

THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF PAI TEACHERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the growing importance of professional ethics among Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in supporting effective learning and students' character development in madrasah. Although numerous studies have examined teacher competence and character education, research specifically focusing on the implementation of PAI teachers' professional ethics in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of PAI teachers' professional ethics in the learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep, examine its implementation in learning strategies, and identify the challenges and solutions encountered in shaping students' character. This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation involving PAI teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that professional ethics play a significant role in creating a conducive learning environment, improving student discipline, and strengthening students' religious character. The implementation of professional ethics is reflected in teachers' exemplary behavior, discipline, responsibility, polite communication, and the use of humanistic learning approaches grounded in Islamic values. However, teachers face several challenges related to technological advancement, social influences, and students' disciplinary issues. To address these challenges, teachers strengthen religious habituation programs, apply diverse instructional methods, and establish intensive communication with parents. The study concludes that the professional ethics of PAI teachers significantly contribute to the effectiveness of learning and students' character formation. These findings imply the importance of continuous professional development and stronger collaboration among schools, families, and communities in supporting character-based Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

The role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in contemporary education extends beyond merely delivering subject matter. PAI teachers are required to become exemplary figures who are able to demonstrate attitudes, behaviors, and the practical implementation of Islamic values in students' daily lives within the school environment (Kandiri, 2021). Consequently, professional ethics constitutes a fundamental aspect in supporting the effectiveness of the learning process, particularly in shaping students' moral and religious character (Sutarsih, 2012). However, the rapid development of technology, globalization, and social change has created new challenges for PAI teachers in maintaining ethical, meaningful, and value-based learning practices (Dewina Rakhma Alfina Damayanti, 2024). PAI educators are expected to adapt learning strategies to contemporary developments without neglecting Islamic principles and values (Sri Rahayu, 2025).

Empirical facts indicate that some students still exhibit low levels of discipline, politeness, and religious practice in their daily activities. Similar conditions were identified at MIN 1 Sumenep, where PAI teachers encounter difficulties in fostering students' discipline, respect toward teachers, and consistent implementation of Islamic values in everyday routines (Riyan Aryuning Putri, 2022). These conditions highlight the importance of strengthening the professional ethics of PAI teachers as a foundation for effective learning and character formation in madrasah settings.

Previous studies have demonstrated that teacher professionalism significantly contributes to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and to students' character development. Research conducted by Bararah (2022) revealed that teachers' professionalism positively influences communication patterns between teachers and students during learning activities (Bararah, 2022). Likewise, research by Echo Perdana Kusumah et al. (2023) found that learning approaches grounded in Islamic values positively affect students' religious understanding and beliefs (Echo Perdana Kusumah, 2023). Other studies have also confirmed that PAI teachers play a central role in shaping students' character and daily behavior within educational institutions (Muh. Judrah, 2024). Furthermore, the quality of PAI teachers is assessed not only through pedagogical competence but also through honesty, exemplary conduct, and environmental awareness demonstrated during the learning process (Wenny Liana Simaremare, 2025).

Although numerous studies have examined teacher competence, character education, and learning strategies, research specifically addressing the professional ethics of PAI teachers in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah remains limited. In particular, studies investigating how professional ethics are implemented in the learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep are still scarce. This gap indicates the need for further investigation into the relationship between PAI teachers' professional ethics and its practical implementation in madrasah learning activities.

The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on professional ethics as the primary foundation for the teaching and learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep. This research specifically explores how the ethical conduct of PAI teachers contributes to student personality development through learning practices that prioritize Islamic values, humanity, and moral principles. In addition, this study examines the challenges encountered by PAI teachers in maintaining professionalism and role modeling in the modern educational era.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to analyze the contribution of PAI teachers' professional ethics to the learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep, describe the implementation of professional ethics within learning strategies, and identify the challenges and solution efforts undertaken by PAI teachers in shaping students' character through learning activities guided by Islamic and moral values.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected to obtain an in-depth understanding of the importance of the professional ethics of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in the learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep. Through this approach, the researcher sought to explore teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and ethical practices within the madrasah environment comprehensively.

The case study focused specifically on MIN 1 Sumenep as the research site. Data collection was conducted during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, from January to March 2026. The research process

consisted of several stages, including determining the research focus, preparing interview guidelines and observation instruments, collecting data in the field, analyzing data, and drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained.

Research participants were selected using purposive sampling based on predetermined criteria, namely teachers who consistently teach Islamic Religious Education subjects and actively participate in the teaching and learning process. The primary informants in this study consisted of **three PAI teachers** at MIN 1 Sumenep. In addition, supporting informants included the madrasah principal and several students to obtain complementary information regarding the implementation of teachers' professional ethics during classroom activities. Secondary data were obtained from school documents, scientific articles, institutional archives, and previous studies relevant to teacher professional ethics and Islamic Religious Education learning.

Data were collected through three techniques: semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of professional ethics in classroom learning. Each interview lasted approximately 30–60 minutes and was recorded with the participants' consent. Observations were carried out directly during PAI learning activities to examine teacher-student interactions, teachers' exemplary behavior, and the application of ethical principles in classroom practices. Documentation techniques were employed to collect supporting data from lesson plans, school regulations, photographs, and other institutional records related to the research focus.

Data analysis in this study utilized the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Indah Sri Annisa, 2023). Data reduction involved selecting and focusing relevant information, while data display was conducted by organizing findings into descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved interpreting and verifying the findings to generate conclusions.

To ensure data validity and reliability, this study applied triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, including PAI teachers, school leaders, and students. Method triangulation was also employed by comparing data gathered through interviews, observations, and documentation. Furthermore, member checking was conducted by confirming interview results with participants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Professional Ethics of PAI Teachers in the Implementation of Learning at MIN 1 Sumenep

The findings of this study indicate that the professional ethics demonstrated by PAI teachers significantly influence the effectiveness of the learning process at MIN 1 Sumenep. Professional ethics are reflected not only in the mastery of teaching materials but also in teachers' attitudes, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and exemplary conduct during classroom activities (Rinda Puspitasari, 2024). Based on interviews, one PAI teacher stated, *"As PAI teachers, we are not only responsible for explaining lessons but also for becoming examples for students in everyday behavior, because students tend to imitate what they see rather than what they hear."* This finding confirms that PAI teachers act simultaneously as educators, mentors, motivators, and role models for students (Yenti Arsini, 2023).

Classroom observations further revealed that teachers consistently began lessons by greeting students, leading prayers, and reminding students to maintain polite behavior during learning activities. Teachers also demonstrated discipline by arriving on time and responding patiently to students' questions. Such practices represent the implementation of professional ethics through discipline, responsibility, honesty, patience, and polite communication (Iskandar Mirza, 2025). Furthermore, students were routinely encouraged to practice Islamic values through activities such as reciting prayers before learning, respecting teachers, and maintaining harmonious relationships with peers (Supiana, 2017).

The effectiveness of these practices appears to stem from the developmental characteristics of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students, who are still strongly influenced by observational learning and imitation. Students tend to internalize values more effectively when they observe teachers consistently practicing those values in daily interactions. Consequently, teachers' exemplary behavior contributes to creating an orderly, comfortable, and

conducive learning atmosphere while fostering students' moral maturity (Munawir, 2025). These findings reinforce the argument of Nur Ainiyah (2019) that character education becomes more successful when teachers consistently demonstrate positive role models. Likewise, Rizki Zakiah Nur Rohmah (2021) emphasizes that ethical conduct in education strengthens classroom relationships and enhances learning quality. Therefore, the findings suggest that PAI teachers perform dual functions: developing students' academic competence and nurturing their moral character.

Implementation of Professional Ethics of PAI Teachers in Learning Strategies

The study found that PAI teachers at MIN 1 Sumenep implement diverse learning strategies adapted to students' characteristics and classroom situations. These strategies include lectures, group discussions, contextual learning, habituation activities, and approaches emphasizing warm interpersonal relationships between teachers and students (Kurdi, 2018). Rather than merely transmitting theoretical knowledge, teachers attempt to relate learning materials to students' everyday experiences, making lessons more meaningful and relevant (Aminah, 2022).

For instance, during observations, teachers frequently connected lessons about honesty with situations encountered by students at school, such as returning borrowed items or admitting mistakes honestly. Teachers also encouraged active participation by providing opportunities for students to ask questions and express opinions during discussions (Marwah Sholihah, 2022). In one observed lesson, the teacher invited students to discuss examples of respectful behavior toward parents and classmates, allowing students to share personal experiences. Such activities promoted student engagement and strengthened students' understanding of Islamic values in practical contexts.

The implementation of these strategies is strongly influenced by teachers' awareness that elementary-aged students learn more effectively through concrete experiences than abstract explanations. Therefore, contextual and humanistic approaches become essential in facilitating students' comprehension of religious teachings. Additionally, teachers consistently attempted to treat all students fairly, regardless of differences in academic ability or family background (Nur Fazrah Hasibuan, 2025). This equitable treatment reflects teachers' professional ethics and contributes to creating an inclusive learning environment.

These findings support the study conducted by Ina Magdalena (2021), which argues that PAI learning should integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions. Similarly, Depita (2024) found that active learning strategies enhance communication and student participation, while M. Mahbubi (2024) emphasized that contextual learning enables students to apply Islamic teachings more effectively in everyday life. Thus, the implementation of professional ethics in instructional strategies not only improves learning quality but also strengthens constructive social relationships between teachers and students.

Challenges of PAI Teachers in the Implementation of Learning

The findings reveal that PAI teachers at MIN 1 Sumenep encounter several challenges in implementing ethical and meaningful learning. The most prominent challenges involve the influence of digital technology, social media, peer environments, and changing social values on students' behavior. Interviews revealed that some students still demonstrate undisciplined behavior, reduced concentration during lessons, and limited awareness regarding the importance of politeness and religious practices.

One teacher explained, *"Many students are influenced by social media content, so they sometimes imitate inappropriate language or behavior without realizing that it contradicts Islamic values."* Classroom observations also indicated that several students occasionally lost focus during learning activities and required repeated reminders to maintain discipline.

These challenges arise because students currently grow up in a digital environment characterized by unrestricted access to information and diverse behavioral models. Consequently, the values taught at school may not always align with those encountered in students' home or social environments. This condition requires teachers to demonstrate greater patience, creativity, and communication skills in guiding students (Ahsanulhaq, 2019; Najmi, 2024).

The findings are consistent with Zidan Fahman Arbi (2024), who argues that digital technology presents significant challenges to students' moral development. Likewise, Tatik Safiqo (2025) highlights the necessity for PAI teachers to adapt to societal changes to maintain their effectiveness in character education. The results indicate that student character formation cannot be achieved solely by schools but requires collaborative support from families and communities.

Solutions of PAI Teachers in Overcoming Learning Challenges

To address these challenges, PAI teachers at MIN 1 Sumenep implement various strategies aimed at strengthening both learning quality and student character development. Teachers organize routine religious activities, including Qur'an recitation, congregational prayers, and continuous moral guidance. They also diversify instructional methods to maintain students' motivation and prevent boredom during lessons.

Interview findings revealed that teachers actively communicate with parents regarding students' behavior and learning progress. One teacher stated, *"If a student repeatedly demonstrates problematic behavior, we communicate directly with parents so that guidance can continue at home."* Such collaboration reflects the understanding that character education requires consistency between school and family environments (Sun'iyah, 2020).

Observational data further showed that teachers consistently attempted to model positive behavior through honesty, politeness, punctuality, and respectful interactions. The effectiveness of this strategy may be attributed to the tendency of elementary-aged students to imitate significant figures within their immediate environment. Consequently, teachers' exemplary conduct becomes one of the most influential factors in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors.

These findings support Irwan (2020), who emphasizes the importance of comprehensive Islamic education involving schools, families, and communities. Similarly, Hidayat (2015) argues that exemplary conduct represents the most effective approach to character formation, while Rangkuti (2025) highlights that the success of Islamic education is closely linked to educators' morality and integrity.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that professional ethics substantially influence the implementation of learning at MIN 1 Sumenep. Teachers' professionalism not only creates an effective learning environment but also contributes significantly to the formation of students' religious character. Therefore, continuous efforts to strengthen PAI teachers' professionalism through competency development, internalization of Islamic values, and innovation in humanistic learning strategies remain essential for achieving the broader goals of Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the professional ethics of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a significant role in supporting the implementation of learning at MIN 1 Sumenep. The findings indicate that the application of professional ethics, reflected in exemplary behavior, discipline, responsibility, polite communication, and humanistic learning approaches based on Islamic values, contributes to creating a conducive learning environment and fostering students' character development. In addition, PAI teachers face challenges arising from technological advancement, digital media, and changing social environments, which necessitate continuous adaptation in educational practices.

The study further reveals that effective character formation cannot be achieved solely through school-based efforts. Strong collaboration among schools, families, and the wider community is essential to ensure the consistent internalization of Islamic values in students' daily lives.

This study is limited by its focus on a single research site and its emphasis primarily on teachers' perspectives. Therefore, future research should involve more diverse educational settings and include the perspectives of students and parents to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of professional ethics in Islamic education.

Practically, the findings imply that strengthening PAI teachers' professional ethics through continuous professional development, exemplary practices, and collaborative partnerships with families and communities is essential for enhancing both learning quality and students' character formation.

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