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Paper title: “Educational Inequity: The Plight of Islamic Religious Teachers in Modern Contexts”

Indonesia's dual educational governance, divided between the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT), creates systemic inequities for Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) teachers, particularly those in public schools. This study explores the challenges PAI teachers face, including inadequate welfare, limited access to professional development, and the emotional strain of balancing dual administrative responsibilities. Employing a qualitative methodology, data were gathered through interviews and documentation with eight PAI teachers across Indonesia. Framed within Freire's critical pedagogy, the findings reveal entrenched structural inequalities, reminiscent of colonial legacies, that marginalize PAI teachers and hinder their professional growth. The study underscores the need for policy alignment between MoRA and MoECRT, enhanced funding for teacher training and equitable resource allocation. Addressing these issues is critical to achieving an education system that values the contributions of all educators. By recognizing the resilience and dedication of PAI teachers, this research advocates for systemic reforms to ensure an equitable and empowering educational framework in Indonesia.