

**Teacher Performance and Student Character in Islamic Schools:  
Case of History Learning in Spain's Pandemic Time**Ruth Castillo<sup>1</sup>**Abstract**

This research aims to analyze teacher performance and student character in Islamic schools by highlighting the case of history learning in Spain during the Pandemic. This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. Research location in an Islamic-based school. The data sources in the research are informants, consisting of the deputy head of curriculum, history teacher, and student representatives from each class, learning activities, and documents. The results of this research show that planning for online history learning in Islamic-based schools is good, but teachers need to improve their competence and ability to adapt to technology; The role of history teachers in the process of cultivating character in pandemic conditions through distance learning is very limited. Interaction between teachers and students is very limited. Meanwhile, in distance learning, the assessment of the character of each student is seen from assignments, monitoring outside class hours, and communication with parents; Student responses to the role of history teachers in cultivating character through distance learning are different for each student. Student responses are influenced by students' interest in history subjects, as well as the methods and media used by teachers to attract students' attention.

**Keywords:** *Teacher Performance, Student Character, Islamic School, History Learning*

**Introduction**

Education is one of the important things for human life. According to Chiner and Cardona (2013), education has a function for students to become good human beings, namely in developing abilities, forming character and national civilization and aiming to develop potential. Education in Spain currently applies a curriculum that applies to all levels of education in schools. School is a place where interaction between teachers and participants in teaching and learning activities takes place. One of the tasks of teachers or educators is to create a learning atmosphere that attracts students' interest and attention so that they can always learn well and enthusiastically. The teacher's role is to create a series of behaviors that are related to each other in certain situations and are related to the progress of behavior and development of the students for which they are aimed (Calvo, 2017; Tejedor, et al. 2020).

Education is a process of instilling character values, not only interpreted as a transfer of knowledge but also a transfer of values. Character is the overall natural disposition and what has been mastered stably in an individual's psychological behavior system to become typical

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in thinking and acting (Ramos-Morcillo, et al. 2020; Malin, et al. 2020). According to Jimenez, et al. (2020) said that the resources needed in global competition are people with competence and character. Since the pandemic caused by the Corona Virus Disease or COVID-19 at the end of 2019 which hit the world, including Spain, it has been necessary to carry out full teaching and learning activities at home. This is done to prevent the spread of the virus by limiting direct contact between individuals. All educational units in Spain implement Home Learning or Distance Learning, including schools in Catalonia.

According to the Spanish Ministry of National Education Regulations, distance education is a teaching and learning process through the use of communication media carried out online or remotely using communication media, the aim of which is to make it easier to access education face to face or face to face. Distance learning is delivered by teachers without meeting face to face in one place, students and teachers communicate online. Meanwhile, responding to the problem of the spread of COVID-19, a home learning policy was issued which focuses on life skills education by paying attention to access to learning in every home (Harvas, et al. 2020; Pérez-Eransas & Martínez-Virto, 2020).

Distance learning utilizes technology as a medium for delivering material, even interaction between educators and teachers in virtual classes. In the educational context, technology is seen as a means that can be used to support the online learning process starting from computers or laptops, gadgets, tablets connected to an internet connection so that they can access virtual classes with the Online Learning Platform (OLP) provided by the school.

Independent learning does provide flexibility for students so they can learn anywhere, with anyone, and at any time and has different nuances from previous face-to-face learning. However, this limits teachers and students from interacting due to the separation of time and space and limited face-to-face contact (Martínez-Valdivia & Burgos-Garcia, 2020; Navarro-Mateu, 2020). Apart from that, the condition of teachers in Spain who do not fully master the use of technology has an impact on limitations in using online learning media (Sala, 2020). The geographical conditions in each school area in Spain are also different, remote areas with poor internet networks also hinder the distance learning process.

Low character in children needs efforts to be corrected through the learning process, because poor human resource conditions will affect the condition of society (Sánchez Agusti & Miguel Revilla, 2020). Quality graduates from a school are not only cognitively competent but also have integrity with noble character. A balance between competence and character will produce humans who can work adaptively. Teachers should not ignore character formation but can still focus on teaching the development of students' intelligence, physical and emotional abilities.

The process of understanding history includes all aspects, not just memorizing facts through the process of listening, noting and memorizing. Students' understanding of history will also give rise to historical awareness through the role of history teachers in cultivating character (Garreta-Bochaca, 2020). The attitudes that exist in a person's personality will not be formed by themselves without continuous social contact between individuals. Cultivating character through history subjects has a strategic meaning in forming citizens who have a sense of nationalism, patriotism, responsibility, and so on.

Without the development of historical awareness as a source of inspiration and aspirations, the formation of a national personality, identity and identity will not be realized due to the historical process being the collective experience of a nation (Gomez, et al. 2020; Jo & Gebru, 2020). Character education, which seems to be neglected, has a multi-dimensional impact in Spain, because students who are competent and have character are really needed for the nation's progress.

The cultivation of character will be realized if it becomes a habit from activities that are carried out repeatedly, because in the process of implementing the character, the character also needs to be adjusted between the material and the method of delivery from the teacher. A systematically structured school program is also needed as a form of implementation for cultivating student character in educational units. The school program at Islamic schools has been prepared as an effort to instill character in students. The school has an Islamic School Culture program as one of the strategies that emphasizes instilling character in students. In teaching and learning activities, it is not only the learning process that needs to be developed with interesting methods and media, but also the cultivation of character in students. One way is through studying history as a subject that contains character values. Even though each subject also instills character in each learning activity, expectations may not always match the process carried out.

Based on the reality of the problems that occur in the field, it can be concluded that even though a program has been prepared to instill character from the learning environment, it is not a guarantee that students in their daily lives have implemented character values. Apart from that, conditions at home regarding character education in the family environment and each student's learning motivation also likely influence the way children act and behave. Apart from further observations made by researchers, another problem with the teacher's role in cultivating character is that class So character cultivation is carried out online with minimal interaction between teachers and students. A form of bad attitude is shown when students' learning is

mostly off camera when carrying out learning using the Online Learning Platform (OLP), apart from that, they rarely respond to Social Media Groups and attend late.

Some research on the role of history teachers in cultivating character is research conducted by Gomez Carrasco, et al. (2020), this research concludes that character formation is carried out using two approaches, namely in the classroom by the teacher as a model and mentor to teach values and reflect morals and outside the classroom by paying extra attention to students and creating a moral culture. in the madrasa environment. In addition, research from Cabero-Almenara, et al. (2020) research results show that history teachers need to increase creativity in instilling nationalist values in students. Furthermore, in Ortega-Sanchez's (2020) research, this research discusses the importance of learning local history for character development related to the environment. The teacher's role is as a facilitator, managing the class, giving examples and evaluating learning, while the obstacles faced by teachers are difficulties in understanding the psychological condition of each student and a lack of supervision of social interactions in the environment.

This research aims to analyze teacher performance and student character in Islamic Schools, by taking the case of history learning in Spain's Pandemic Time. Even though there is a school program and regulations are in place during distance learning, it still needs improvement to make it better. The pandemic conditions which require schools to carry out teaching and learning activities via distance learning also require teachers and students to adapt to the situation and technology. So in this article the researcher writes the results of research with a focus on teacher performance and student character in Islamic schools: the case of history of learning in Spain. The important contribution of this research lies in the research results which can be used as a reference in conducting research on teacher performance in the future.

### **Method**

This research aims to describe and analyze more deeply the role of history teachers in cultivating student character. Therefore, the method used in this research is qualitative with a descriptive approach (Cresswell, 2014). Data sources include participants, learning activities, and documents. Meanwhile, the data sources for research participants consisted of the Head of Curriculum, History Teacher, and class X students. This research involved 14 history teachers from Islamic schools in Catalonia. They are professional teachers who have worked for no less than 10 years. Participants have a balance in terms of gender. They are productive teachers who publish research every year to improve and improve the quality of learning. Apart from that, the participants in this research also came from 4 heads of curriculum, and 27 students. Data

collection techniques used interviews, observation, and document study. Data validity testing was carried out by source triangulation and technical triangulation. The data analysis technique used was analysis according to Huberman (2014) with the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation and verification. This research was conducted on an Islamic basis in the City of Catalonia. The location selection was based on the fact that it is an Islamic-based school with an Islamic school culture program that emphasizes character development in students. Activities in analysis include data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. Some qualitative researchers try to collect data as long as possible and intend to analyze it after leaving the field.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **History Learning Plan in Islamic Schools**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has had an impact in various areas of life, one of which is education. There have been changes in the process of implementing learning in schools. Learning is an activity that seeks to create a learning atmosphere for students by providing guidance and providing opportunities. Learning is an activity that seeks to create a learning atmosphere by providing guidance and providing opportunities for students to gain experience according to learning objectives. Distance learning objectives based on the opinion of Tejedor, et al. (2020) including: (a) Ensuring the fulfillment of students' rights in obtaining education during the pandemic; (b) Protecting education unit residents from the negative impacts of the pandemic; (c) Prevent the spread and transmission of COVID-19; and (d) Ensure the fulfillment of psychosocial support for educators, students and parents.

The application of the national curriculum when distance learning is different from face-to-face learning. Face-to-face learning is carried out according to a predetermined time, whereas in distance learning there is a reduction in Basic Competencies due to the limited time duration for each subject. However, history teachers are still guided by the Learning Implementation Plan that has been prepared.

Program development and learning preparation are part of the learning planning that is prepared before the learning is implemented. Basically, every educator at the educational unit level is required to develop a learning plan, including a Learning Plan. The importance of learning plans is to help teachers think about what will be taught before learning so they can find solutions to learning difficulties. Thus, it can be concluded that the statement from the history teacher regarding learning by preparing a Learning Implementation Plan is in accordance with theory.

### **Teacher Performance in Character Cultivation**

The application of character is carried out by internalizing character values through subjects and local content carried out in the learning process in a planned, guided and measurable manner. So that after participating in learning, students' knowledge and character have a mutually strengthening relationship. In accordance with this theory, history teachers instill character in students during the learning process, starting with religious character which is in line with the school program. Then value the character of discipline when taking attendance, value the character of responsibility by obeying rules such as wearing a uniform when studying. Based on the Ministry of National Education Regulations, it is explained that teachers are tasked with guiding and training students to achieve competency, which can be developed through learning activities at school.

The character education program aims to provide knowledge to students in particular and society in general (Sala, 2020; Ufie, et al. 2020). The aim is for them to become more aware and pay more attention to the importance of a good life. History learning covers material that plays an important role in character education, namely containing values that are the basis for the process of forming character education, such as the values of patriotism, nationalism, role models and the spirit of never giving up. This is shown when the history teacher's explanation of the material includes conveying the moral message contained in the material.

Meanwhile, other characteristics are also carried out by teachers with students, such as: the character value of independence and curiosity by the teacher providing a video link so that students continue to study individually at home, the character value of caring for the environment by reminding students to always protect nature and obey health protocols, students' politeness and activeness during learning also shows the character of each student, namely tolerance and mutual respect (Navarro-Mateu, et al. 2020). The teacher's role in character education takes the form of the teacher's example as a model or example for students. Then the teacher as a motivator is the teacher's ability to awaken spirit, work ethic and extraordinary potential in students. And the teacher as an evaluator, that is, the teacher assesses the learning carried out.

Based on this theory, the history teacher's example in cultivating student character in learning is carried out by the teacher giving students examples of religious activities at home at the start of learning before explaining the material through the Online Learning Platform (OLP). The teacher's role as a motivator for students is demonstrated by giving encouragement to students at the beginning of learning. While the teacher's role as an evaluator is carried out by assessing learning, history teachers assess politeness, student activity, and monitoring outside of history

learning hours. The role of the teacher as an inspirer and dynamist in cultivating character is less demonstrated by history teachers, due to limited interaction and the different psychological conditions of each student.

One of the teacher's roles in character education is as an evaluator, the teacher assesses the learning carried out (Ofianto, 2018). The implementation of the assessment has an important meaning, teachers need to pay attention to the components and carry out the evaluation well. Evaluation as a benchmark for students in achieving learning goals and to measure the level of success of the teaching program.

History teachers carry out affective assessments during learning on the Online Learning Platform (OLP), responses on social media groups and assignments from each student. Teachers try to read children's writing in answering questions. For children with good curiosity, the answers are complete, but there are also those who seem to imitate their friends. Additional assessment is also given to those who are punctual in assignments, so that others can respect their time. Attitudinal competency in the curriculum, both spiritual attitudes and social attitudes that are not taught directly in the teaching and learning process. Based on this theory, the teacher can assess the attitude of each student through the politeness, activeness and language shown by students in learning through Social Media Groups, Online Learning Platforms (OLP). In distance learning, the attitude of class X is good, seen from the response on social media.

### **Obstacles to Learning History**

The change from the face-to-face learning system to distance learning means character development is limited for teachers. Distance learning conditions give rise to various obstacles experienced by history teachers, the obstacles faced are internal and external obstacles. Internal constraints are constraints that originate from teachers both in terms of competence and ability. Based on the results of interviews, researchers found that teachers initially had difficulty adapting to the media used. Teachers realize the importance of continuing to learn to improve their teaching abilities in an effort to adapt to distance learning. The lack of intensity of meeting plus only online also makes it difficult for teachers to memorize and understand students. This is because teachers have never met face to face with students and cannot directly control students during teaching and learning activities. Teachers have difficulty understanding each student because they have never communicated face to face. Communication is an important aspect in cultivating character, teachers and students need to establish good communication.

Apart from internal obstacles, history teachers also face external obstacles. External obstacles are obstacles that come from outside oneself. Based on the researchers' findings, the facilities and infrastructure at the school are adequate. The school has a computer laboratory that can be used by teachers, when they have to work from home teachers already have devices that support the implementation of learning. Learning media has an instrumental function, not just a tool but to achieve a goal. Through learning media, it is required to increase learning motivation, activate students when providing responses and feedback to students.

### **Student Appreciation of Character Learning**

In general, the responses shown by students to cultivating character through distance learning at school vary. Student responses can be seen from students' interest in history subjects, as well as the methods and media used by teachers to attract students' attention. This can be seen from students' curiosity about the material presented by the teacher, students ask or answer questions from the teacher. However, there are also students who are less enthusiastic during learning, making it difficult for the teacher to develop character. This can be seen from being late when attending or collecting assignments and turning off the camera when doing activities with the Online Learning Platform (OLP). The different conditions of students at home, from an economic and psychological perspective, influence the responses students give when learning. In the world of education, students are not only expected to be smart academically, but must be accompanied by a good attitude in everyday life. This is in line with the theory according to Calvo (2017) which explains that the main task of educators is to guide students in a better direction, namely the formation of attitudes and personalities, not just providing knowledge. Students' responses to character cultivation through distance learning vary. Students who respond well are students who realize the importance of character, this student's behavior can be said to be in accordance with the learning objectives and school program. However, students who still underestimate and respond poorly still need guidance and direction, not only from history teachers.

### **Conclusion**

Learning planning for history subjects in Islamic schools via distance learning is prepared by history teachers in accordance with the provisions applicable to the curriculum. It's just that teachers need to prepare more learning materials and media so that learning activities run smoothly, and create affective assessment instruments so that character cultivation is more optimal. The role of the history teacher in the process of cultivating character, the role of the



history teacher is to provide an example, motivator and evaluator for students. During face-to-face learning the teacher can interact directly in class, whereas during distance learning the interaction between the teacher and students uses online media. Meanwhile, in distance learning, the assessment of the character of each student is seen from assignments, monitoring outside class hours, and communication with parents.

History teachers' obstacles in cultivating the character of class X students through distance learning are in the form of internal obstacles and external obstacles. Internal obstacles to developing student character are caused by teachers' competence and ability to adapt to technology, and the lack of interaction with students. Meanwhile, external obstacles come from different student facilities and networks at each home. However, history teachers can overcome this by increasing their competence in history, as well as having the motivation to improve their abilities in utilizing the technology used. Apart from that, students' responses to the role of history teachers in cultivating character through distance learning for each student are different. In this case, student responses are influenced by students' interest in history subjects, as well as the methods and media used by teachers to attract students' attention. This research is limited to studying teacher performance and the character of students participating in history learning. Future research needs to be encouraged to conduct studies on other subjects, so that the puzzle of teacher performance and student character in Spain can continue to be completed to determine the direction of policy development in Islamic schools.

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