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The Ideal Islamic Religious Education Teacher from Generation Z's Perspective: Teaching Quality in Digital Era at NW Suralaga Islamic Senior High School

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to examine Generation Z students' perceptions of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher and the teaching qualities required in the digital era. **Theoretical framework**: The study draws on pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competencies, complemented by digital literacy as an essential dimension of contemporary Islamic education. **Literature review**: Previous studies emphasize teacher competence and technology integration; however, the characteristics of ideal IRE teachers from Generation Z students' perspectives require further investigation. **Methods**: This study employed a mixed-methods approach using an explanatory sequential design. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations, documentation, and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were examined through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing following Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. **Results**: Students' perceptions were predominantly high (50%; 372 responses), followed by very high (32%; 236), low (13%; 97), and very low (5%; 37). Qualitative findings indicate that ideal IRE teachers serve as role models, motivate learners, communicate effectively, understand students' needs, facilitate engaging learning, and integrate digital technology into instruction. **Implications**: These findings provide guidance for teacher education, professional development, and instructional improvement by aligning IRE teachers' competencies with Generation Z's learning characteristics and needs. **Novelty**: This study formulates a comprehensive profile of the ideal IRE teacher from Generation Z's perspective by integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence across pedagogical, personality, social, professional, and digital literacy competencies, offering context-specific insights for Islamic education in the digital era.

Keywords: digital era, generation z, islamic religious education teacher, student perceptions, teaching quality

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the world of education, especially in learning patterns, student characteristics, and school learning systems. Generation Z, as a generation born amidst technological advancements, has characteristics that differ from previous generations. They are more familiar with the internet,

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social media, digital communication, and tend to prefer interactive, visual, creative, and flexible learning. These conditions require teachers to be able to adjust the quality of their teaching to meet the needs of students in the digital era. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), teachers are not only required to master religious material but also to be moral guides, character role models, learning facilitators, and communicators who are adaptive to technological developments and the social changes of Generation Z students [1]. These abilities become important factors in creating relevant, meaningful, and appropriate Islamic Religious Education learning that aligns with the characteristics of students in the digital era.

In the digital era, Islamic Religious Education teachers are required to possess integrated pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies to deliver a learning process that aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z. Islamic Religious Education teachers also need to be able to utilize digital technology in teaching, establish humanistic communication with students, and create an engaging and non-monotonous learning atmosphere. Furthermore, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is expected to serve as a means of instilling Islamic values, shaping character, and strengthening the spirituality and morality of students amidst the increasing influence of digitalization on the behavior patterns of the younger generation. IRE teachers in the digital era must possess balanced pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies to create interactive, humanistic, and adaptive learning that is relevant to the characteristics and learning needs of Generation Z [2]. Therefore, strengthening the competencies of Islamic Religious Education teachers has become an urgent need to realize effective learning while also addressing the challenges of education in the digital era.

However, the reality on the ground shows that many Islamic Religious Education teachers are still unable to adjust their teaching methods to the characteristics of Generation Z. Some teachers still apply conventional teaching methods that tend to be monotonous, focus on lecturing, and have not yet maximized the use of digital technology in the learning process. Various studies indicate that Generation Z is more interested in learning that is visual, interactive, and technology-based, while some teachers still face limitations in digital literacy and learning innovation [3]. Moreover, various educational reports and public discussions also reveal that the quality of teachers remains one of the factors affecting the low effectiveness of learning in Indonesia, such as the lack of ability to understand students' needs, low flexibility in teaching, and weak adaptability to the developments in digital education.

These conditions have various impacts on the education sector, both socially, psychologically, and morally-spiritually. The low quality of teacher-student interactions can reduce learning comfort, lower motivation, and lead to decreased student engagement in learning. Additionally, the poor quality of Islamic Religious Education learning also has the potential to weaken the instillation of religious values and the character formation of students amidst the influence of social media and digital development. This phenomenon can be explained through constructivist theory and humanistic pedagogy, which emphasize the importance of active student engagement, interpersonal communication, and understanding the needs of learners in the learning process [4]. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education teachers in the era of Generation Z are not only required to master the material but also to utilize technology, understand students' characters, and serve as moral and spiritual role models.

Previous research shows that the quality of teachers has a significant impact on the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era. The research conducted by Sukmawati et al. explains that Islamic Religious Education teachers need to enhance their digital competencies and update their teaching methods to align with technological advancements and the characteristics of digital generation students. Another study by Setyaningsih et al. found that the use of digital media and interactive learning

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strategies can increase the motivation and participation of Generation Z students. Furthermore, the research by Patmawati et al. states that the transformation of Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era requires technology-based innovations to make learning more effective and relevant to the characteristics of today's students [5]. Additionally, research by Hasanah and Misbah shows that the limitations in teacher innovation and low digital literacy still pose obstacles in Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era [6]. Meanwhile, research published by Supriadi et al. explains that the use of digital platforms, social media, and technology-based learning can enhance active engagement and learning interest among Generation Z students [7].

Although previous research has discussed the competencies of Islamic Religious Education teachers, digital learning, and the characteristics of Generation Z, most studies still focus on the use of learning technology and teaching strategies in general. Previous research has not specifically examined how Generation Z students perceive the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher in the digital era, particularly in relation to communication quality, humanistic approaches, moral exemplarity, and the teacher's ability to understand students' psychological needs. Additionally, earlier studies tend to emphasize the technical aspects of digital media usage rather than the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students in the Islamic Religious Education learning process.

Based on this gap, this research offers novelty by studying the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher from the perspective of Generation Z students, integrating aspects of digital pedagogy, humanistic communication, moral exemplarity, and the quality of learning interactions. This research is important because Islamic Religious Education teachers play a strategic role in shaping the character, morality, and spirituality of students amidst the development of technology and the increasingly complex influence of digital media. Therefore, the results of this research are expected to serve as evaluation materials and recommendations for improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning to be more adaptive, relevant, and in line with the needs of Generation Z.

The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in facing educational challenges in the digital era becomes increasingly important because the characteristics of Generation Z have different learning, communication, and social interaction patterns compared to previous generations. Islamic Religious Education teachers are not only required to master religious material but also to adapt to technological developments, build humanistic communication, and become moral and spiritual role models for students. However, various issues in Islamic Religious Education learning are still found, such as low learning innovation, limited digital literacy among teachers, and a lack of understanding of the psychological needs of Generation Z students. Therefore, this research is conducted to provide an overview of the ideal characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers based on students' perspectives as evaluation material to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning to be more adaptive, relevant, and in line with the developments of the digital era.

This research analyzes Generation Z's perceptions of the ideal characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers in the digital era, assesses the teaching quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers based on students' views, and identifies aspects considered important in the Islamic Religious Education learning process. Additionally, this research also describes the teachers' ability to build communication, utilize digital technology, apply a humanistic approach, and serve as moral and spiritual role models for students within the school environment.

Despite the growing attention to the integration of digital technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE), further investigation is needed to understand how Generation Z students perceive the ideal characteristics of IRE teachers in the digital era. In particular, students' perspectives on the integration of pedagogical competence, digital literacy, effective communication, humanistic interaction, and moral and spiritual role modeling deserve closer

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examination within the context of Islamic education. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on Generation Z students' perceptions as a basis for understanding the characteristics they consider essential in an ideal IRE teacher. Rather than focusing exclusively on teachers' competencies from a theoretical or institutional perspective, this study highlights students' views of teaching quality and the qualities that support meaningful IRE learning in a digitally connected environment.

The findings are expected to have practical implications for IRE teachers, teacher educators, and educational institutions. For teachers, the study may provide insights into how teaching practices can respond to Generation Z students' learning expectations while maintaining the moral and spiritual foundations of Islamic education. For teacher education programs and educational institutions, the findings may inform the development of professional training that integrates pedagogical competence, appropriate digital technology use, effective communication, and a humanistic approach. Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to discussions on how IRE teachers can remain relevant and effective in the digital era without compromising their roles as moral and spiritual role models.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers play an important role in developing students' religious understanding, moral character, and spiritual awareness. Their responsibilities extend beyond the transmission of religious knowledge to include the development of ethical behavior, personal responsibility, and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. Previous studies have highlighted the contribution of IRE teachers to character formation and demonstrated the importance of integrating professional competence with moral guidance and exemplary conduct. Accordingly, an ideal IRE teacher is expected to possess pedagogical competence, subject-matter knowledge, social skills, and personal integrity, enabling teachers to support students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual development [8], [9].

The development of digital technology has also transformed teaching and learning practices, including Islamic Religious Education. Generation Z students have grown up in an environment characterized by widespread access to digital information, social media, and technology-mediated communication, which shapes how they access learning materials and interact with educators. Recent research on Generation Z learning preferences indicates the importance of understanding students' expectations when designing effective learning experiences [10]. In Islamic education, digital tools can expand access to learning resources, increase classroom interaction, and support the presentation of religious concepts through various media. However, effective technology integration requires more than the ability to operate digital applications; teachers must also be able to select appropriate tools, develop meaningful learning activities, and guide students toward responsible and critical engagement with digital information [11], [12].

Beyond pedagogical and technological competence, effective IRE teaching depends on the quality of teacher–student relationships. Communication characterized by empathy, respect, responsiveness, and clear explanations can help establish a supportive learning environment in which students feel encouraged to participate and express their perspectives. A systematic review of teacher empathy has highlighted its relevance to teacher–student interactions and student outcomes, while other research has explained how students' perceptions of teachers' care influence their interpretation of teacher expectations [13], [14]. Within Islamic Religious Education, these relational qualities are particularly significant because teachers are expected to embody the moral and spiritual values they teach. Research on IRE teachers' roles in character education emphasizes the importance of exemplary behavior, consistent guidance, and the integration of religious values into students' everyday experiences [15], [16].

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Although previous studies have examined IRE teacher competence, digital literacy, teacher–student relationships, and character education, these themes provide complementary perspectives for understanding the characteristics of an ideal IRE teacher. The present study brings these dimensions together by examining Generation Z students' perceptions of teachers' pedagogical quality, use of digital technology, communication skills, humanistic approach, and moral and spiritual role modeling. Its specific contribution lies in centering students' perspectives to explore how these characteristics are understood and valued in the context of contemporary Islamic Religious Education. By connecting professional competence with digital adaptability and ethical role modeling, the study seeks to provide insights that may inform IRE teaching practices and teacher development while maintaining the moral and spiritual foundations of Islamic education.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a mixed-methods approach with an Explanatory Sequential Design, which is a study that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in stages. The quantitative approach is used to determine the level of agreement and general perception of students regarding the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher in the digital era through numerical data, while the qualitative approach is used to deeply explore the views, experiences, and expectations of Generation Z toward the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher. This research was conducted at Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga, with the subjects being students from grades X, XI, and XII.

The data sources in this research consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga students. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through journals, books, scientific articles, and documents related to Islamic Religious Education learning, Generation Z, and education in the digital era. The data collection technique at the quantitative stage was conducted using a Likert scale questionnaire through a Questionnaire Sheet, while at the qualitative stage, it was conducted through interviews, observations, documentation, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD).

The technique for determining informants at the qualitative stage used Simple Random Sampling, which is a sampling technique that gives every member of the population an equal chance to be selected as a research informant through a random selection process. This technique is used to minimize researcher bias in determining informants so that every student has an equal opportunity to be a source of research data. In this study, the sampling process was carried out by first compiling a list of all students in grades X, XI, and XII at Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga, who constitute the research population. Next, the researcher randomly selected informants using a lottery system to obtain informants representing each grade level. The selected informants were then asked for their willingness to participate in interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) as part of the qualitative data collection process.

The technique for quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics in the form of percentages, averages (mean), and respondent data descriptions to understand students' perceptions of the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher. Then, qualitative data analysis used the model of Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, theme selection, and conclusion drawing. The results of the quantitative analysis are then reinforced with qualitative data, resulting in more in-depth, objective, and comprehensive research findings regarding Generation Z's perception of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher quality in the digital era.

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Table 1. Informant Selection Criteria

Informant	Gender	Position	Informant Selection Criteria
AS	Male	Grade X Student	Actively participates in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning, is communicative, and can provide an in-depth explanation of learning experiences.
RI	Female	Grade XI Student	Has a positive learning experience with the Islamic Religious Education teacher and is able to provide information relevant to the focus of the study.
EY	Female	Grade X Student	Actively participates in the learning process and is willing to engage openly in interviews.
RM	Male	Grade XI Student	Has good communication skills and actively participates in Islamic Religious Education learning activities.
HH	Female	Grade XI Student	Can express opinions regarding learning experiences with the Islamic Religious Education teacher.
KP	Female	Grade XI Student	Actively participates in discussions and is able to provide in-depth information regarding the relationship between teachers and students.
HA	Female	Grade XI Student	Has extensive learning experience with the Islamic Religious Education teacher and is therefore able to provide comprehensive information.
JA	Female	Grade XI Student	Actively participates in learning activities and is able to explain the quality of the Islamic Religious Education teacher's instruction.
MF	Female	Grade XI Student	Is communicative and has experience participating in various Islamic Religious Education learning models.
IN	Female	Grade XI Student	Has participated in technology-based learning activities implemented by the Islamic Religious Education teacher.
MK	Male	Grade X Student	Can explain the use of technology in learning based on personal experience.
SK	Female	Grade XI Student	Is willing to serve as an informant and provide open information regarding the use of technology in Islamic Religious Education learning.

The table presents 12 student informants purposively selected based on their learning participation, communication skills, educational experiences, and ability to provide relevant information. The informants comprised students from Grades X and XI, representing both male and female perspectives. Their selection considered their experiences with Islamic Religious Education teachers, classroom interactions, instructional methods, and technology-supported learning. These criteria ensured that the interviews captured diverse and meaningful insights into students' perceptions of ideal teacher characteristics, teaching quality, and the competencies required to meet Generation Z's learning needs in the digital era.

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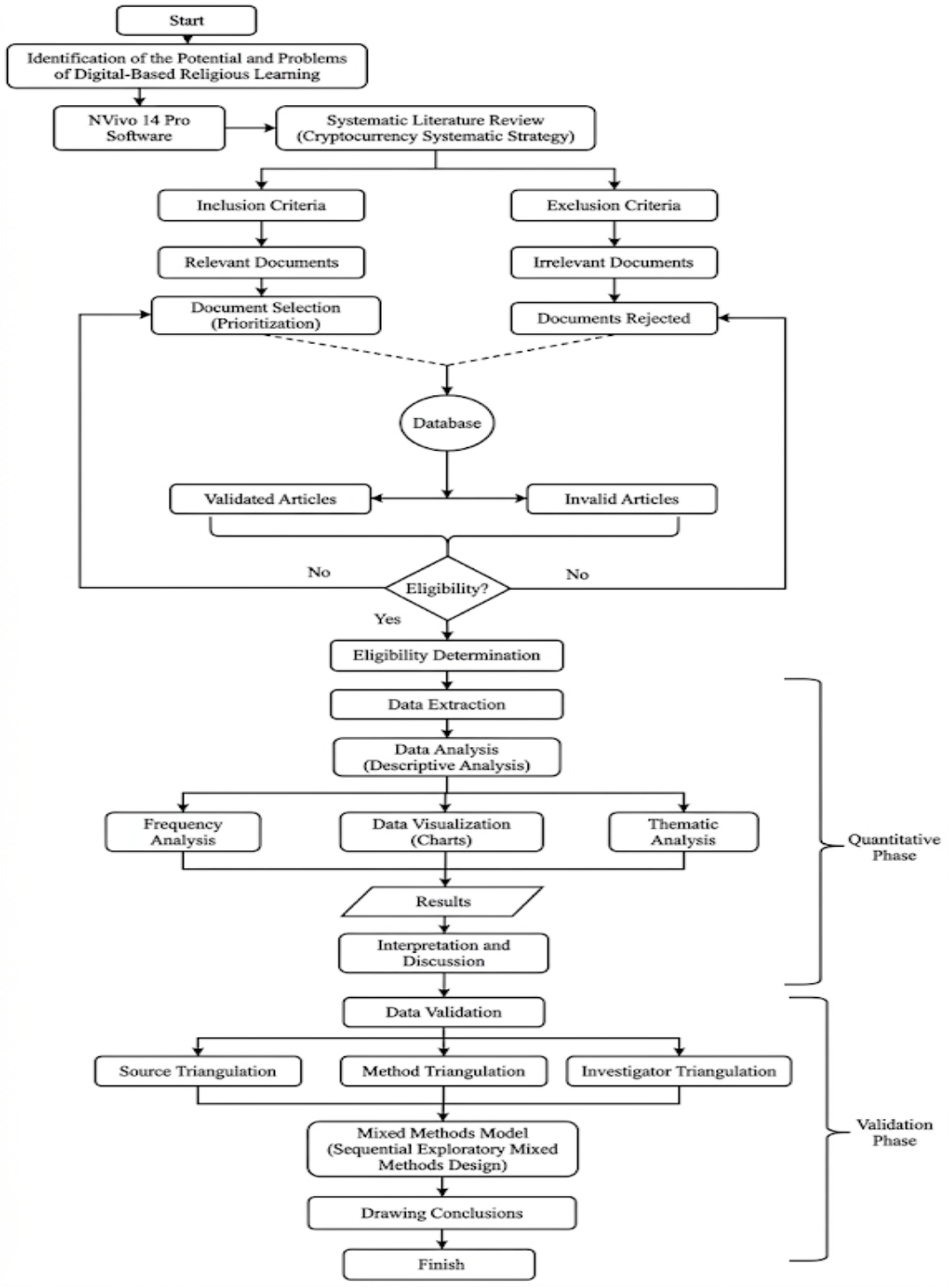


Figure 1. Conceptual Diagram of the Research Flow

Figure 1 outlines the research methodology for digital religious learning, starting from problem identification and systematic literature review using NVivo 14 Pro. Documents are filtered through inclusion and exclusion criteria to store validated articles within the database. The quantitative phase involves data extraction and descriptive analysis comprising frequency analysis, data visualization, and thematic analysis to generate discussion results. Finally, the validation phase applies source, method, and investigator triangulation using a sequential exploratory mixed methods design to reach final study conclusions.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The perception of students regarding the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher in the digital era was obtained through the strategic distribution of comprehensive questionnaires to research respondents across the target educational institution. The empirical answers provided by the participating students show varying levels of assessment, reflecting distinct expectations and evaluations of teaching effectiveness. To facilitate a structured quantitative analysis, these responses were carefully categorized into four discrete perception groups: Very High, High, Low, and Very Low. The comprehensive results of this classification highlight a strong positive trend, with the vast majority of respondents expressing highly favorable views regarding the necessary qualities and competencies of contemporary religious educators. These detailed empirical outcomes, illustrating the precise frequency and percentage distribution of student responses, are presented in the form of a bar chart in Figure 1. This visual representation serves as an essential foundational baseline for examining specific teacher dimensions required in modern learning environments.

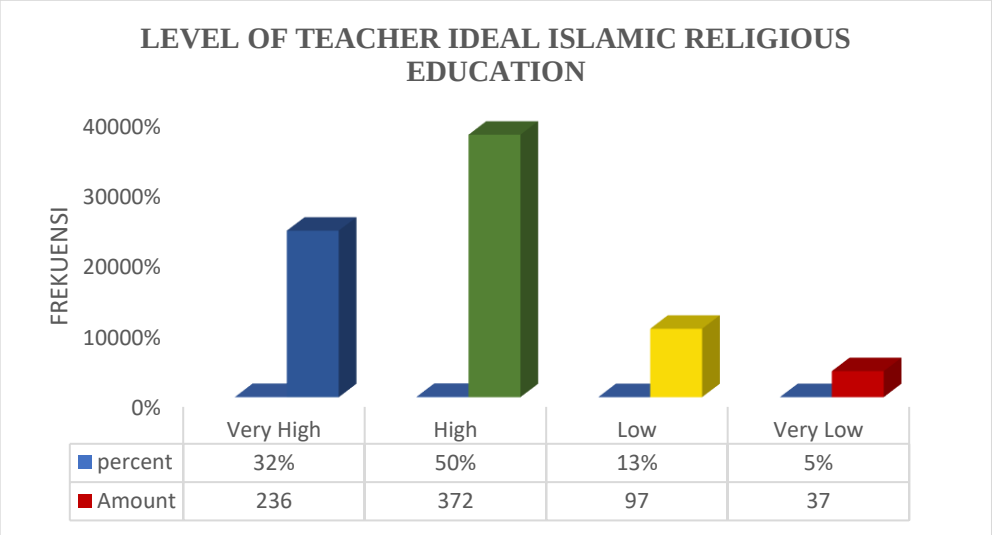


Figure 2. Distribution of Generation Z students' perceptions regarding the ideal level of Islamic religious education teachers.

The results of the questionnaire distributed to Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga students provide an overview of students' perceptions of the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher in the digital era. The data obtained are presented in the form of a bar chart to show the distribution of students' perceptions of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher. Based on Figure 1, the high category received the highest percentage of 50%. The very high category follows with a percentage of 32%, while the low category is at 13% and the very low category is at 5%. These results indicate that the majority of respondents gave a positive assessment of the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher.

The bar chart shows that the high category has the highest percentage, which is 50%, compared to the other categories. The dominance of that category indicates that the majority of Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga students believe that the Islamic Religious Education teachers have met their expectations. The assessment is related to the quality of the teacher's personality, communication skills, implementation of learning, and the ability to adapt to technological developments that are an important part of Generation Z's life.

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The very high category, with a percentage of 32%, indicates that quite a number of students rated the quality of the Islamic Religious Education teacher as very good. This condition illustrates that the Islamic Religious Education teacher is viewed not only as a deliverer of learning material but also as someone who can be a role model, provide motivation, guide students, and create a comfortable and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

The low category at 13% indicates that there are still a small number of students who feel that the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers do not fully meet their expectations. These differing perceptions may be influenced by diverse learning experiences, the variety of teaching methods employed by the teachers, or the teachers' ability to understand the different needs and characteristics of the students.

The very low category has the smallest percentage, which is 5%. This percentage indicates that only a small number of students have a less positive perception of the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers. The small percentage in this category shows that negative assessments of Islamic Religious Education teachers are relatively low compared to the positive assessments given by the majority of students.

The dominance of the high and very high categories indicates that students' perceptions of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher tend to be positive. These findings illustrate that Generation Z students at Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga have high expectations regarding the quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers. The ideal teacher, according to them, is not only determined by mastery of the subject matter but also by the ability to be a role model, establish good communication, create engaging learning experiences, and keep up with digital technology developments.

The interpretation of the diagram shows that the perception of MA NW Suralaga students toward the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher falls into the high category. This finding indicates that the majority of students view the Islamic Religious Education teacher as a figure with good qualities that are relevant to the characteristics of Generation Z. The ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher is understood as a figure who not only plays a role in delivering learning materials but also serves as a role model, motivator, guide, effective communicator, and is capable of utilizing technology to support the learning process in the digital era.

The interpretation of the diagram shows that the perception of Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga students toward the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher falls into the high category. The findings indicate that the majority of students view Islamic Religious Education teachers as figures with good qualities that are relevant to the characteristics of Generation Z. The ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher is understood as a figure who not only plays a role in delivering learning materials but also serves as a role model, motivator, guide, effective communicator, and is capable of utilizing technology to support the learning process in the digital era.

The empirical survey results regarding students' perceptions of ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in the digital era reveal a structured analytical framework, as visually summarized in the flowchart below. The data indicates that half of the respondents categorized teacher quality as high, forming the dominant distribution group alongside thirty-two percent in the very high category. Across four evaluated teacher characteristics, teaching quality emerged as the highest-rated aspect, driven by clear material presentation and engaging instructional methods. Consequently, ideal IRE teachers must effectively integrate key roles as motivators, mentors, and role models while cultivating comfortable and enjoyable learning environments.

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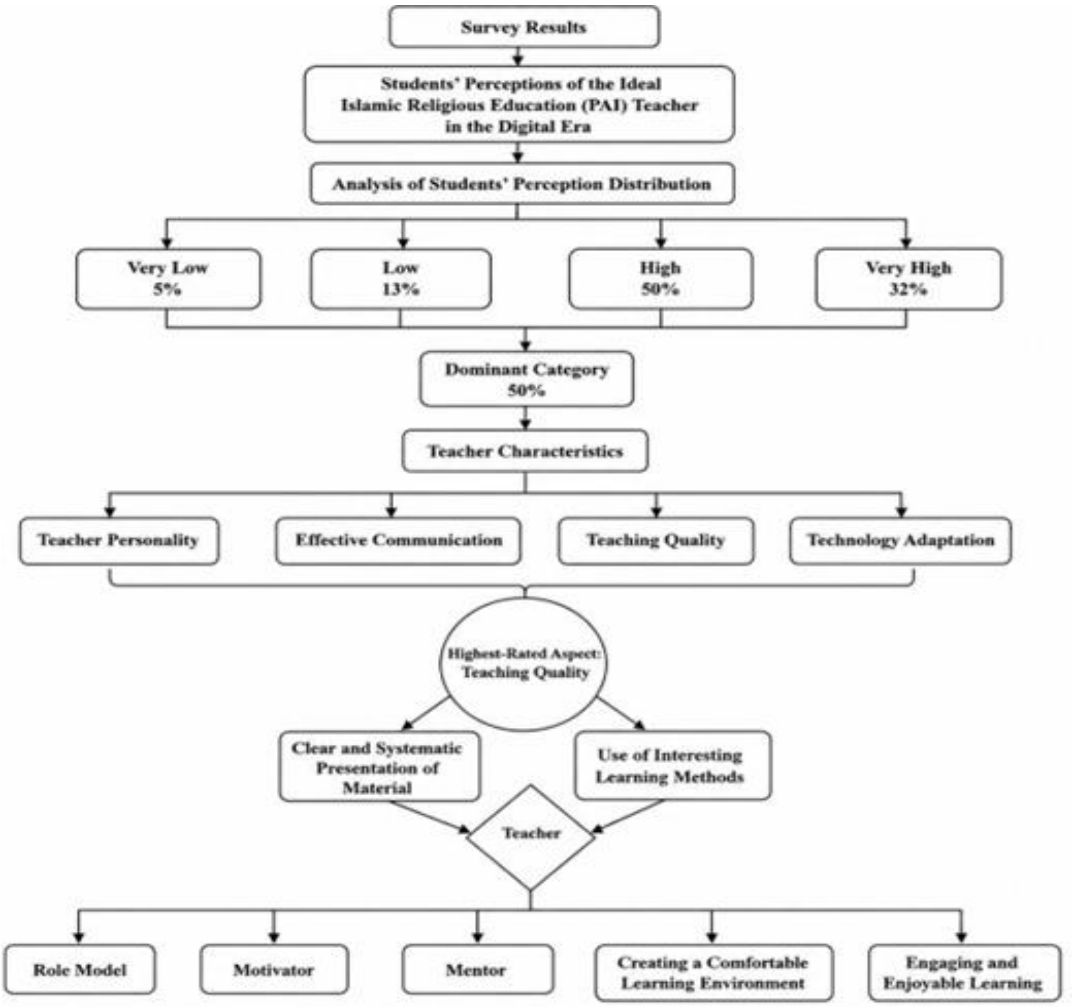


Figure 3. Results of Questionnaire Implementation

Figure 3 illustrates survey results on students' perceptions of ideal Islamic Religious Education teachers. Showing a dominant high rating of 50%, teaching quality is the top aspect. Supported by clear presentations and engaging methods, teachers effectively serve as role models, motivators, and mentors, ultimately creating a comfortable, engaging, and enjoyable learning environment for all students.

The Exemplary Behavior of Teachers and Providing Motivation to Students

The interview was conducted to obtain a clearer picture of students' views on the exemplary behavior and motivation provided by Islamic Religious Education teachers. Through the interview, students shared their experiences and evaluations regarding the teachers' attitudes and the forms of motivation they received during the learning process.

The interview results showed that students had a positive view of the exemplary behavior and motivation provided by Islamic Religious Education teachers. Informant AN stated, "A good Islamic Religious Education teacher, in my opinion, is friendly and can be a role model for students." The same informant also stated, "All this time, the teacher often gives us motivation so that we are more enthusiastic about learning." Meanwhile, informant RF stated, "The teacher always reminds us to maintain politeness and respect others." In line with that, informant DL said, "If there are students who lack enthusiasm, the teacher usually provides guidance and support to keep them diligent in studying." In addition, several informants also stated that the advice given by teachers is quite helpful in daily life and encourages them to behave better.

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The results of the interviews show that students place exemplary behavior and motivation as important characteristics that Islamic Religious Education teachers should possess. The exemplary behavior of teachers is seen through their friendly attitude, actions that reflect Islamic values, and the habit of providing good examples to students. Additionally, teachers are also considered capable of providing motivation through advice, guidance, and encouragement that fosters students' learning spirit. These findings show that Islamic Religious Education teachers not only serve as conveyors of learning material but also as educational figures who guide the formation of character and the development of students' attitudes.

The findings are in line with the observation results, which show that Islamic Religious Education teachers display discipline, politeness, and a sense of responsibility in carrying out their duties. During the learning activities, the teacher appeared to provide guidance, advice, and motivation to the students, both before and during the learning process. In addition, the teacher is able to build a good relationship with the students, creating a comfortable learning atmosphere that supports the learning activities.

The data is further strengthened by documentation results that show positive interactions between teachers and students during the learning process. The teacher is seen actively accompanying, guiding, and paying attention to the students during the learning activities. The documentation shows that the teacher's role is not only limited to delivering material but also to being a mentor and role model for the students.



Figure 4. Documentation of Teacher Exemplary Behavior and Providing Motivation to Students

Thus, the results of interviews, observations, and documentation support the previous quantitative findings that exemplary behavior and motivation are among the main characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher according to the perspective of Generation Z. This finding indicates that the personality competence of teachers is a highly regarded aspect by students in shaping their views of Islamic Religious Education teachers in the digital era.

The Ability to Communicate and Understand the Needs of Students

Interaksi: The interaction between teachers and students is one of the aspects that influences the success of the learning process. The teacher's ability to build good communication and understand the needs of students can create a more comfortable and conducive learning environment. An overview of this aspect was obtained through interviews with several students as follows.

Interviews were conducted to obtain a clearer picture of the Islamic Religious Education teacher's ability to communicate and understand the needs of students during the learning process. The SM informant stated, "The communication between the teacher and the students is good." We are not afraid to ask questions when there is material that we do not understand.

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Informant AZ stated, "The teacher understands the students' conditions quite well, although there are still some students who are not fully understood." Meanwhile, informant NR stated, "I feel more comfortable with teachers whose communication is relaxed but still polite." The Islamic Religious Education teacher is already quite close to the students. In addition, several informants also stated that the teacher provides opportunities for students to express their opinions and ask questions when they have difficulty understanding the learning material.

The results of the interview indicate that the ability to communicate and understand the needs of students are characteristics deemed important by students regarding the Islamic Religious Education teacher. The teacher is considered capable of creating open communication, allowing students to feel comfortable asking questions, discussing, and expressing their opinions during the learning process. Additionally, the teacher is also considered to have made efforts to understand the diverse conditions and characteristics of the students, although there are still some student needs that require further attention.

These findings indicate that a good relationship between teachers and students plays a role in creating a comfortable learning atmosphere and supporting the learning process optimally. These findings are consistent with observational results showing that Islamic Religious Education teachers actively engage with students during the learning activities. The teacher provides opportunities for students to ask questions, express opinions, and respond to every question and comment made by the students. In addition, the teacher uses polite, communicative, and easily understandable language, thereby creating a comfortable learning atmosphere and supporting the active involvement of students in the learning process.

The data is further reinforced by the documentation of learning activities, which shows a good relationship between the teacher and students, both during the learning process and outside of class hours. Documentation also shows that teachers utilize digital communication media, such as mobile phones, as a means to communicate with students. The use of these media indicates the teachers' efforts to maintain closeness and provide learning services that align with the characteristics of Generation Z, who are familiar with digital technology.



Figure 5. Documentation of Communication Skills and Understanding of Student Needs

Thus, the results of interviews, observations, and documentation support previous quantitative findings that the ability to communicate and understand students' needs is one of the important characteristics of an ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher according to the perspective of Generation Z. This finding indicates that the teacher's social competence plays a very important role in building humanistic relationships, creating a conducive learning atmosphere, and increasing students' comfort in participating in the learning process in the digital era.

Quality of Teaching and Engaging Learning

The experiences of students during Islamic Religious Education classes provide an overview of the quality of teaching by the teacher in the classroom. The way the material is

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delivered, mastery of the learning material, use of teaching methods, and student involvement in the learning process are aspects that were frequently mentioned in the interviews. Various perspectives can be seen in the following interview results.

The quality of teaching is one of the aspects that influences students' interest and engagement in following the lessons. Through interviews, students provided various perspectives on how teachers deliver the material, their mastery of the learning content, the methods used, and student involvement during the learning process. Informant FH explained, "The teacher's teaching method is easy to understand because the explanations are clear and straightforward." Informant QA stated, "The teacher has a good command of the material and often provides examples related to everyday life." Meanwhile, informant MR stated, "Learning feels more engaging when the teacher provides opportunities for discussion and questions." In addition, several informants also stated that the teacher was able to manage the class well, creating an orderly and conducive learning atmosphere.

The results of the interview indicate that students assess the teaching quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers as being in the good category. Clear and easily understandable explanations of the material, adequate mastery of the subject, and the use of examples close to everyday life are factors that help students understand the lessons. In addition, student involvement through discussion and question-and-answer activities also creates a more active and engaging learning atmosphere. These findings indicate that the quality of a teacher's instruction is not only determined by their ability to deliver content but also by their ability to create learning experiences that actively engage students in the learning process.

The findings are in line with the observation results, which show that Islamic Religious Education teachers are able to manage the classroom well and create a conducive learning atmosphere. During the learning activities, the teacher provides opportunities for students to ask questions, engage in discussions, and express their opinions. The teacher also combines lecture methods with discussion activities so that the learning does not proceed monotonously. In addition, the teacher provides positive feedback on every question and opinion expressed by the students, thereby encouraging active student involvement in the learning process.

The data is further reinforced by the documentation of learning activities, which shows active participation from students during the learning process. The documentation indicates that the interaction between teachers and students is going well, marked by two-way communication, discussion activities, and student involvement in various learning activities. These conditions create a more engaging, enjoyable learning atmosphere and support students' understanding of the material being studied.



Figure 6. Documentation of Engaging Teaching and Learning Quality

Thus, the results of interviews, observations, and documentation support previous quantitative findings that the quality of teaching and the ability to create engaging learning experiences are among the important characteristics of an ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher according to the perspective of Generation Z. These findings indicate that the

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pedagogical competence of teachers plays a very important role in creating an effective learning process, increasing student participation, and building a comfortable and enjoyable learning atmosphere in the digital era.

Utilization of Digital Technology in Learning

The development of digital technology has brought changes in various aspects of education, including the process of learning Islamic Religious Education. The use of technology by teachers has become one of the efforts to support the delivery of material to make it more engaging and in line with the characteristics of students in the digital era. To obtain a deeper understanding of the use of technology in learning, the researcher conducted interviews with several students. The results of the interviews are presented as follows.

The utilization of digital technology in learning has become one of the aspects that received attention in this research. Through interviews, students expressed various views on the use of digital technology by Islamic Religious Education teachers during the learning process. Informant LS stated, "The teacher once used a laptop and a mobile phone while explaining the material in class." Informant RA stated, "In my opinion, the use of technology makes learning more interesting compared to just using books." Meanwhile, informant DM said, "The teacher has been able to keep up with technological developments, but the use of digital media has not yet been implemented in every meeting." In addition, several informants also stated that the use of the internet, mobile phones, and other digital devices can help them obtain additional information related to Islamic Religious Education learning materials.

The results of the interview indicate that students responded positively to the use of digital technology in Islamic Religious Education. The use of devices such as laptops and mobile phones is considered capable of aiding in the delivery of material and making learning more engaging compared to the use of conventional learning resources alone. On the other hand, students believe that teachers have a fairly good ability to keep up with technological developments. However, the use of digital media in learning has not been consistently implemented in every session, so students hope that the utilization of technology can be further optimized to support an effective learning process that meets the demands of the digital era.

These findings are in line with the observation results, which show that Islamic Religious Education teachers have utilized technological devices as supportive media for learning. The teacher was seen using digital devices to assist in delivering the material and providing access to information for the students. However, the use of that technology has not been implemented consistently in every meeting. Most of the learning activities are still dominated by conventional methods combined with the use of simple learning media. Nevertheless, the use of technology by teachers has provided variety in the learning process, thereby increasing students' attention and interest in learning.

The data is further reinforced by the documentation of learning activities that show the use of laptops, mobile phones, and digital teaching materials as supporting tools in the learning process. The documentation indicates that teachers have made efforts to integrate technology into the learning process, although its implementation is still not fully optimal. The presence of digital media in learning provides a more varied learning experience and aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z students who are familiar with technological advancements.

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Figure 7. Documentation of the Use of Digital Technology in Learning

Thus, the results of interviews, observations, and documentation support previous quantitative findings that the use of digital technology is one of the important characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher from the perspective of Generation Z. This finding indicates that the digital competence of teachers plays a crucial role in creating more innovative, engaging, and relevant learning in the digital era. Although the use of technology in learning has been implemented quite well, students still expect improvements in the use of media and digital devices to make the learning process more effective and aligned with the needs of Generation Z.

Discussion

The results of the questionnaire data processing indicate that the perception of Islamic Senior High School NW Suralaga students toward the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher in the digital era falls into the high category. The dominance of this category is evident from the number of respondents who rated it as high, totaling 372 people, followed by the very high category with 236 people. Meanwhile, the low and very low categories received 97 and 37 respondents, respectively. This condition illustrates that the majority of students have a positive assessment of the characteristics of the Islamic Religious Education teachers they expect. The assessment reflects that teachers are not only seen as capable of delivering learning materials but are also considered to have good personalities, able to build effective communication, conduct engaging lessons, and begin to adapt the learning process to the development of digital technology. The presence of respondents who rated in the low and very low categories indicates that students' perceptions are still varied. These differences are likely influenced by varying learning experiences, diverse student characteristics, and the way teachers manage learning in each class.

The results of the research are in line with the teacher competency theory proposed by E. Mulyasa, which explains that teacher professionalism is built on four main competencies, namely pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies [17]. The four competencies complement each other, enabling teachers to conduct effective learning while simultaneously meeting the ever-evolving needs of students. Teacher competencies in the digital era are no longer limited to mastery of the material, but also include the ability to build positive relationships with students, create meaningful learning experiences, and adapt to technological developments. The positive perception shown by the majority of students indicates that Islamic Religious Education teachers have demonstrated the implementation of various competencies in the learning process.

This view is further reinforced by the 21st-century teacher concept, which positions teachers as facilitators, motivators, mediators, inspirators, and innovators in the learning process. The role of the teacher is no longer centered on the delivery of information, but rather on guiding students to build knowledge through active, collaborative, and contextual

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learning experiences. In Islamic Religious Education, this role is also realized through exemplary behavior (uswah hasanah) so that teachers not only transfer knowledge but also instill values, attitudes, and character in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The results of this study are similar to the research in the Basicedu Journal, which found that teacher competence contributes to the formation of positive student perceptions of the quality of learning [18]. The results of this study are also in line with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework developed by Mishra and Koehler, which emphasizes the importance of integrating content mastery, teaching strategies, and technology in creating effective learning [19]. Additionally, the research by Husniyatus Salamah Zainiyati (2021) shows that Islamic Religious Education teachers who can combine pedagogical competence, exemplary behavior, good communication, and the use of technology receive higher appreciation from students because they are considered capable of meeting the learning needs of the digital generation [20], [21].

The results of the discussion lead to a synthesis that the characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher, according to the perspective of Generation Z students, are not only determined by academic ability or mastery of learning materials. The teacher perceived as ideal is one who can integrate pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies, as well as the ability to adapt to the development of digital technology. The integration of these competencies forms the basis for the positive perceptions of students and also shows that Generation Z's needs for teachers are not only oriented toward cognitive aspects but also toward the quality of interpersonal relationships, character building, and learning innovations that are relevant to the times.

The Exemplary Conduct of Teachers and Providing Motivation to Students

The results of the interviews, supported by observational data and documentation, show that exemplary behavior and the provision of motivation are the most valued characteristics of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers by students. Teachers are perceived not only as conveyors of lesson material but also as figures who can set an example through their friendly, polite, disciplined, and responsible attitudes in carrying out their duties. In addition, teachers are considered capable of fostering students' learning motivation through advice, guidance, and encouragement provided during the learning process. These findings indicate that Generation Z students still place exemplary behavior as one of the main aspects in building trust and respect toward teachers. Observation results show that teachers actively accompany and guide students during learning activities, while documentation indicates harmonious interactions between teachers and students. These conditions demonstrate that the values of exemplary behavior have been realized in daily learning activities, not merely understood as a concept.

The findings of this study align with the personality competence theory proposed by E. Mulyasa, which explains that personality competence reflects the teacher's ability to display a stable, mature, wise, authoritative personality, and to serve as a role model for students. That competence becomes one of the important elements that support the creation of a positive relationship between teachers and students, while also contributing to character formation through the attitudes and behaviors demonstrated by teachers during the learning process.

The results of this study are also reinforced by the concept put forward by Chaerul Rochman and Heri Gunawan, which positions teachers as figures worthy of being role models for students. Every action, word, or behavior demonstrated by the teacher influences the character development of the students [22]. This view aligns with the educational concept of Imam Al-Ghazali, which emphasizes that teachers are qudwah hasanah, or good role models. According to Al-Ghazali, the success of education is not only determined by the mastery of knowledge but also by the teacher's character, compassion (rahmah), and exemplary behavior in guiding students so that moral values can be internalized through real-life examples in

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daily life [23]. Exemplary behavior is not only manifested through the delivery of advice or moral values but also through the teacher's consistency in applying those values in every learning activity, allowing students to obtain real examples that can be applied in daily life.

The findings of this study are similar to research published in the "Jurnal Diskursus Islam," which shows that the personality competence of teachers has a positive influence on students' learning motivation. Teachers who are able to demonstrate exemplary behavior through good attitudes and conduct tend to more easily foster students' learning enthusiasm. These results are reinforced by research in the "Elementary School: Journal of Elementary Education and Learning" which found that teachers' personality competence has a significant relationship with students' learning motivation. The better the personality of the teacher, the higher the motivation of the students [24]. Research by Linda Agustina, Alif Luthvi Azizah, Fitriadi, and Sowiyah (2026) also reveals that the personality competence of teachers positively contributes to students' learning motivation because teachers with good personalities can create a comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere, encouraging students to be more active in participating in lessons [25].

Based on the overall analysis results, it can be concluded that exemplary behavior and motivation are inseparable parts of the personality competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers. For Generation Z students, the ideal teacher is not only determined by their ability to master the subject matter but also by their ability to be a role model, provide learning encouragement, and guide students through positive attitudes and behaviors. The exemplary behavior shown by teachers forms the basis for building good relationships with students, while the motivation provided can enhance learning enthusiasm, strengthen character development, and build positive perceptions of Islamic Religious Education teachers in the digital era.

The Ability to Communicate and Understand Students' Needs

The research results show that the ability to communicate and understand students' needs is one of the characteristics of an ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher according to the perspective of Generation Z. Based on the interview results, most informants stated that Islamic Religious Education teachers can establish good communication with students, use polite and easily understandable language, and provide opportunities for students to ask questions and express their opinions during the learning process. Teachers are also assessed on their efforts to understand the character, conditions, and learning difficulties of students, thereby creating a more comfortable and conducive learning environment. This research shows that for Generation Z, the quality of teacher communication is not only measured by the ability to deliver material but also by the ability to build warm, open, and responsive interpersonal relationships with students' needs.

The research aligns with the humanistic theory proposed by Carl Rogers, which positions the teacher as a learning facilitator responsible for creating a learning environment that optimally supports student development. In this perspective, interpersonal relationships built through empathetic, open, and appreciative communication become important factors in enhancing students' motivation, self-confidence, and engagement in the learning process [26]. Teachers who are able to understand the academic and emotional needs of their students will find it easier to create student-centered learning, making the learning process more meaningful and aligned with the characteristics of Generation Z, which demands active interaction and equal communication. These findings emphasize that the success of learning is not only determined by mastery of the material but also by the teacher's ability to build positive relationships with students.

The results of this study are also reinforced by the concept of pedagogical communication, which views communication as an educational process to build dialogic interactions between teachers and students. Pedagogical communication not only serves to convey information but

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also acts as a means to build trust, provide constructive feedback, and create a learning atmosphere that supports both the cognitive and affective development of students [27]. In the context of Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era, dialogic, open communication that values students' opinions becomes increasingly important because Generation Z tends to prefer interactive, collaborative learning that provides them with space to actively participate in the learning process.

The results of this study are in line with several previous studies that emphasize the importance of teacher communication in creating effective learning. The research by Ariza Qurrata A'yun et al. shows that communication between teachers and students, built through openness, clarity in message delivery, and constructive feedback, can create a conducive learning environment and increase student participation in learning [28]. These findings are supported by research in "Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan," which found that teachers' interpersonal communication skills in Islamic Religious Education significantly influence students' learning discipline. Teachers who can communicate empathetically, openly, and respectfully with students find it easier to build effective learning interactions [29]. Additionally, research in the "Journal of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting" explains that the interpersonal communication of Islamic Religious Education teachers, which combines verbal and nonverbal communication in an empathetic, supportive, and dialogic manner, is capable of building trust, motivation, and student engagement in the learning process [30].

Based on the results of the research, theories, concepts, and previous studies, it can be synthesized that the ability to communicate and understand the needs of students is a social competence that significantly determines Generation Z's perception of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher. Teachers are not only required to convey material clearly but also to build empathetic, dialogical, and student-centered communication. These abilities form the foundation for creating a harmonious relationship between teachers and students, enhancing student engagement in learning, and supporting the development of an effective, humanistic, and relevant Islamic Religious Education learning process that aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z in the digital era.

Quality of Teaching and Engaging Learning

This research shows that the quality of teaching and the ability to present engaging learning experiences are among the main characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher according to Generation Z. Based on interview results, students assess that Islamic Religious Education teachers can deliver material clearly and systematically, have a good command of the subject matter, connect the material with everyday life realities, and provide space for students to ask questions and engage in discussions. Observation results also show that teachers can manage the classroom well, combine various teaching methods, and encourage active student participation during the learning process. These findings are supported by documentation showing the presence of two-way communication between the teacher and students, creating a more interactive, comfortable, and enjoyable learning atmosphere. This shows that the quality of teaching is not only reflected in the teacher's ability to deliver the material but also in their ability to create meaningful learning experiences and encourage active student participation.

The research aligns with the constructivist theory proposed by Jerome Bruner, which emphasizes that learning will be more effective when students are actively involved in constructing their knowledge through experiences, social interactions, discussions, and problem-solving. In this approach, the teacher functions as a facilitator who provides a learning environment that allows students to develop their understanding independently [31]. Therefore, the learning practices that involve discussion activities, question-and-answer sessions, as well as the use of contextual examples as found in this study reflect the application of student-centered learning. The learning model is considered relevant to the

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characteristics of Generation Z, who tend to prefer interactive, collaborative, and participatory learning processes.

This research can also be explained through the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework developed by Mishra and Koehler. This framework emphasizes that the quality of learning is determined by the teacher's ability to integrate content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and technology in a balanced manner. Teachers who possess good TPACK competence can choose learning approaches that align with the characteristics of the students, connect the material with real-life contexts, and create more engaging and meaningful learning experiences [32]. In the context of this research, the teacher's ability to explain the material in a systematic manner, relate the learning to students' experiences, and involve students in the discussion process demonstrates the application of pedagogical competence that supports the creation of effective learning.

The results of this study are in line with research in the "Mandala Education Scientific Journal," which found that the application of TPACK in Islamic Religious Education learning can increase student activity because teachers can present more varied learning that meets students' needs [33]. The active involvement of students in learning contributes to the improvement of the quality of the teaching and learning process because it encourages teachers to continuously develop their pedagogical and technological competencies. Furthermore, research published in the "EDUCATIO: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia" reveals that the proper integration of content knowledge, pedagogy, and technology can enhance the effectiveness of learning and students' understanding of the material being studied [34]. However, research by Iskandar and Riantoni in the "Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan" shows that some teachers still face challenges in optimally integrating pedagogical and technological elements, resulting in the quality of learning not fully meeting the demands of 21st-century education [35].

Based on the overall analysis, it can be concluded that the quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers' teaching from the perspective of Generation Z is not only determined by their mastery of the subject matter but also by their ability to design learning that is active, contextual, engaging, and student-oriented. Learning that provides opportunities for students to discuss, interact, and connect the material with real life can enhance their engagement in the learning process. Thus, the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher is one who can integrate pedagogical competence, mastery of the material, learning innovation, and classroom management skills to create effective, enjoyable, and needs-based learning for Generation Z in the digital era.

Utilization of Digital Technology in Learning

Research findings reveal that the ability to utilize digital technology is one of the important characteristics of an ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher from the perspective of Generation Z. Based on interview results, students conveyed that teachers have used various digital devices, such as laptops, mobile phones, and the internet, as supporting media in delivering learning materials. The use of such technology is considered capable of creating a more engaging learning process compared to learning that solely relies on conventional methods. However, students also stated that the use of digital media has not been implemented consistently in every learning activity. Observation results show that teachers have utilized digital devices as learning media, while documentation indicates the use of digital-based teaching materials that provide variety in learning activities. These findings indicate that the use of technology has had a positive impact on the quality of learning, although its implementation still requires strengthening to meet the learning needs of Generation Z, who are growing and developing in the digital era.

These findings can be understood through the Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition (SAMR) model introduced by Ruben Puentedura. This model explains that

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the integration of technology in learning develops through four stages, namely substitution as the replacement of conventional tools with technology, augmentation as the enhancement of learning functions through technology, modification as the redesign of learning with the support of technology, and redefinition as the stage when technology enables the creation of learning experiences that were previously difficult to achieve [36]. Based on the research findings, the use of laptops, mobile phones, and digital learning media indicates that teachers have integrated technology into the learning process. However, its utilization is still mostly at the substitution and augmentation levels, as technology functions as a supporting tool for delivering material and has not yet been used to transform learning into a more collaborative, innovative, and student-centered activity.

This research is also supported by the concept of Digital Pedagogy, which views technology as an integral part of the learning strategy, not merely as media or auxiliary tools. This approach positions technology as a means to create more interactive, collaborative, flexible, and learner-oriented learning. Therefore, teachers are required to be able to select and integrate digital media that align with learning objectives, student characteristics, and 21st-century competencies so that technology can enhance the quality of interaction, participation, and learning independence [37]. In the context of this research, the ability of teachers to utilize digital devices, provide access to technology-based learning resources, and introduce variety in the learning process indicates an effort to implement digital pedagogy that aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z.

The results of this study are in line with Yanti Mulyati's research in the "Journal of Educational Review and Teaching," which shows that the use of information and communication technology in Islamic Religious Education learning has a positive impact on students' interest in learning, facilitates understanding of the material, and creates a more engaging and interactive learning atmosphere [38]. These findings are also supported by research from the "Journal of Education and Counseling (JPDK)," which explains that the use of digital media can enhance student activity, creativity, and learning outcomes, thereby contributing to the improvement of the quality of the learning process [39]. Additionally, in the research by Mohammad Ismail et al., it was revealed that the implementation of TPACK-based learning supports more effective integration of technology in 21st-century education [40], [41]. However, the research also shows that the limitations of facilities, internet access, and teachers' digital competencies still pose obstacles in optimizing the use of technology in schools.

Based on the overall analysis, it can be concluded that the utilization of digital technology is one of the important characteristics of the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher from the perspective of Generation Z. For students, technology is not only seen as a medium for delivering material but also as a means to create more engaging, interactive, flexible, and suitable learning experiences in the digital era. Although teachers have demonstrated the ability to utilize various digital devices as learning support, the research results indicate that Generation Z.

These findings suggest that, from Generation Z students' perspective, digital technology should be understood not merely as a supplementary teaching tool but as a means of improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning. The value of technology lies in how it enables teachers to present learning materials in engaging, interactive, and flexible ways that correspond to students' learning needs. However, the availability of digital devices does not automatically guarantee effective learning. The quality of technology integration depends on teachers' ability to select appropriate digital resources, encourage active student participation, and connect technological activities with clear educational objectives. Therefore, digital competence should be evaluated not only by teachers' ability to operate technological devices but also by their capacity to use technology purposefully to strengthen students' understanding of Islamic teachings.

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Furthermore, the findings highlight the need to balance digital adaptability with the distinctive moral and spiritual responsibilities of Islamic Religious Education teachers. Although Generation Z students may appreciate technology-supported learning, the educational role of IRE teachers cannot be reduced to delivering information through digital platforms. Teachers remain responsible for guiding students in understanding Islamic values, developing ethical judgment, and applying religious principles in everyday life. Consequently, the ideal IRE teacher in the digital era is one who integrates technological competence with effective communication, a humanistic approach, and consistent moral role modeling. This interpretation suggests that teacher development programs should address not only digital literacy but also pedagogical innovation, student-centered communication, and the ability to integrate Islamic ethical values into technology-supported learning.

CONCLUSION

The results of the quantitative analysis show that students' perceptions of the ideal characteristics of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in the digital era fall into the high category, with the highest frequency of 372 respondents, followed by the very high category with 236 respondents. The findings indicate that students have a positive assessment of the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers, who are deemed capable of meeting the demands of learning in the digital era. These results are further supported by qualitative research findings that provide a more comprehensive explanation of the ideal characteristics of Islamic Religious Education teachers from the perspective of Generation Z. Based on the qualitative research findings, students view the ideal Islamic Religious Education teacher as not only possessing competence in delivering learning materials but also serving as a role model through good attitudes, behavior, and morals, as well as providing motivation that can enhance students' learning enthusiasm and character development. In addition, the teacher's ability to establish open communication, understand students' learning needs, and build positive relationships becomes an important factor in creating a comfortable, humane learning environment that encourages active student engagement throughout the learning process. Research findings also indicate that the quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers' instruction is influenced by their ability to master the material, select and apply varied teaching strategies, deliver the material systematically, and relate the learning to the students' daily life contexts. These conditions can create a more engaging, meaningful, and student-centered learning experience. In addition, the use of digital technology has become one of the increasingly necessary characteristics in Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era. For Generation Z, technology is not only utilized as a medium for delivering material but also as a means to support more interactive, innovative, and characteristically suitable learning. However, research findings indicate that the integration of technology in learning still requires development to support a more collaborative, creative, and effective learning process. Based on the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings, it can be concluded that the ideal Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher from the perspective of Generation Z is one who can harmoniously integrate personality, social, pedagogical, professional, and digital competencies. The combination of these various competencies serves as an important foundation in realizing effective, meaningful, and technology-adaptive Islamic Religious Education learning, as well as meeting the needs and learning characteristics of Generation Z in the digital era. Therefore, the continuous strengthening of teachers' competencies, whether in personality, pedagogical, social, professional, or digital literacy aspects, becomes a strategic effort to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning in the future.

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Author Contribution

Maya Miftahatul Masruroh conceptualized the study; Muh. Zulkifli developed the methodology; Yogi Sopian Haris conducted data analysis and manuscript revision.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding this study, its research process, data interpretation, or publication of the findings.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The authors used AI tools solely for language refinement and grammar checking, while retaining full responsibility for the manuscript's content and conclusions.

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