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INTEGRATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING IN VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The development of Artificial Intelligence has brought changes to student learning practices, including in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Vocational High Schools. This AI integration not only expands access to religious knowledge but also raises challenges related to academic integrity. This study aims to describe students' use of AI in Islamic Education (PAI) classes, analyze students' perceptions of technology use within the framework of academic integrity, and identify teachers' pedagogical strategies for mediating AI use so that it remains consistent with the values internalized in the learning process. This study uses a qualitative case study design. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, learning observations, and assignment documentation, and was analyzed thematically. The results show that AI is integrated into learning practices as a tool for understanding the material and composing responses. Students show an ambivalent ethical dynamic between technological efficiency and academic honesty norms. Teachers' pedagogical practices function as a mediation through authentic assessments, reflective dialogues, and the affirmation of the value of honesty, integrated into the learning process. Students also negotiate the use of AI by modifying the results and combining them with other sources. These findings suggest that AI integration does not directly erode academic integrity but shifts its practice toward a more contextual and situational approach, depending on pedagogical design and the intensity of teacher mediation. The study also shows that religious values serve as a normative framework that shapes how learners interpret and use AI in the context of academic honesty.

Keywords: *Academic Integrity; Artificial Intelligence; Digital Pedagogy.*



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Abstrak

Perkembangan Artificial Intelligence menghadirkan perubahan dalam praktik belajar siswa, termasuk pada mata pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan. Integrasi AI ini tidak hanya memperluas akses pengetahuan keagamaan, tetapi juga memunculkan tantangan terkait integritas akademik. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan praktik penggunaan AI oleh siswa dalam pembelajaran PAI, menganalisis pemaknaan siswa terhadap penggunaan teknologi dalam kerangka kejujuran akademik, dan mengidentifikasi strategi pedagogis guru dalam memediasi penggunaan AI agar tetap selaras dengan nilai-nilai yang diinternalisasikan dalam pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi pembelajaran, dan dokumentasi tugas, serta dianalisis secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa AI terintegrasi dalam praktik belajar sebagai alat bantu memahami materi dan menyusun respons. Peserta didik menunjukkan dinamika etis yang ambivalen antara efisiensi teknologi dan norma kejujuran akademik. Praktik pedagogis guru berfungsi sebagai mediasi melalui asesmen autentik, dialog reflektif, dan penegasan nilai kejujuran yang terintegrasi dalam proses pembelajaran. Peserta didik juga melakukan negosiasi penggunaan AI dengan memodifikasi hasil dan mengombinasikannya dengan sumber lain. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa integrasi AI tidak secara langsung mengikis integritas akademik, tetapi menggeser praktiknya menjadi kontekstual dan situasional, bergantung pada desain pedagogis dan intensitas mediasi guru. Studi ini juga menunjukkan bahwa nilai religius berperan sebagai kerangka normatif yang memengaruhi cara peserta didik memaknai dan menggunakan AI dalam konteks kejujuran akademik.

Kata Kunci: *Artificial Intelligence; Integritas Akademik; Pedagogi Digital.*

INTRODUCTION

The presence of Artificial Intelligence in the classroom has shifted the way students acquire, process, and produce knowledge, including in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Vocational High Schools. In classroom learning, students begin using AI as an alternative source to understand material, answer questions, and prepare academic assignments quickly. This technology allows students to generate text-based responses quickly and access a variety of digital resources without a lengthy search (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). This condition opens up broader learning opportunities while increasing efficiency, but it also raises new problems related to cognitive engagement and academic honesty, especially when AI use is not accompanied by a deep understanding process (Chiu et al., 2024; Susnjak, 2022). In the context of PAI learning, this

situation becomes more complex because the learning process is not only oriented towards mastery of the material, but also character formation and internalization of moral values, so that the use of AI presents a space for negotiation between technological efficiency and the value of academic honesty (Luckin & Cukurova, 2019; Selwyn, 2019).

A number of studies show that AI has the potential as a thinking partner that can help students understand the material while increasing learning efficiency (Bearman et al., 2023; Crompton & Burke, 2023). However, other studies have also shown that uncontrolled use of AI has the potential to reduce students' intellectual engagement in the processes of analysis, problem-solving, and independent task completion (Chiu et al., 2024; Susnjak, 2022). This development underscores the need to adapt learning and assessment strategies so that students remain actively engaged in the process of knowledge construction (Bearman et al., 2023). In the context of value-based learning such as PAI, this issue is not only related to the effectiveness of learning, but also touches on the ethical dimension and character formation of students. Therefore, the integration of AI in learning cannot be separated from a pedagogical framework that is able to connect cognitive and moral aspects in a balanced way (Selwyn, 2019).

Some studies emphasize the role of AI in improving learning efficiency and personalizing learning, while others highlight the potential for academic integrity violations due to reliance on technology (Chiu et al., 2024; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). Several studies have also begun to highlight the importance of developing assessment designs that encourage active student participation and adapt the learning process to advancements in digital technology (Bearman et al., 2023; Bond et al., 2020).

However, studies that specifically examine how students interpret the use of AI in the context of value-based learning, as well as how teachers mediate its practice in real-world classroom settings, remain relatively limited. These limitations indicate conceptual gaps that warrant further examination, especially in the context of PAI learning. Based on the above discussion, this study focuses on students' experiences and interpretations of AI use in Islamic Education (PAI) at vocational high schools, and examines how teachers' pedagogical practices shape technology use in alignment with the value of academic integrity. Unlike previous studies, which tend to highlight the technological aspects or general ethical risks of AI, this study positions AI use as a phenomenon shaped by the interaction among technology, moral values, and learning practices within the context of values-based education.

This research addresses the dynamics of students' use of AI in PAI learning in vocational schools and their implications for academic integrity. In learning practice, the use of AI is not only about technical aspects but also involves meaning-making, ethical considerations, and the interaction between students and teachers in determining the limits of technology use. To understand the phenomenon of the use of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education learning contextually, this study asks three main questions, namely how to practice the use of AI by students in PAI learning in vocational schools, how students interpret the use of technology in the framework of academic honesty, and how teachers' pedagogical practices in mediating the use of AI to remain in harmony with the values internalized in the learning. This formulation of the problem views AI use as a social phenomenon inseparable from context, interaction, and value in a learning environment (Chiu et al., 2024; Holmes et al., 2019).

This research is based on the assumption that the use of AI does not directly undermine academic integrity, but gives rise to a space for moral negotiation mediated by students' ethical awareness and teachers' pedagogical strategies. The more intensely technology is used, the more likely it is that there will be a shift in the way students build knowledge and organize academic work. However, these influences depend heavily on how the value of honesty is articulated in learning practice and how teachers design pedagogical strategies that are able to direct the ethical use of technology (Bearman et al., 2023; Bond et al., 2020). Thus, academic integrity is not understood as a direct impact of technology, but rather as the result of the interaction between learning practices, values adhered to, and pedagogical mediation in the learning process. With this framework, this study seeks to offer a more contextual reading of the relationship between AI and academic integrity in Islamic religious education learning.

This study aims to: (1) describe students' practices in using AI in Islamic Education (PAI) learning; (2) analyze students' interpretations of technology use within the framework of academic integrity; and (3) identify teachers' pedagogical strategies in mediating AI use to ensure it remains aligned with the values internalized in the learning process. Together, these three objectives form an analytical framework that differentiates this study from more general studies of AI in education.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with an instrumental case study design to understand in depth the dynamics of the use of AI in Islamic Religious Education learning. The instrumental case study was chosen because it not only

focuses on the case itself, but also uses the case as a means to understand a broader phenomenon, namely the practice of using AI, the ethical perception of learners, and the pedagogical mediation of teachers in the context of learning (Creswell, John W. Cheryl N, 2018). This approach allows researchers to examine phenomena contextually in real classroom situations, so that the meaning built by students and teachers can be understood in depth. The research was conducted over a four-month period, from September to December 2025. The research phases began with the identification of the phenomenon of AI use in PAI learning, followed by the development of observation and interview instruments based on the research focus, then field data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation, and concluded with the data analysis and verification process. This timeframe allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the ongoing practices of AI use in learning activities.

This research was conducted at SMK Negeri Tuter, Pasuruan Regency involving 16 participants, consisting of one Islamic Religious Education teacher and 15 students in grades X and XI from the Visual Communication Design (DKV), Light Vehicle Engineering (TKR), Motorcycle Engineering (TSM), Ruminant Livestock Agribusiness (ATRM), and Animal Nursing (KH). The selection of the research location was based on several considerations. First, the school has demonstrated the use of AI in learning activities, both by teachers and students. Second, the availability of adequate internet access allows for the relatively intensive use of digital technology in the learning process. Third, the characteristics of a vocational school with a variety of specialized programs provide opportunities to gain diverse experiences and observe student responses to the use of AI in values-based learning.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on several criteria. For teachers, the criteria used were active involvement in teaching Islamic Education and integrating the use of digital technology into the learning process. The criteria for selecting students included: (1) students in grades X and XI who actively participated in PAI lessons, (2) students who had direct experience using digital devices in the PAI learning process, and (3) students who had used AI-based applications, whether to search for information, understand the material, or complete academic assignments. These criteria were used to ensure that participants had experience relevant to the research focus.

Data collection is carried out through three main techniques that complement each other. First, observations were carried out to directly observe the practice of using AI, including the patterns of students' interaction with technology and teachers' responses in managing learning. Second, semi-structured

interviews were used to explore students' experiences, meanings, and ethical considerations as well as teachers' pedagogical strategies in mediating the use of AI. Third, documentation in the form of student assignments and learning evaluation practices is used as supporting data to strengthen the interpretation of findings. This combination of techniques allows triangulation of methods and data sources thereby increasing the depth and accuracy of understanding the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2014).

Data analysis was carried out using a thematic analysis approach to interview and documentation data through the process of data reduction, coding, categorization, and drawing themes related to learning practices, ethical perceptions, and pedagogical responses (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The validity of the data is maintained through several strategies, namely triangulation of methods and sources, member checking with participants, and peer discussions to test the consistency of interpretation (Miles et al., 2020). In addition, this study also pays attention to the ethical principles of research, including participant consent and the confidentiality of respondents' identities. With this approach, the results of the research not only describe the practice of using AI descriptively, but also provide a deep understanding of how students interpret the use of technology and how teachers mediate the practice within the framework of academic honesty values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on in-depth interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers and students, classroom learning observations, and assignment documentation, this study shows that the integration of AI in PAI learning at SMKN Tutor takes place gradually through a digital learning ecosystem that has developed before. AI is not used as a substitute for the role of teachers, but as a pedagogical tool to expand access to materials, facilitate the preparation of teaching materials, and support students' learning activities. In practice, the presence of AI also raises new ethical issues related to the limits of the use of technological assistance, the authenticity of work results, and the meaning of academic honesty. Therefore, teachers play an important role as mediators who organize the use of AI through learning design, authentic assessment, reflective dialogue, and internalization of religious values.

Teachers as AI Integration Planners in PAI Learning

Teachers view that changes in the character of students require a change in learning strategies. The learning model that was previously centered on lectures, recording materials, and written assignments is considered less effective for the

generation that is accustomed to digital media. Therefore, teachers are starting to develop more visual, interactive, and participatory learning by utilizing school LMS, PowerPoint, learning videos, Quizizz, and Canva AI.

"The change is huge. In the past, there were more lectures, writing, and book assignments. Now students are more interested in using digital media." (G-PAI)

The statement shows that the integration of AI in schools was born out of pedagogical needs, not just following technological trends. Teachers try to maintain the relevance of PAI learning to the learning character of students in vocational schools who tend to favor practical and visual approaches.

During observation, teachers open learning through the school's LMS, explain learning objectives, display visual presentation-based materials, and then use interactive quizzes as formative evaluations. Canva AI is used to help design materials that are more communicative and engaging. Students look more focused and active when the material is presented through a combination of text, images, and digital activities.

"If you use visual media, quizzes, or videos, students are more enthusiastic and don't get bored quickly." (G-PAI)

The teacher's perception aligns with the students' experience, who feel that Islamic Education classes become more engaging when supported by digital technology. One student stated:

"Religious Education classes are more engaging when modern technologies like AI, educational videos, images, animations, PowerPoint presentations, and quizzes are used, making it easier for me to understand the material when it's presented visually." (S-12)

"It's more engaging and fun because using PowerPoint presentations, educational videos, and quiz games keeps us from getting bored while learning." (S-4)

These statements indicate that students not only accept the use of technology as a technical innovation but also experience a shift toward a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience. These findings suggest that the integration of AI and digital media serves to enhance student engagement in Islamic Education (PAI) learning, which previously tended to be dominated by verbal and textual approaches.

Table 1. Forms of AI and Digital Media Integration in PAI Learning

Learning Practices	Media Used	Pedagogical Function
Delivery of material	PPT, video, Canva AI	Facilitate conceptual understanding
Distribution of teaching materials	LMS, Google Drive	Expand access to learning
Formative evaluation	Quizizz, Kahoot	Increase student participation
Material enrichment	YouTube, Tiktok education	Adding contextual examples

Table 1 shows that the integration of AI and digital media in PAI learning at SMKN Tutar takes place systematically at various stages of the learning process. At the material delivery stage, teachers use PowerPoint, learning videos, and Canva AI to present material in a more visual, concise, and engaging way. The use of this media helps students understand religious concepts that previously tended to be conveyed textually and verbally. Materials such as morals, fiqh, and Islamic history become easier to understand when supported by images, illustrations, or audiovisual impressions. This shows that technology serves to clarify the content of learning and increase students' focus during the learning process.

At the stage of distributing teaching materials, teachers use the school LMS and Google Drive so that students can access the material at any time outside of learning hours. This practice expands the learning space because learners not only rely on explanations in class, but can relearn the material independently. The digital distribution system also makes it easier for teachers to manage teaching materials more efficiently, structured, and well-documented. Thus, technology supports learning flexibility and strengthens a culture of independent learning among students.

At the formative evaluation stage, the use of Quizizz and Kahoot showed that teachers developed more interactive assessment models. Digital quizzes encourage learner engagement because they are presented in the form of competitive games with scores and rankings. Students become more enthusiastic about participating in evaluations, while teachers get quick feedback on the level of class understanding. The use of YouTube and generative AI as material enrichment shows that technology is used to add learning references, expand insights, and connect PAI material with the context of daily life. Overall, this table confirms that AI and digital media serve as pedagogical tools that support the effectiveness, appeal, and accessibility of PAI learning.

Teachers' Pedagogical Practices as Ethical Mediation of the Use of AI

Teachers are aware that some students have used AI such as ChatGPT and Gemini to find answers, summarize material, or help with presentations. This condition is not responded to with a total ban, but through a pedagogical arrangement that emphasizes responsible use.

"The benefits make it easier to learn and find information. The risk is that students can be lazy to think for themselves or just copy paste." (G-PAI)

This view shows that teachers view AI in a balanced way, namely as useful learning resource, but risky if it replaces students' thinking processes.

As a form of mediation, teachers apply authentic assessments, which are assignments that require personal understanding and are difficult to complete by simply copying AI answers. This form of assessment includes group presentations, analysis of contemporary religious cases, reflection on worship experiences, and oral explanations of written answers. Teachers consider that this kind of task model is better able to measure students' real understanding.

In addition, teachers also conduct reflective dialogues by inviting students to discuss the benefits, risks, and ethical limits of using AI.

"I explained that honesty also applies when learning online. Don't copy other people's answers." (G-PAI)

The dialogue is carried out during assignments and after evaluation, so that students not only accept the rules, but understand the moral reasons behind the rules. The message given by the teacher was understood by most of the students. One student explained:

"In my opinion, schools and teachers have already set boundaries, such as prohibiting the use of AI to cheat on assignments or tests and reminding students to use AI as a learning tool." (S-5)

"Schools and teachers have restricted the use of AI to prevent it from being used for cheating." (S-4)

The data indicates that the teachers' mediation does not stop at simply providing formal rules, but has been understood by students as a guide for using AI responsibly. In other words, teachers play a role in establishing a normative framework that helps students distinguish between acceptable uses of AI and those that violate academic ethics.

Teachers also instill religious values as a normative framework in the use of technology.

“Technology is a tool. If it is used to study well, if it is used to deceive, it is wrong. God always sees our deeds” (G-PAI)

This statement shows that digital ethics is not positioned as a mere administrative rule, but as part of Islamic morality that includes honesty, trust, and responsibility.

Table 2. Forms of Teacher Pedagogical Mediation

Teacher Strategy	Form of Implementation	Purpose
Authentic assessments	Presentations, case studies, reflections	Measure original understanding
Reflective dialogue	AI ethics discussion	Cultivate moral awareness
Evaluation supervision	Anti-cheat mode	Preventing cheating
Internalization of religious values	Honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility	Character formation

Table 2 shows that teachers have a central role in mediating the use of AI to stay in line with educational goals and academic ethics. The first strategy appears to be the application of authentic assessments in the form of presentations, case studies, and reflections. This form of assessment requires students to understand the material in real terms, convey personal opinions, and relate religious concepts to daily life situations. This kind of assignment model is difficult to complete by simply copying AI answers, making it more effective in measuring students' original abilities than questions that only require memorization or short answers.

The second strategy is reflective dialogue, which is an open discussion between teachers and students about the benefits, risks, and limits of using AI. Teachers not only give prohibitions, but also invite students to understand the moral reasons behind the importance of honesty and responsibility in learning. Through this dialogue, students are guided to think critically about how technology should be used proportionately. This approach is important because the issue of academic integrity in the AI era is not enough to be solved through technical rules alone.

The next strategy is supervision of evaluation through monitoring of devices and the use of anti-cheating modes during learning and tests. Teachers try to prevent students from opening other applications or looking for instant answers when the evaluation takes place. In addition, the internalization of religious values is a distinctive element in PAI learning. Values such as honesty, trust, discipline,

and responsibility are used as moral foundations in the use of technology. Thus, this table shows that teachers carry out a dual function, namely as learning managers as well as coaches of students' character in the digital era.

Learners' Responses and Negotiations to the Use of AI

Data shows that learners are embracing AI as a practical and accessible learning tool. The most frequently used platforms are Gemini and ChatGPT. Students assess AI to help understand the material, answer questions, and speed up task completion.

"Gemini AI, I think the answer is more precise and explained in detail." (S-3)

"ChatGPT is practical because it's on WhatsApp and doesn't need to be downloaded." (S-4)

"AI helps explain the material in easy-to-understand language and can be used anytime as a study aid." (S-5)

Students negotiate the use of AI, which is to adjust AI results to their learning needs. Some students use AI just to find an initial idea, then rewrite it in their own language. Others compare AI answers to books, teacher notes, or other internet sources.

"Use AI only for learning, not for exams or tasks that have to be done independently." (S-7)

"If it's not in the book, just ask the AI." (S-14)

These findings suggest that learners are beginning to establish personal boundaries between the use of AI that is considered reasonable and that use is considered excessive.

On the other hand, some learners are also aware of the risks of using AI.

"Our brains become lazy in thinking." (S-1)

"AI answers are sometimes not 100% accurate." (S-6)

The findings indicate that students' attitudes toward AI are not uniform. Some view AI as a learning resource that enhances efficiency and understanding of the material, while others remain critical of the accuracy of the information and its impact on their ability to concentrate. This suggests that the use of AI is the result

of an active negotiation between practical needs, learning experiences, and students' level of trust in the technology.

Table 3. Forms of Negotiation of the Use of AI by Students

Form of Negotiation	Description
Limited use	AI is only for material explanations
Modified answers	Rewrite in your own language
Source verification	Compare with books/teachers
Self-restriction	Not used during the exam

Table 3 shows that students do not use AI uniformly, but rather conduct a negotiation process according to their learning needs and ethical understanding. The first form is limited use, where AI is used to obtain additional explanations, summarize material, or find sample questions. In this pattern, students still position AI as a learning companion, not as a substitute for personal endeavors. This shows that some students have understood the ideal function of AI as a learning tool.

The second form is answer modification, where students take information from AI and then rewrite it in their own language or adapt it to the context of the task. This pattern shows that there are efforts by students to remain actively involved in the learning process. They don't completely accept the AI's answers raw, but try to reprocess the information obtained. However, the quality of this process is highly dependent on students' literacy skills in understanding and verifying the content of AI answers.

The third form is source verification, which is where learners compare AI answers with books, teachers' notes, or other internet sources. This practice indicates an awareness that AI is not always the right source and still needs to be checked. The fourth form is self-restriction, where some students choose not to use AI during certain exams or assignments because they think it is dishonest. Overall, this table shows that students' use of AI is dynamic, adaptive, and influenced by a combination of practical needs, academic awareness, and school rules.

Implications of AI on Students' Academic Integrity

The majority of students consider that the use of AI during daily exams is dishonest because the results do not reflect the original ability.

"Wrong is an act of fraud." (S-1)

"A test should measure one's own ability." (S-7)

"Using AI to do daily quizzes is the same as cheating." (S-4)

"It's not fair to those who think for themselves." (S-12)

The study also found ethical ambivalence. A small percentage of students think AI can still be used to confirm answers or help when experiencing difficulties.

"It's okay if it's just to be sure." (S-5)

"I think it's okay, but you should still try to do it on your own first." (S-14)

The data indicates that students' ethical awareness is not entirely uniform. The majority view the use of AI during assessments as a form of academic dishonesty, but some still tolerate the use of AI within certain limits. These findings suggest the existence of an ethical gray area regarding the use of AI, where students continue to negotiate the boundaries between learning aids considered legitimate and behavior deemed to violate academic integrity.

Religious values remain a moral reference for some students. They associate honesty in learning with morals, trust, and personal responsibility.

"Honest value is more valuable than high value but cheating." (S-15)

This view shows that some students still place learning success not only on the achievement of numbers, but on the process in accordance with moral values. These findings confirm that religious values can serve as internal controls in the face of the temptation to use AI unethically.

Table 4. Implications of AI for Academic Integrity

Aspects	Findings
Ethical awareness	Majority reject AI during exams
Moral ambivalence	Some consider it permissible to ensure
Academic risk	Copy paste, dependence, lazy thinking
Protective factors	Religious values and teacher supervision

Table 4 shows that the influence of AI on students' academic integrity is complex and cannot be understood in black and white. In the aspect of ethical

awareness, the majority of students reject the use of AI during exams because they think that the action does not reflect their own abilities. This view shows that the value of academic honesty is still quite strong among students. They understand that the purpose of evaluation is to measure personal learning outcomes, not the ability to utilize technological assistance.

However, in the aspect of moral ambivalence, there are still some students who think AI can be used to ensure answers or help when encountering difficulties. These findings suggest that the line between legitimate learning aids and cheating has not been uniformly understood. The presence of AI has presented a new ethical gray area that previously did not appear much in conventional learning models. Therefore, schools need clear guidelines regarding when AI is allowed to be used and when it should be restricted.

In the aspect of academic risk, the excessive use of AI has the potential to give rise to copy paste behavior, reliance on instant answers, and decreased willingness to think independently. If left unchecked, this condition can weaken the process of forming students' analytical skills. However, this table also shows the existence of protective factors in the form of religious values and teacher supervision. The values of honesty, trust, and responsibility function as internal controllers, while teacher supervision functions as external controllers. Thus, academic integrity in the AI era is not only determined by the existence of technology, but by the strength of school culture, the quality of teachers' pedagogical mediation, and the moral awareness of the students themselves.

Overall, the case at SMKN Tutar shows that AI does not automatically weaken academic integrity, but its impact is largely determined by the pedagogical mediation of teachers. When teachers direct the use of AI through learning design, supervision of evaluation, and internalization of honesty values, AI tends to function as a learning tool, not a means of cheating.

Discussion

Teachers as AI Integration Planners in PAI Learning

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in PAI learning at SMKN Tutar takes place mainly through teachers' initiatives in responding to changes in students' learning characteristics. Teachers leverage Canva AI, digital presentation media, learning videos, and interactive quiz platforms to create a more engaging and accessible learning experience. Based on the results of the interviews, the teacher assessed that students were more responsive when the material was presented visually and interactively compared to the conventional lecture method. This condition shows that the adoption of AI and digital technology in schools is

born from real pedagogical needs, not just the encouragement to follow innovation trends. The use of AI in education will be valuable when it is directed to solve learning problems in concrete ways (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019).

In the context of vocational high schools, practical and applicative learning orientations make students tend to prefer concise, visual, and participatory learning. Therefore, the use of AI becomes relevant when placed as a tool to bridge PAI material that is often perceived as abstract or textual. AI has the potential to increase learning effectiveness when integrated through appropriate pedagogical design (Holmes & Tuomi, 2022). Generative AI can help teachers prepare materials, differentiation of assignments, and more adaptive learning resources (Kasneci et al., 2023). In the context of Islamic education, the integration of technology and AI in learning has also been proven to increase teacher readiness and the effectiveness of the learning process when directed systematically (Hidayati et al., 2023).

Field data shows that teachers remain in primary control of the learning process. Teachers select materials, re-examine AI outputs, and adapt them to the curriculum objectives and the context of religious values. This shows that AI does not replace the role of teachers, but rather shifts the role of teachers from a single information conveyor to a curator of knowledge, a facilitator of learning, and a mediator of technology. The presence of AI actually strengthens the importance of teachers' professional capacity in providing pedagogical direction and consideration (Luckin & Holmes, 2016). AI outputs remain at risk of bias or inaccuracy without human verification (Tlili et al., 2023). In PAI learning, verification becomes more important because it concerns the accuracy of religious materials as well as the moral orientation of education.

These findings suggest that artificial intelligence (AI) does not serve as a substitute for teachers, but rather as a tool that expands teachers' ability to manage the learning process. Interestingly, teachers' decisions to use AI are not driven by the demands of the technology itself, but rather by the need to adapt the learning process to the characteristics of students who prefer visual, interactive, and digital media.

The primary factor driving AI integration is not the availability of technology, but rather teachers' pedagogical needs. This finding contrasts with much of the discourse that frames the adoption of AI primarily as a consequence of advancements in educational technology. In the case of SMKN Tutar, teachers actually turned to AI because conventional methods were deemed insufficient to maintain student engagement. Thus, AI integration is better understood as a pedagogical response rather than a technological one.

Teachers' Pedagogical Practices as Ethical Mediation of the Use of AI

The results of the study show that PAI teachers do not respond to the presence of AI with a blanket ban, but through more constructive pedagogical mediation. This strategy can be seen in the use of authentic assessments, digital evaluation supervision, and reflective dialogue on the ethical limits of AI use. Teachers develop presentation assignments, oral explanations, case discussions, and understanding-based evaluations so that students are required to show their thought process, not just submit finished answers. This approach is in line with the concept of authentic assessment which assesses students' ability to apply knowledge in a real context, not just memorize information (Mueller, 2025).

In the era of generative AI, conventional short-answer-based evaluation models are becoming increasingly vulnerable because they can be done through machine help without adequate learning involvement. Therefore, teachers have practically adapted the evaluation to a model that assesses reason, communication, and academic responsibility. The spread of AI is driving a shift in assessment from the final product to the thought process (Farrokhnia et al., 2024). The findings of this study show that authentic assessment is not only an evaluative strategy, but also a mechanism to prevent students' dependence on instant answers from AI.

Nevertheless, the research findings indicate that authentic assessment has not yet fully eliminated differences in students' understanding of the limits of AI use. Some students still consider the use of AI acceptable as long as it is used only to verify answers or to seek assistance when facing difficulties. These findings suggest that the issue of academic integrity in the AI era is not only related to the design of assessments but also to how students interpret the meaning of honesty in the context of digital technology. In other words, the main challenge is not merely preventing the use of AI but helping students understand when technology functions as a learning aid and when it begins to replace the intellectual effort that should be undertaken independently. This perspective goes beyond the surveillance-based approaches that have long been used to maintain academic integrity (Farrokhnia et al., 2024).

In addition to assessments, teachers also build a reflective dialogue about the ethics of using AI. Based on interviews, teachers emphasized that AI can be used to find references, understand material, or help with assignment preparation, but it is not allowed to cheat during exams or replace personal efforts. This dialogical approach is important because academic integrity is not sufficiently upheld through external control, but needs to be instilled as an internal awareness. Ethical digital literacy as an important competency in the 21st century. In the context of

PAI, the dialogue is enriched by the values of honesty, trust, and responsibility as part of the moral of learning (Ng et al., 2021). Thus, teachers not only play the role of academic evaluators, but also moral guides in the digital space.

Learners' Responses and Negotiations to the Use of AI

The findings of the study show that students do not interpret AI individually, but rather negotiate their use according to their needs, learning experiences, and ethical considerations. Some students use AI to summarize material, get quick explanations, or get an initial idea of a task. Others say they still need to double-check the AI's answers through books, teacher notes, or other sources because they do not fully believe in their accuracy. There are even students who feel that learning through smartphones actually reduces focus and is more comfortable using printed books. This shows that the acceptance of technology among students takes place selectively, not automatically.

This diversity shows that students are not passive users of technology. They actively assess when AI helps, when it needs to be restricted, and when conventional learning methods are more effective. In the perspective of self-regulated learning, this behavior shows the process of choosing a learning strategy, monitoring understanding, and evaluating learning resources independently (Panadero, 2017). Self-regulation is an important factor in determining whether AI supports learning or actually causes dependency (Chiu, 2024). In other words, AI becomes part of a learning ecosystem that is negotiated, not automatically accepted. The success of the use of educational technology is greatly influenced by the readiness of the user and the direction of the teacher (Hidayati et al., 2023).

The findings of this study indicate that students' acceptance of AI is not uniform. Some students view AI as a tool that facilitates learning, while others remain more comfortable using books or conventional learning resources. This situation differs from the assumption often found in the literature that younger generations automatically accept digital technology as a more effective learning tool. These differing responses indicate that the use of AI is influenced not only by the availability of technology but also by learning preferences, individual experiences, and the level of trust in the quality of information generated by AI. Thus, the effectiveness of AI in learning cannot be understood as a characteristic of the technology alone but rather as the result of an interaction between technology, users, and the learning context.

The data also shows a pragmatic tendency. A number of students choose AI because it is considered fast, practical, and able to provide detailed answers. If this orientation of efficiency is not balanced by critical literacy, learners risk relying on

instant answers and declining intellectual perseverance. AI can increase learning productivity, but it can also reduce the depth of cognitive processing when used passively (Grassini, 2023). An important contribution of this study is to show that students' negotiations with AI are strongly influenced by the classroom context and the teacher's direction. When teachers provide clear ethical boundaries, students tend to position AI as a learning aid; instead, without a briefing, AI is easier to understand as an academic shortcut.

Implications of AI on Students' Academic Integrity

The results show that the presence of AI does not automatically damage the academic integrity of students, but changes the form of challenges faced by schools. The majority of students view the use of AI during exams as cheating because it does not reflect one's own abilities. However, some students still think AI can be used to confirm answers or help when experiencing difficulties. This condition shows that there is a moral ambivalence between the value of honesty and the encouragement of technological efficiency. Generative AI is expanding ethical gray areas as the line between legitimate learning aids and academic cheating becomes increasingly blurred (Roe & Perkins, 2024).

Before the advent of AI, academic misconduct was generally associated with copying a classmate's work or plagiarism. However, AI presents a new scenario because students can still produce answers that appear original even though part of their thought process has been delegated to technology. Therefore, the primary issue of academic integrity is no longer limited to the originality of the final product, but also extends to the originality of the underlying thought process (Roe & Perkins, 2024).

This problem emphasizes that academic integrity in the AI era is no longer sufficiently understood limited to textual plagiarism. The main focus shifts to the authenticity of the thought process, honesty of effort, and the involvement of students in completing tasks. The new challenge of education is not only detecting cheating, but building a culture of integrity in the midst of technological change (Eaton, 2023). A culture of integrity is more effectively built through learning design rather than just the threat of sanctions (Bretag et al., 2020). The findings of this study show that the combination of authentic assessments, teacher supervision, and ethical communication is a more realistic strategy than a punishment approach alone.

The most dominant finding is the functioning of religious values as a normative framework in the use of AI. Teachers instill the concepts of honesty, trust, responsibility, and the awareness that every action has moral consequences.

A number of students also stated that high grades obtained through cheating do not provide personal pride. This suggests that religious values work as an internal control mechanism that goes beyond the formal rules of the school. Ethical behavior is more sustainable when moral values are internalized as a personal commitment (Berkowitz, 2021). In the perspective of Islamic education, the value of honesty is the foundation for the formation of academic character and social responsibility of students (Suyadi et al., 2021).

Previous studies have largely examined AI from the perspectives of learning effectiveness, digital literacy, or the risk of academic dishonesty. This study presents a different perspective, namely that the use of AI in PAI learning is a process of moral negotiation involving students, teachers, and religious values present within the school environment. These findings demonstrate that decisions regarding the use or restriction of AI are influenced not only by school policies or technological capabilities but also by how students interpret honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility within the learning process. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in the explanation that academic integrity in the AI era is not solely shaped by monitoring mechanisms or digital literacy, but rather by the interaction between teachers' pedagogical mediation, students' moral awareness, and the internalization of religious values in PAI learning.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Islamic Religious Education at SMKN Tutar has become an integral part of classroom learning practices and teaching strategies. AI is utilized as a tool to help students understand the material, prepare learning resources, and enhance student engagement through more interactive learning. However, the presence of AI also presents new challenges regarding academic integrity, learning dependency, and a shift in the meaning of students' intellectual effort. The research findings confirm that the impact of AI is not determined by the technology itself, but rather by the quality of the teacher's pedagogical mediation through authentic assessment, learning guidance, and the internalization of the values of honesty, trustworthiness, and responsibility. Thus, the use of AI in Islamic Religious Education is a process of moral negotiation involving technology, students, teachers, and religious values that develop within the school environment.

This study has limitations because it was conducted at a single school and focused on a single subject, so the findings are heavily influenced by the local context of SMKN Tutar. Additionally, the school's policy allowing the use of smartphones and internet access in the classroom also influenced students'

patterns of AI usage. Therefore, the results of this study cannot yet be generalized to schools with different policies regarding the use of digital devices or to the context of learning other subjects.

Based on these findings, schools need to develop adaptive policies regarding the use of AI through guidelines on digital academic ethics, the strengthening of AI literacy, and the enhancement of teachers' competencies in designing authentic assessments relevant to the era of artificial intelligence. The implications of this research suggest that strengthening academic integrity cannot be achieved solely through technological monitoring, but also through school culture and ongoing character education. Future research is recommended to use a longitudinal design to observe the long-term development of students' AI use and academic integrity, as well as to conduct comparative case studies in schools with different characteristics and digital policies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between AI, pedagogical practices, and character education.

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