be understood as moral concepts but also be embodied as practices reflected in teacher-student relationships, learning processes, and educational decision-making. The consistency between the religious values conveyed by teachers and their actual behaviour provides students with concrete experiences of how religious values are applied in real-life contexts.

Previous studies converge on the importance of consistent role models and teacher competence for character development. Teacher and parental involvement helps prevent gaps in honesty and responsibility (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), while discipline, fairness, and positive learning environments distinguish effective teachers (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), whose pedagogical competence, direct practice, and guidance strengthen character education (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). Within Islamic Religious Education specifically, strengthening pedagogical competence through training and supervision improves instructional quality (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), Religious ethics education progressing through knowing, doing, and being supports value development (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), and experience-based learning helps students understand values although its effectiveness depends on teachers and school conditions (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). Related work adds that conceptual clarity, habituation, and school-family cooperation are necessary (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), and that Islamic Religious Education should remain contextual and adaptive to students' academic and social behaviour (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025).

Although previous studies have contributed to character education, teacher competence, and educator role modelling, many primarily examine role modelling through students' observation and imitation of teachers' positive behaviours. This perspective does not fully explain how teachers embody values, how these values are experienced in educational interactions, and how students obtain opportunities to practise values. Therefore, the living positive model provides an analytical perspective that views teacher modelling not merely as an individual teacher characteristic but as an educational process connecting value embodiment, student experiences, behavioural practices, and character formation.

Preliminary classroom and school-activity observations conducted in December 2025 at SMP Diponegoro Depok, Sleman, indicated that some students still demonstrated inconsistent discipline, responsibility, and honesty, such as lateness, delayed assignments, dependence on others, and academic dishonesty. These behaviours indicated a gap between students' understanding of character values and their daily practices. Meanwhile, the Islamic Religious Education teacher attempted to provide positive examples through punctuality, respectful communication, personal guidance, religious habituation, consistent rule enforcement, and school involvement.

This study contributes to character education and Islamic Religious Education by extending the *living positive model* as a framework for understanding teacher modelling. Unlike studies that merely describe teachers' exemplary behaviours, this study examines how values are embodied through teachers' actions, observed and interpreted by students, practised through educational activities, and supported by the school environment in character formation. Therefore, teacher modelling is understood as an interactive process involving teacher behaviour, student experiences, and educational context.

Based on this background, the study aims to analyse how the Islamic Religious Education teacher enacted the role of a living positive model in developing students' discipline, responsibility, and honesty at SMP Diponegoro Depok. It also aims to identify the factors that supported and inhibited teacher role modelling in the process of students' character formation.

Method

The researcher employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to develop an in-depth understanding of how an Islamic Religious Education teacher enacted the role of a *living positive model* in developing students' discipline, responsibility, and honesty. The case study design enabled the researcher to examine the teacher's behaviour, students' experiences, educational interactions, and students' practices related to character values within their real-life setting (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). The researcher conducted the study at SMP Diponegoro Depok, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in December 2025. The researcher bounded the case by focusing on one Islamic Religious Education teacher, five eighth-grade students, classroom learning, relevant school activities, and the ways discipline, responsibility, and honesty were demonstrated and experienced within the educational context during the research period.

The researcher selected the participants through purposive sampling based on their involvement in Islamic Religious Education learning and student character development. The participants consisted of one Islamic Religious Education teacher and five eighth-grade students from a regular class. The number of participants was determined based on the depth of information required in a qualitative case study rather than statistical representation. The teacher was selected as the central participant because the study focused on how the living positive model was enacted through daily educational practices, interactions, and decision-making. The five students were selected to provide perspectives on how teacher behaviours were observed, interpreted, and experienced in relation to discipline, responsibility, and honesty. Participant adequacy was determined through the consistency of information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation.

Data adequacy in this study was determined by the depth and consistency of information rather than participant numbers, consistent with case study logic that prioritises analytic depth over statistical breadth (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). The sufficiency of data was established through the convergence of interview, observation, and documentary evidence, which revealed consistent patterns within the bounded case. The teacher and students were selected based on their direct involvement in Islamic Religious Education learning, character development activities, and their ability to provide relevant information. To protect the participants' identities, the researcher assigned the code GP to the teacher and the codes S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5 to the students.

The study focused on the teacher's consistency between words and actions, professional discipline, responsibility, honesty in assessment, respectful communication, personal guidance, rule enforcement, and involvement in character development activities. Rather than measuring changes in students' character over time, the study examined how students experienced, interpreted, and practised values through interactions with the teacher and educational environment. The researcher served as the primary research instrument and used

a semi-structured interview guide, an observation guide, and a documentation checklist as supporting instruments for data collection.

The researcher collected data through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the teacher and students to explore the teacher's understanding of the living positive model, exemplary behaviours, character development practices, student experiences, and supporting or inhibiting factors. Additional clarification was obtained when necessary. All interviews were conducted with participant consent and documented for analysis.

The researcher conducted classroom and school-activity observations to identify recurring patterns of teacher behaviour, student responses, and educational practices. These observations aimed to understand the implementation process rather than establish behavioural changes through a longitudinal study. The observations focused on the teacher's punctuality, instructional preparedness, communication practices, rule enforcement, task management, assessment practices, personal approaches, and responses to student misconduct. The researcher also observed students' punctuality, learning preparedness, participation, task completion, willingness to admit mistakes, and academic honesty. The researcher recorded the observation findings in field notes during each activity or immediately after the activity ended.

The researcher examined classroom agreements, school regulations, students' assignments, assignment submission records, documentation of practical activities, and records of religious and character development activities. These documents enabled the researcher to compare the participants' statements with evidence concerning rule implementation, task distribution, punctuality, participation, responsibility, and academic honesty. The integration of interview, observation, and documentary evidence strengthened the depth of interpretation by enabling the researcher to examine consistency among different sources of information. The documentary evidence also strengthened the findings obtained from interviews and observations.

The researcher analysed the data using the interactive model proposed by (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data condensation, the researcher organised interview transcripts, field notes, and documents by coding and categorising data related to the living positive model, students' character practices, and supporting or inhibiting factors. Data were then displayed through thematic descriptions and triangulation tables to identify patterns and relationships before drawing and verifying conclusions.

The researcher established data trustworthiness through source triangulation and methodological triangulation. For source triangulation, the researcher compared information obtained from GP with information provided by S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5. For methodological triangulation, the researcher compared the interview findings with observational and documentary evidence. When the data showed discrepancies, the researcher reviewed the context of the events, the participants' explanations, the field notes, and the relevant documents before determining the final interpretation. The use of multiple data sources was also intended to strengthen the credibility and depth of the findings because the study focused on understanding the process of *teacher modelling* within a specific educational context rather

than producing generalisable measurements of character change. Before collecting the data, the researcher obtained the school's permission and the participants' informed consent, and protected their identities throughout the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The Islamic Religious Education Teacher as a *Living Positive Model* at SMP Diponegoro Depok

Interview, observation, and documentation data showed that the Islamic Religious Education teacher enacted the living positive model by consistently aligning religious instruction with everyday conduct. The teacher demonstrated positive values through classroom practices and school activities, while students encountered opportunities to practise discipline, responsibility, and honesty. The following subsections present these findings in detail.

Teacher Modelling in Students' Discipline Practices

The findings showed that the Islamic Religious Education teacher enacted discipline through personal example, classroom agreements, rule enforcement, and daily routines. The teacher demonstrated discipline through punctuality, instructional preparation, orderly classroom management, and consistent responses to violations. Students recognised these behaviours as examples of discipline, although their practices were not yet consistent.

Table 1. Data Triangulation on Students' Discipline Practices

Data source	Research findings
Interview with the Islamic Religious Education teacher	GP explained that the teacher established classroom agreements at the beginning of the academic year to provide clear expectations regarding classroom rules, students' obligations, learning procedures, and consequences for violations. The teacher sought to provide an example through punctuality, instructional preparedness, and consistent rule enforcement.
Interviews with students	S1 stated that the teacher's punctuality encouraged the student to arrive on time. S2 regarded the teacher's orderliness and preparedness before teaching as behaviours worthy of emulation. S3 viewed the teacher's consistency as encouragement to obey classroom rules. S4 and S5 considered the teacher's compliance, neatness, and orderly conduct helpful in preparing them to participate in learning activities.
Classroom observations	The teacher arrived and prepared the lesson according to schedule. Several students arrived on time, prepared their learning materials, and participated in the lesson in an orderly manner. However, some students still arrived late, talked while the teacher explained the material, used mobile phones for activities unrelated to learning, or entered the classroom without preparing books and stationery.
Learning documentation	Classroom agreements and assignments administered through Google Forms showed the existence of rules, deadlines, and requirements for students to complete tasks independently. Some students submitted assignments according to schedule, while others postponed their work or completed it with limited effort.
Documentation of school activities	Congregational prayers, Qur'an memorisation, and other religious habituation activities supported students' time management and

compliance with school routines. However, these activities did not specifically focus on the development of learning discipline.

Source: Processed research data, 2025.

The triangulation data showed that *teacher modelling* was reflected in classroom routines, rule enforcement, and students' responses to disciplinary expectations. Several students demonstrated punctuality, preparation of learning materials, and compliance with classroom procedures. However, other students continued to depend on supervision and repeated reminders. These findings indicate differences in students' responses to *teacher modelling* rather than evidence of fully internalised discipline.

Teacher Modelling in Students' Responsibility Practices

The findings showed that the Islamic Religious Education teacher encouraged opportunities for students to practise responsibility through personal example, individual and group assignments, clear role distribution, deadlines, and practical learning activities. The teacher demonstrated responsibility by preparing lessons, guiding learning activities, completing professional duties, and monitoring students' participation. Responsibility in this study involved not only submitting assignments but also preparing materials, performing assigned roles, helping group members, managing time, and accepting the consequences of one's actions.

Table 2. Data Triangulation on Students' Responsibility Practices

Data source	Research findings
Interview with the Islamic Religious Education teacher	GP explained that responsibility practices were encouraged through assignments and practical activities that required student participation. During the practicum on Islamic funeral rites, students were divided into groups and assigned to bring specific materials and equipment. The teacher assessed not only the final outcome but also students' preparedness, commitment, quality of task performance, and concern for other group members.
Interviews with students	S1 stated that the student attempted to bring the required practicum materials and complete assignments conscientiously. S2 associated responsibility with carrying out classroom duty schedules and completing group assignments on time. S3 mentioned preparing activity reports and completing assigned projects. S4 demonstrated responsibility by helping peers and organising equipment after activities, while S5 emphasised the importance of time management in completing assignments according to the established requirements.
Classroom observations	Most students demonstrated responsibility through participation in group activities, preparation of materials, and task completion. However, several students submitted assignments late, relied excessively on peers, or participated inadequately in carrying out their assigned roles. In one case, a student submitted another student's previously assessed work because the student had not completed the assignment independently.
Learning documentation	Documentation of practical activities and assignments showed role distribution, requirements to bring specific materials, report-writing tasks, and submission deadlines. These activities provided students with opportunities to fulfil both personal and collective responsibilities.

Source: Processed research data, 2025.

The triangulation data showed that practical activities, role distribution, assignments, and deadlines provided students with opportunities to practise individual and collective responsibility. Several students fulfilled their roles, prepared the required materials, contributed to group activities, and completed their assignments. However, others continued to delay tasks, rely on peers, or participate minimally. These findings indicate that *teacher modelling* and structured learning created opportunities for students to demonstrate responsibility, although some students still required guidance and supervision.

Teacher Modelling in Students' Honesty Practices

The findings showed that the Islamic Religious Education teacher promoted opportunities for students to practise honesty through exemplary conduct, objective assessment, consistent rule enforcement, personal dialogue, and educational responses to dishonest behaviour. The teacher demonstrated honesty through openness, fairness, and consistency between words and actions. The teacher also encouraged students to report their actual circumstances, admit mistakes, and complete assignments independently.

Table 3. Data Triangulation on Students' Honesty Practices

Data source	Research findings
Interview with the Islamic Religious Education teacher	GP explained that honesty practices were encouraged through exemplary conduct, objective assessment, advice, and personal guidance. The teacher asked students about the reasons for their lateness, the fulfilment of religious obligations, and the completion of assignments to encourage them to describe their actual circumstances truthfully. When the teacher identified dishonest behaviour, the teacher provided educational reprimands and explained its consequences for the students and others.
Interviews with students	S1 stated that the teacher frequently asked about students' daily activities and advised them when they had not been truthful. S2 considered the teacher objective in assessment and willing to reprimand students who lied. S3 explained that the teacher encouraged students to disclose the actual circumstances when they made mistakes. S4 stated that the teacher explained the consequences of cheating and manipulating grades, while S5 believed that the teacher's honesty in daily conduct encouraged students to behave truthfully.
Classroom observations	Some students demonstrated the courage to admit mistakes and explain their actual circumstances. However, when the teacher asked about the reasons for lateness, morning routines, and the performance of the dawn prayer, several students provided answers that did not correspond to the observed situation. After the teacher approached them personally, the students became more open in explaining what had occurred.
Documentation of assignment results	An examination of students' assignments revealed similarities among several submitted answers. This evidence indicated that some students copied or collaborated inappropriately when completing individual assignments. Therefore, students had not demonstrated academic honesty consistently.

Source: Processed research data, 2025.

The triangulation data showed that teacher practices related to objective assessment, consistent expectations, personal dialogue, and opportunities to admit mistakes shaped students' experiences of honesty practices. Several students became more open when the teacher approached them personally. However, inaccurate explanations and similarities among individual assignments showed that honesty had not been practised consistently. These findings indicate that teacher integrity and personal guidance supported honest behaviour, although fear of consequences and academic pressure continued to influence some students' decisions.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the *Living Positive Model*

The findings showed that the implementation of the Islamic Religious Education teacher's role as a *living positive model* was influenced by the teacher's exemplary conduct, the learning process, students' responses, school culture, and the wider social environment. These factors influenced the extent to which students encountered and practised discipline, responsibility, and honesty within the school context.

Table 4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Islamic Religious Education Teacher's Role as a *Living Positive Model*

Aspect	Supporting factors	Inhibiting factors
Teacher's exemplary conduct	The teacher consistently demonstrated discipline, responsibility, honesty, politeness, fairness, and consistency between words and actions.	Limited interaction time restricted the teacher's ability to supervise and guide students' behaviour comprehensively.
Learning process	Classroom agreements, assignments, practical activities, role distribution, deadlines, reflection, and personal guidance provided opportunities for students to practise character values.	Some students followed rules and completed assignments mainly because of direct teacher supervision rather than personal awareness.
Students' responses	Several students imitated the teacher's punctuality, learning preparedness, responsibility in group activities, willingness to admit mistakes, and honesty in communication.	Differences in students' habits, motivation, backgrounds, and self-regulation contributed to variations in students' responses and practices of character-related values.
School culture	Congregational prayers, Qur'an memorisation, school regulations, and religious habituation provided additional contexts for students to encounter discipline, responsibility, and honesty-related values.	The values contained in religious activities were not always explicitly connected to students' academic behaviour and social interactions.
Social environment	Support from other teachers, positive peer relationships, and consistent habituation reinforced the teacher's exemplary conduct.	Peer influence, digital media use, and inconsistent reinforcement within the family environment limited the consistency of students' practices of values encountered at school.

Source: Processed research data, 2025.

The triangulation data identified teacher consistency, structured learning activities, religious school culture, and support from other teachers and peers as the main supporting factors. In contrast, limited interaction time, differences in students' self-regulation, peer pressure, digital distractions, and inconsistent family reinforcement hindered the internalisation of discipline, responsibility, and honesty. These findings indicate that *teacher modelling* was more meaningful when classroom practices, school culture, and the wider social environment provided consistent opportunities for students to encounter and practise the same values.

Discussion

The Islamic Religious Education Teacher as a *Living Positive Model*

This study extends the understanding of *teacher modelling* by proposing that the *living positive model* operates through a progression of value embodiment, observation, practice, and potential internalisation. Unlike social learning theory, which mainly explains behavioural acquisition through observation and imitation, the *living positive model* emphasises how teachers' embodied values become educational experiences through structured opportunities for students to practise values. Thus, *teacher modelling* functions as a process connecting teacher conduct, student interpretation, guided practice, and gradual character formation. The teacher did not merely explain moral values but made them visible through professional behaviour, respectful communication, fair treatment, and consistent guidance.

Although social learning theory explains that students acquire behaviour through observing significant models, it does not fully explain how observed moral behaviour is transformed into opportunities for practice within educational settings. Similarly, conventional role-modelling approaches often emphasise the teacher as an exemplary figure, but provide limited explanation of the pedagogical processes that connect teacher behaviour with students' gradual character development. The living positive model extends these perspectives by highlighting the interaction between value embodiment, guided practice, reflection, and environmental reinforcement.

This finding reflects (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) distinction between a *man of discourse* and a *man of action*, in which educators gain moral credibility when their actions correspond with the values they communicate. This consistency strengthened students' acceptance of the teacher's guidance. Students considered the teacher's behaviour credible because the teacher applied the same standards that students were expected to follow. This finding supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who emphasise that teacher personality, fairness, consistency, and relational competence contribute to character education. Therefore, the teacher's influence emerged not only from formal authority but also from students' trust in the teacher's conduct.

Social learning theory explains that students learn by observing and interpreting the behaviour of significant models (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). However, the findings indicate that observation alone does not automatically produce consistent behaviour. Teacher modelling provides an initial moral reference, while students' habits, motivation, and environmental support influence value practice. The living positive model extends this explanation by positioning teacher modelling as a process involving value embodiment, observation, and opportunities for practice that may facilitate gradual internalisation. The teacher provides a concrete moral example, but students require repeated practice and guidance before those values become part of their character. This interpretation supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) view that character development involves the integration of moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action.

Teacher Modelling and Students' Discipline Practices

The findings indicate that teacher modelling provided students with an observable reference for understanding disciplinary expectations. Students interpreted disciplinary expectations through the teacher's consistency in fulfilling professional responsibilities and applying classroom rules. This process corresponds with social learning theory, which explains that students learn by observing, retaining, and reproducing the behaviour of credible models (Bandura, 1986).

The teacher's conduct also functioned as a hidden curriculum that communicated behavioural standards beyond formal Islamic Religious Education content. Students assessed classroom rules by observing whether the teacher practised the same standards expected from them. This finding supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who identify discipline, fairness, consistency, and respect as important teacher characteristics, and (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who highlight the contribution of teacher exemplary conduct to students' disciplinary character.

However, teacher modelling did not produce the same level of discipline among all students. Some students regulated their conduct independently, while others still relied on supervision and reminders. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) explains that observation does not automatically lead to consistent behavioural reproduction because students' motivation, habits, reinforcement, and environment influence their responses. Therefore, observing a disciplined teacher represents an initial stage of discipline development rather than evidence of full character internalisation.

Classroom agreements, consistent reinforcement, and corrective dialogue provided opportunities for students to reflect on behavioural expectations and practise self-regulation. Shared rules clarified behavioural expectations and consequences, while personal guidance encouraged students to understand and correct their conduct. This interpretation supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who emphasise that rules, routines, relationships, and consistent reinforcement strengthen students' discipline. It also corresponds with (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who position Islamic Religious Education teachers as models, advisers, and motivators who guide students through educational rather than merely punitive responses.

Religious habituation further strengthened discipline when the teacher connected ritual orderliness with academic and social responsibilities. Religious activities alone could not automatically produce disciplined learning behaviour without explicit guidance concerning punctuality, time management, and commitment to classroom obligations (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). From the perspective of the living positive model, the teacher provided a concrete representation of discipline, while repeated practice and gradually reduced supervision supported students' self-regulation.

Teacher Modelling and Students' Responsibility Practices

The findings indicate that responsibility practices developed through a transition from externally guided task completion toward emerging accountability. Students may initially fulfil obligations because teachers assign tasks, establish deadlines, and monitor performance. However, genuine responsibility requires students to maintain commitments even when supervision decreases. This interpretation corresponds with (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) framework connecting moral knowing, feeling, and action in responsible character formation.

Teacher modelling provided students with a concrete representation of responsibility through preparation, consistency, and commitment to learning. Students observed that responsibility involved not only completing duties but also considering the quality and consequences of their actions. This finding supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who highlight the contribution of teacher modelling and guidance to responsibility

development. It also aligns with (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who highlight the role of structured routines and supportive learning environments in developing responsible behaviour. Structured learning activities strengthened this process by providing opportunities for students to practise individual and collective accountability. Responsibility became visible through preparedness, role fulfilment, cooperation, and commitment to shared outcomes. Therefore, teachers should not evaluate responsibility solely from final assignments but also consider the learning process, as emphasised (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025).

However, students did not internalise responsibility at the same level. Some students could fulfil obligations independently, while others still relied on instructions, reminders, or assistance from peers. This variation shows that teacher guidance remains necessary but should gradually lead students toward greater autonomy. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) position teachers as role models, facilitators, and motivators in developing responsibility. These roles enable teachers to provide support without maintaining excessive control that may create continued dependence.

From the perspective of the *living positive model*, responsibility practices do not emerge solely from observing a responsible teacher but through the interaction between teacher modelling, structured learning experiences, and students' opportunities to practise accountability. The progression from *knowing* and *doing* toward *being* requires students to understand their obligations, perform them consistently, and gradually demonstrate responsibility in their academic and social practices (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025).

Teacher Modelling and Students' Honesty Practices

The findings indicate that teacher modelling provided a moral reference for honesty. Through fairness, openness, and consistency in assessment and interaction, the teacher demonstrated that honesty applies to both teachers and students. This process corresponds with social learning theory, which explains that students learn ethical behaviour by observing credible models and interpreting consequences (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). However, observing honest behaviour alone was insufficient to ensure consistent honesty practices; internalisation requires reflection, guidance, and repeated moral practice.

Students generally understood honesty as an important Islamic and educational value, but situational pressures still influenced its practice. The distinction between *knowing*, *doing*, and *being* helps explain this condition. Students may understand honesty conceptually but fail to practise it consistently under fear, academic difficulty, or peer pressure. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) emphasise that values become part of character through repeated practice and internalisation.

Teacher integrity strengthened the credibility of honesty education. Objective assessment, equal treatment, and consistent responses to misconduct showed students that moral expectations operated fairly. This finding supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who emphasises that educators' integrity, fairness, respect, and responsibility influence students' ethical conduct. Therefore, honesty education becomes more persuasive when teachers embody the same standards they require from students.

The findings also show that academic conditions can affect students' ethical decisions. Students may prioritise task completion or avoidance of consequences when they feel pressured, which can weaken honest behaviour. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) similarly identify assessment pressure, fear of failure, and social influence as factors related to academic dishonesty. Personal dialogue and reflective guidance therefore remain important because they help students acknowledge misconduct and understand its consequences without removing accountability (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025). From the perspective of the *living positive model*, honesty practices are shaped through

the interaction between teacher integrity, consistent expectations, and repeated moral practice. Religious values can strengthen this process when teachers connect honesty with concrete academic conduct rather than teaching it only as an abstract principle (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025).

Taken together, these findings suggest a common pattern in how the living positive model operates. Value embodiment is a necessary but insufficient condition, observation establishes moral credibility rather than behavioural change, and internalisation becomes possible only when structured practice accompanies gradually reduced supervision. This differs from social learning theory, which emphasises observation and reproduction, because it treats the withdrawal of supervision, not merely the presence of a model, as the condition distinguishing practice from internalisation. It also differs from conventional role-modelling accounts by locating the teacher's contribution not only in exemplary conduct but in structuring opportunities that convert observation into practice

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the *Living Positive Model*

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of the *living positive model* depends not only on teacher conduct but also on the consistency of the educational environment. Teacher modelling becomes more influential when classroom activities, school regulations, religious habituation, and interpersonal relationships reinforce similar moral expectations. This finding extends the *living positive model* by showing that teacher modelling operates as an ecological process shaped by interactions between teachers, students, and the educational environment. This interpretation aligns with (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who emphasise that teacher competence, exemplary conduct, and direct educational experience jointly support students' character development.

Structured learning activities provided an important connection between the values demonstrated by the teacher and students' opportunities to practise them. Classroom agreements, assignments, practical activities, clear deadlines, reflection, and personal guidance enabled students to translate observed values into concrete behaviour. However, such structures should not maintain students' dependence on teacher supervision. Teachers need to reduce guidance gradually so that students can move from externally directed behaviour toward independent moral awareness.

School culture influenced the continuity of character development. Religious habituation, school regulations, and support from other teachers reinforced value-related practices. However, participation in religious activities did not automatically produce consistent academic and social behaviour. This condition supports (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025), who explain that value internalisation requires progression from knowing and doing toward being. The wider social environment could reinforce or weaken teacher modelling. Positive peer relationships and consistent family guidance supported similar behavioural expectations across settings, whereas peer pressure, digital media use, and inconsistent family reinforcement weakened the continuity of values developed at school. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) similarly emphasise the importance of consistent examples from teachers and parents in developing honesty and responsibility.

From the perspective of the *living positive model*, environmental reinforcement influences whether students merely recognise the teacher's example or have opportunities to practise the values represented by that example. (Mahmud Solehudin, Nurul Rahmawati, 2025) describes educators as positive generators and transmitters who embody values through action. This study further suggests that the *living positive model* is not merely a teacher-centred process but a relational and contextual process involving the interaction between teacher conduct, students' experiences, and environmental reinforcement. The implementation of the *living positive model* therefore works most effectively as a shared educational process rather than as the isolated responsibility of the Islamic Religious Education teacher.

Conclusion

This study found that the Islamic Religious Education teacher at SMP Diponegoro Depok enacted the role of a *living positive model* through consistency between religious instruction and everyday conduct. The teacher demonstrated discipline through punctuality and instructional preparedness, responsibility through commitment to learning activities and student guidance, and honesty through fairness, openness, and objective assessment. These examples provided opportunities for students to practise discipline, responsibility, and honesty, although the internalisation of these values remained uneven because some students still depended on supervision, reminders, peer assistance, or situational considerations. Teacher consistency, structured learning activities, religious habituation, school culture, and positive social relationships supported the process, while limited interaction time, differences in self-regulation, peer influence, digital distractions, and inconsistent family reinforcement inhibited it.

This study proposes the *living positive model* as a conceptual process connecting value embodiment, observation, practice, and potential internalisation. The findings suggest that *teacher modelling* becomes more meaningful when educators provide structured opportunities, reflective guidance, and gradual autonomy that may support students' self-regulation, accountability, and value-based behaviour. Practically, schools should integrate *teacher modelling* with classroom agreements, process-based assessment, religious habituation, personal guidance, cooperation among teachers, and family involvement so that students encounter consistent moral expectations across educational environments.

This study has several limitations. It examined a single case involving one Islamic Religious Education teacher and five students within a relatively short research period, so the findings cannot represent all teachers, students, or school contexts. The study also focused primarily on teacher and student perspectives without directly involving parents, school leaders, or other teachers as participants. Future studies should involve multiple schools, broader participant groups, and longer observation periods to examine how the *living positive model* develops across different educational settings and how students maintain discipline, responsibility, and honesty over time.

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Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for educational research. Before data collection, permission was obtained from the school, and informed consent was obtained from the participants. Participation was conducted with due consideration for participants' rights and confidentiality. To protect participants' identities, the teacher was identified using the code GP, while the students were identified as S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5. All

information obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation was used solely for academic and research purposes.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Statement

The authors used artificial intelligence (AI) tools only for limited language-editing purposes, including improving grammatical accuracy, clarity, and readability of the manuscript. AI was not used to generate research data, conduct data analysis, interpret the findings, or formulate the research conclusions. All AI-assisted outputs were critically reviewed, verified, and revised by the authors, who take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

Author Contributions

Mitha Shaskila Sinaga contributed to the conceptualization, investigation, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of the findings, and preparation of the original draft. Muqowim contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, supervision, validation, interpretation of the findings, and critical review and revision of the manuscript. Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and take responsibility for its scholarly content.

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