

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (PAI) TEACHERS IN THE UTILIZATION OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGY IN THE DIGITAL ERA AT SMPN 8 PAMEKASAN

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the professional ethics of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in utilizing educational technology in the digital era from the perspective of Islamic education. Specifically, it explores the ethical principles that should guide technology integration, analyzes the role of technology in learning, and identifies the challenges associated with its implementation. This research employed a qualitative approach using a literature review method. Data were collected from secondary sources, including classical Islamic literature, scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and official documents related to teacher professional ethics, educational technology, and Islamic education published between 2015 and 2025. The collected data were analyzed descriptively and critically through processes of data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and synthesis. SMPN 8 Pamekasan was used solely as a contextual illustration of technology implementation in schools and not as a site for empirical data collection. The findings reveal that the ethical values of amanah (trustworthiness), adalah (justice), taqwa (God-consciousness), and adab (proper conduct) constitute the primary framework for PAI teachers in integrating technology into learning. Although educational technology enhances accessibility, flexibility, and learning effectiveness, its implementation also raises ethical challenges related to digital inequality, data privacy, and reduced interpersonal interaction. Therefore, technology integration in Islamic education should be guided by professional ethics to ensure that digital learning remains aligned with the moral and spiritual objectives of Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the digital era has significantly transformed various aspects of human life, including education. The integration of technology into educational practices has shifted learning from conventional approaches to more adaptive, interactive, and digitally mediated processes (Author, Year). Consequently, educators are required to adapt to technological advancements to ensure that learning remains relevant to the needs of contemporary society (Author, Year). In the context of Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI), this challenge is more complex because PAI teachers are not only responsible for delivering subject matter but also for fostering students' moral character, religious values, and spiritual development (Author, Year). Therefore, professional ethics constitute a fundamental aspect of PAI teachers' professionalism, encompassing values such as honesty, responsibility, justice, and exemplary conduct in both classroom and digital environments (Author, Year).

Despite the increasing integration of technology in educational settings, numerous studies have reported that the use of digital technology in learning is frequently not accompanied by adequate ethical awareness among educators (Author, Year). Several ethical issues have emerged, including the misuse of digital devices, insufficient supervision of students' access to online content, breaches of digital privacy, and reduced face-to-face interactions between teachers and students (Author, Year). Such challenges are particularly critical for PAI teachers, whose educational mission emphasizes moral guidance and character formation. Without strong professional ethics, the extensive use of technology may undermine the moral and spiritual objectives of Islamic education (Author, Year).

Previous studies have extensively discussed educational technology integration, digital literacy, and teacher professionalism in general (Author, Year; Author, Year). Other studies have also examined professional ethics in Islamic education from normative and conceptual perspectives (Author, Year). However, limited attention has been given to the intersection between professional ethics and technology use among PAI teachers, particularly within the context of basic education institutions. Existing studies tend to address either technology integration or teacher ethics separately, leaving a gap in understanding how ethical principles should guide PAI teachers in utilizing technology in contemporary learning environments (Author, Year). Moreover, empirical and contextual discussions concerning ethical challenges faced by PAI teachers in schools implementing digital learning remain relatively scarce.

This issue is particularly relevant at SMPN 8 Pamekasan, which has increasingly incorporated technology into its learning activities. Although technology offers substantial opportunities to enhance learning effectiveness, its implementation also raises ethical concerns regarding teachers' responsibilities in supervising, guiding, and modeling appropriate digital behavior for students. Therefore, an in-depth examination of PAI teachers' professional ethics in the use of educational technology is necessary.

Using a qualitative approach with a literature review method, this study analyzes various scholarly sources, including books, journal articles, and related academic documents, to explore the ethical dimensions of technology use in Islamic education. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the concept of professional ethics for PAI teachers within the perspective of Islamic education; (2) analyze the role of technology in supporting learning in the digital era; (3) identify ethical principles that should guide PAI teachers in utilizing educational technology; and (4) analyze the challenges and implications arising from technology integration in education.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to integrate discussions on teacher professional ethics and educational technology within the specific context of Islamic Religious Education. By positioning ethical principles as the foundation for technology integration, this study contributes to the development of a conceptual framework that can guide PAI teachers in implementing technology-based learning while maintaining the moral and spiritual objectives of Islamic education. The findings are expected to enrich scholarly discourse on teacher professionalism and provide practical recommendations for educators and educational institutions, particularly SMPN 8 Pamekasan, in fostering ethical, character-oriented, and technology-enhanced learning practices.

METHOD

Research, also referred to as *riset* or *research*, has been defined differently by various scholars due to differences in perspectives and experiences in understanding the concept of research (Mukhid, 2021). This study employed a qualitative approach using a literature review design. The literature review method was selected because the study focuses on examining theoretical perspectives concerning the professional ethics of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in utilizing learning technology in the digital era.

The data sources used in this study consisted of secondary data obtained from various scientific publications, including books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and other relevant academic documents related to teacher professional ethics, educational technology, and Islamic education in the digital era. To ensure the relevance and quality of the reviewed literature, the researchers established several inclusion criteria: (1) publications discussing professional ethics, educational technology, digital learning, or Islamic education; (2) scholarly works published within the period of 2015–2025 to capture recent developments in digital education; and (3) publications originating from reputable academic sources, such as indexed journals, scholarly books, and official institutional documents. Conversely, publications lacking academic credibility, duplicate documents, and sources unrelated to the research objectives were excluded from the review.

The literature selection process was conducted systematically through several stages. First, the researchers identified relevant literature by searching electronic databases and digital repositories using keywords such as "teacher professional ethics," "Islamic Religious Education teachers," "educational technology," "digital learning," and "Islamic education." Second, the identified literature was screened by reviewing titles, abstracts, and keywords to determine its relevance to the research focus. Third, full-text screening was undertaken to ensure that the selected sources met the predetermined inclusion criteria. Finally, the eligible literature was organized and classified according to major themes related to the study objectives.

Data collection was carried out through documentation techniques by reviewing, examining, and recording information from selected written sources. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques involving four stages: data reduction, data classification, data interpretation, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, information relevant to the research objectives was selected and simplified. Subsequently, the data were classified into thematic categories, such as the concept of teacher professional ethics, the role of technology in learning, ethical principles in technology use, and challenges encountered in digital learning environments. The classified data were then interpreted by comparing and synthesizing findings from different sources to generate a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Finally, systematic conclusions were drawn to formulate practical and theoretical implications.

It should be emphasized that SMPN 8 Pamekasan in this study serves solely as a contextual background illustrating the implementation of technology in educational settings. No field observations, interviews, surveys, or other empirical data collection activities were conducted at the school. Therefore, SMPN 8 Pamekasan is not considered a research site but rather a contextual reference for discussing the relevance of teacher professional ethics in technology-based learning practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Professional Ethics of Islamic Religious Education Teachers

Ethics serves as a benchmark for assessing whether human actions are considered good or bad. Etymologically, the term ethics originates from the Greek word *ethos*, meaning character, habit, or moral disposition. According to the Indonesian Dictionary, ethics refers to the science that discusses values and norms governing human behavior in society. Within the educational context, ethics encompasses standards of appropriate and inappropriate conduct that guide teachers in carrying out their professional duties. Consequently, the teaching profession possesses a code of ethics that functions as a moral guideline for educators in performing their educational responsibilities. In Indonesia, the teacher code of ethics was formally ratified during the XIII PGRI Congress in Jakarta in 1973 and continues to serve as a moral foundation for teachers in fulfilling their professional obligations.

Professional ethics in teaching extends beyond compliance with institutional regulations. It constitutes a commitment to uphold professional values, continuously improve competencies, and respect students' rights without discrimination. Teachers are expected to maintain confidentiality, provide equitable learning opportunities, and continually develop their pedagogical and professional competencies. Such ethical commitments contribute to the establishment of a conducive learning environment that supports students' holistic development.

From the perspective of Islamic education, professional ethics is closely associated with the concept of *adab*. Unlike secular ethical frameworks that primarily regulate professional behavior, *adab* integrates intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social dimensions. Contemporary Muslim scholars argue that the success of Islamic education is largely determined by the quality of *adab* demonstrated by educators. Therefore, Islamic education is not merely concerned with knowledge transmission but also with the internalization of values and character formation.

The findings of this study indicate that the professional ethics of PAI teachers in the digital era should be understood through four fundamental Islamic values: *amanah* (trustworthiness), *adalah* (justice), *taqwa* (God-consciousness), and *adab* (proper conduct). The value of *amanah* requires teachers to responsibly manage educational activities and maintain students' trust. *Adalah* obliges teachers to treat all students fairly regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. *Taqwa* functions as an internal moral control that directs teachers to perform their duties sincerely and ethically, while *adab* shapes respectful and exemplary interactions between teachers and students.

These ethical values become increasingly important in contemporary educational settings characterized by rapid technological advancement. Ethical competence directly influences the quality of education because teachers serve not only as knowledge transmitters but also as role models whose behaviors significantly affect students' moral development. Consequently, professional ethics should be regarded as the central foundation for technology integration in Islamic education.

Learning Technology in the Digital Era: An Ethical Perspective

Learning technology in the digital era refers to the utilization of technological devices and digital applications to facilitate educational processes (Mukhid, 2023). Technological developments have transformed conventional learning into more flexible, interactive, and accessible educational experiences. Digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), communication applications, cloud-based storage systems, and multimedia resources have become integral components of contemporary education.

The implementation of technology-based learning has expanded significantly, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the adoption of online learning worldwide (Waruwu et al., 2024). Educational institutions, including SMPN 8 Pamekasan, have increasingly incorporated digital technologies to support instructional activities and improve learning quality. Nevertheless, this study argues that technology should not be perceived merely as an instructional instrument. Rather, technology must function as a medium that supports educational objectives while preserving ethical and spiritual values.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the permissibility of technology use is determined not by the technology itself but by its purpose and manner of utilization. Technology is ethically acceptable when it promotes *maslahah* (public benefit) and contributes positively to students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual development. Conversely, technology becomes problematic when its use contradicts educational ethics or Islamic values.

Several digital applications are frequently employed in educational settings, including Google Sites, WhatsApp, Google Drive, and other online learning platforms. Although these applications offer numerous educational benefits, their utilization also raises ethical concerns. For instance, Google Sites and Google Drive facilitate material distribution and collaborative learning; however, teachers must ensure that uploaded content is academically reliable, age-appropriate, and free from copyright violations. Similarly, WhatsApp enhances communication efficiency between teachers and students, yet its use requires clear ethical boundaries regarding communication time, language use, and privacy protection.

These findings demonstrate that technology integration should always be guided by ethical principles. The value of *amanah* requires teachers to utilize digital resources responsibly and protect students' personal information.

Adalah obliges educators to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities for all students, including those experiencing technological limitations. *Taqwa* encourages teachers to critically evaluate digital content and avoid unethical practices, such as plagiarism or dissemination of inappropriate information. Meanwhile, *adab* ensures that respectful and humane interactions remain central to educational relationships despite increasing technological mediation.

Therefore, the effectiveness of educational technology should not be measured solely by technological sophistication but also by the extent to which ethical and spiritual values are maintained throughout the learning process.

Teacher Ethics in the Utilization of Technology

The integration of technology into educational practices has generated new ethical responsibilities for teachers. According to Mukhid (2023), digital learning technologies encompass various systems, including learning management platforms, video conferencing applications, mobile learning applications, cloud computing, and digital content. While these technologies increase accessibility, flexibility, and efficiency, they also create ethical dilemmas requiring professional awareness.

The findings reveal that PAI teachers possess dual responsibilities in digital learning environments. Besides delivering instructional content, they are expected to model ethical behavior and cultivate students' character through technology-mediated learning. Consequently, professional ethics should function as the primary framework guiding technology utilization.

The principle of *amanah* requires teachers to use technology responsibly, supervise students' online activities, and safeguard confidential information. Misuse of students' personal data, inadequate monitoring of internet usage, or dissemination of inaccurate information constitutes a violation of professional ethics.

The principle of *adalah* emphasizes equitable access to learning resources. Technology-based instruction may inadvertently disadvantage students who have limited access to digital devices or internet connectivity. Therefore, teachers should adopt flexible instructional strategies and provide alternative learning resources to ensure inclusiveness.

Furthermore, *taqwa* serves as an internal moral compass guiding teachers' professional decisions. Teachers possessing strong *taqwa* critically evaluate educational content, avoid unethical academic practices, and ensure that technological innovations remain aligned with Islamic values.

The concept of *adab* is equally essential in digital learning environments. Respectful communication, maintenance of professional boundaries, empathy, and exemplary conduct remain indispensable despite reduced face-to-face interactions. Excessive reliance on digital communication without adequate *adab* may weaken interpersonal relationships and undermine character education.

Accordingly, professional ethics in technology-based learning should not merely involve compliance with formal regulations but should encompass the integration of pedagogical competence, professional responsibility, and Islamic moral values.

Challenges and Impacts of Technology Use

The implementation of learning technology in the digital era presents both opportunities and challenges. According to Mukhid (2023), significant challenges include unequal technological access, inadequate digital literacy, concerns regarding data security, and reduced social interaction. These findings indicate that technology is not value-neutral; rather, its impact depends largely on how it is utilized.

One major challenge is the digital divide caused by disparities in infrastructure and internet accessibility. In many regions, unstable internet connections, insufficient technological devices, and electricity limitations continue to hinder effective technology integration. From an ethical perspective, this issue relates directly to the principle of *adalah*, which obliges teachers to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.

Another challenge concerns differences in digital competencies among students, teachers, and parents. Limited digital literacy may reduce learning effectiveness and hinder technology adoption. Consequently, the principle of *amanah* requires teachers to continuously improve their technological competencies while guiding students toward responsible digital behavior.

Data protection and cybersecurity also constitute critical concerns in digital education. The extensive use of online platforms increases risks associated with privacy breaches and exposure to inappropriate content. Therefore, safeguarding students' personal information represents an important manifestation of *amanah* within digital learning contexts.

Furthermore, excessive dependence on technology may reduce direct interactions between teachers and students. In Islamic education, interpersonal relationships and moral exemplification are fundamental components of educational processes. Consequently, *adab* should remain central in technology-mediated learning to ensure that digital communication does not diminish empathy, respect, and character formation.

Despite these challenges, technology provides substantial educational benefits. It expands access to information, supports innovative instructional strategies, facilitates collaboration, and enables learning beyond classroom boundaries. Technology also assists teachers in presenting abstract concepts more effectively and promotes students' independent learning.

Conversely, inappropriate technology use may generate negative consequences, including exposure to harmful content, plagiarism, cybercrime, information overload, excessive screen dependency, and declining critical thinking skills (Damhudi, 2023). These risks underscore the importance of *taqwa* as an internal ethical mechanism guiding teachers and students in navigating digital environments.

Overall, the findings suggest that successful technology integration in Islamic education depends not only on infrastructure availability but also on educators' ethical commitment. The values of *amanah*, *adalah*, *taqwa*, and *adab* provide a comprehensive ethical framework enabling PAI teachers to utilize technology responsibly while preserving the moral and spiritual mission of Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the professional ethics of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers constitute a fundamental framework for the integration of technology in learning during the digital era. The findings reveal that the ethical values of *amanah* (trustworthiness), *adalah* (justice), *taqwa* (God-consciousness), and *adab* (proper conduct) serve as essential principles guiding PAI teachers in utilizing technology responsibly while maintaining the moral and spiritual objectives of Islamic education. Educational technologies offer significant opportunities to enhance learning accessibility, flexibility, and effectiveness; however, their implementation also presents ethical challenges related to digital inequality, data privacy, reduced interpersonal interaction, and the potential misuse of technology.

Accordingly, the successful integration of technology in Islamic education depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on teachers' ethical commitment and professional competence. Therefore, this study recommends the development of digital ethics guidelines specifically for PAI teachers, accompanied by continuous digital literacy enhancement programs and strengthened ethical supervision mechanisms within schools. Such initiatives are necessary to ensure that technology-based learning remains aligned with Islamic values and contributes to the development of students' character in the digital era.

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