



Digital Ethics in the Perspective of Islamic Education: Cultivating Religious Awareness in Cyberspace

Lailil Muharromah*, Umar Manshur

Universitas Nurul Jadid, Indonesia

Email : muharromahlailil090@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

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*Corresponding Author

This study aims to Islamic religious education in the digital era faces significant challenges due to the rapid development of technology, particularly in ensuring that the content aligns with true Islamic teachings. This study aims to explore the role of digital ethics in raising religious awareness online, particularly in the context of religious education. Using a qualitative approach, the study involved interviews with educators and principals and observations of technology use in Islamic schools and madrasas in Indonesia. Key findings indicate that while technology offers significant opportunities for increasing access to religious learning, oversight of content quality and educators' skills in managing technology remain challenges. Most students have not fully implemented Islamic ethics in their use of social media and digital platforms, while available content often does not align with religious principles. This research contributes to identifying the importance of strengthening an Islamic-based digital curriculum and improving training for educators in managing technology to effectively support religious education.

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INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has brought significant changes to almost all aspects of life, including social, economic, and cultural aspects. Society is now increasingly connected through the internet, which brings with it various opportunities and challenges. One aspect that requires attention is digital ethics, particularly in the context of Islamic education (Jalili, 2023; Ma'arif et al., 2023; Moradi et al., 2023). With the development of information technology, we often witness the phenomenon of uncontrolled information dissemination in cyberspace. Therefore, it is important to examine how religious awareness can be instilled in people's digital behavior, particularly among the younger generation

(Hassanifar & Marzbali, 2021; Zvereva, 2023). This research is relevant because it can help create digital ethics guidelines that align with Islamic values, provide direction for the development of religious education curricula, and contribute to better character development in cyberspace.

Society is currently faced with problems related to the misuse of digital technology, such as the spread of hoax news, hate speech, pornography, and cyberbullying (Bauman & Rivers, 2023; Podolski et al., 2023). This phenomenon is more common among the younger generation, who have increasingly easy access to the internet. Unfortunately, religious education in schools often fails to keep pace with the rapid development of information technology. While there have been some attempts to integrate religious education into digital curricula, a lack of understanding of how religious values can be applied to online behavior often leads to underdeveloped awareness of digital ethics (Japar et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2022). This research will fill this gap by examining how Islamic education can address digital ethics issues within society.

The phenomenon of internet and social media abuse is increasingly prevalent, especially among school and college students. This presents a significant challenge for educators and parents in guiding young people to use the internet wisely and responsibly. Numerous cases in the field demonstrate how low religious awareness and digital ethics lead to the spread of misinformation and unethical behavior. Examples include cyberbullying and the use of social media to spread hatred or pornography, involving teenagers. This situation requires strong intervention from various parties, including the integration of strong religious values into digital education, so that the younger generation is not only technologically savvy but also moral in their online interactions.

Previous research on digital ethics in cyberspace has been conducted by several researchers. For example, Guo (2022) examined the influence of technology on digital morality and found that a lack of ethical understanding leads many individuals to engage in actions that are inconsistent with societal values. Tomczyk (2021) examined the implementation of Islamic religious education in digital education and found that most religious education materials were not sufficiently relevant to the challenges of the virtual world. Furthermore, Tao et al. (2022) highlight the importance of religious education in a digital context to instill ethics among adolescents. However, these studies are still limited to conceptual and theoretical analysis, without providing more practical and applicable solutions in the field. This weakness makes it important for this research to be supplemented with a more focused discussion on fostering faith-based digital awareness.

This research offers a novel approach by integrating an Islamic perspective on digital ethics within the context of religious education in cyberspace. This approach is important because there is little research examining how religion can play a role in shaping digital ethics in cyberspace. Another novelty is the deeper understanding of the application of Islamic principles in everyday digital life, which can help reduce issues such as cyberbullying, hoaxes, and negative content. This is highly relevant given the continued advancement of technology and needs to be addressed in a more contemporary and faith-based manner. This study aims to answer the question of how Islamic education can play a role in instilling digital ethics among the younger generation. The main argument of this study is that the application of Islamic values in religious education, particularly in the context of digital technology, can contribute significantly to character formation and awareness of digital ethics.

This study also argues that a strong religious awareness can encourage internet users to be responsible in using technology, reduce its negative impacts, and improve the quality of social interactions in the online world. The original contribution of this research is that it provides new insights into the importance of Islamic education in shaping digital ethics through religious teachings. This research also contributes to the development of curriculum materials that are more relevant to digital challenges and introduces teaching methods that educators can use to instill digital ethics awareness. The research recommends the importance of integrating religious education with digital technology in the school curriculum, as well as the need for support from the government and educational institutions to facilitate digital ethics-based education programs throughout Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative research design with a case study approach (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022). This design was chosen because it aims to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of digital ethics in Islamic education, particularly in the context of the use of information technology and social media among students and educators. Case studies allow researchers to explore the interaction between religious values and digital behavior in a more specific and detailed context (Sulistiyo, 2023). This design choice also provides space to explore various factors influencing awareness of religious-based digital ethics within society. This research was conducted at several Islamic schools (madrasahs) and Islamic schools in urban and rural areas that offer digital technology-based Islamic religious education programs. These locations were chosen to examine differences in perspectives and experiences in implementing

religious education related to digital ethics. Furthermore, these schools have utilized technology in their teaching and learning processes, facilitating data collection on the application of Islamic-based digital ethics in their activities.

The data collection techniques in this study included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies (Harahap, 2020). Interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and principals to obtain their perspectives on the implementation of digital ethics in religious education. Participatory observations were conducted in classrooms and extracurricular activities involving technology to directly observe how digital ethics is applied in practice. A documentation study was conducted by analyzing teaching materials, modules, and guides used in the religious education curriculum that integrates Islamic values with digital ethics. Data analysis was carried out by following the steps in the qualitative data analysis approach, namely data condensation, data reduction, data display, and data verification (Haryono, 2023).

Data condensation was performed by filtering relevant information from interviews and observations, then summarizing and grouping the data based on key themes related to digital ethics in Islamic education. Data reduction was then performed by focusing on the most influential and significant aspects in shaping digital ethics awareness. Data display was used to present data in a systematic and easy-to-understand narrative, while data verification was performed by checking the suitability and consistency of data obtained from various sources to ensure the accuracy of the information. Data validity was checked using source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing interview results with observations and documentation studies to ensure the consistency of data obtained from various sources. Method triangulation was carried out using various data collection techniques to gain a more comprehensive and valid understanding. Furthermore, the researchers held discussions with colleagues and experts in the fields of digital ethics and Islamic education to obtain input and validate the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Islamic Religious Education in the Technological Era

Islamic religious education in the technological era refers to the religious learning process that utilizes various digital platforms and information technology to convey Islamic values. With the rapid development of technology, religious education is no longer confined to traditional classrooms but has expanded into the virtual world through learning apps, social media,

instructional videos, and other digital materials. This allows religious education materials to be more easily accessible to various groups, including students in remote areas, creating new opportunities for disseminating religious teachings. However, the application of technology in religious education also presents its challenges, particularly regarding the alignment of content with sound Islamic principles and the delivery methods that align with religious values.

An interview with a religious education teacher at a madrasah revealed that they use technology, such as WhatsApp and online learning platforms, to provide supplementary materials to students, particularly to review religious studies outside of school hours. The teacher stated, "Students are more interested in learning about religion through social media and apps they are familiar with. We use these platforms to send video lectures, Islamic articles, and assignments that they can access anytime." This suggests that the use of technology can increase student engagement in religious learning, despite concerns about the lack of control over the quality of content students receive online.

On the other hand, an interview with a school principal revealed concerns about the quality of materials available on digital platforms. He stated, "A lot of material on the internet is not in line with true Islamic teachings. We need to be more selective in choosing the content to be provided to students through technology." This principal noted that while technology makes it easier to disseminate information, the biggest challenge is ensuring that the information students receive aligns with authentic Islamic teachings. This highlights the need for stricter curation of digital content in religious education to prevent the spread of misconceptions.

Field observations indicate that although technology has been integrated into religious instruction in most Islamic schools (madrasah) and Islamic schools, implementation remains variable. In some schools, technology use is limited to the use of teacher-operated learning apps to deliver teaching materials. In others, technology is used more extensively, with students actively accessing learning materials through video lessons or participating in online lectures. However, there are gaps in the quality of technology implementation, with most schools still facing challenges in optimizing the use of technology to support effective religious instruction. Peneliti juga mengamati bahwa meskipun ada semangat untuk memanfaatkan teknologi, banyak pendidik yang belum terampil dalam memilih dan mengintegrasikan konten digital yang sesuai dengan tujuan pendidikan agama.

The patterns emerging from this data suggest that the application of technology in Islamic religious education in the digital age can increase accessibility and student engagement. However, challenges related to content

quality and teachers' lack of technology management skills remain barriers. Although many schools and Islamic schools (madrasah) are attempting to use technology to support religious learning, gaps in the application and selection of content consistent with Islamic principles indicate a need for further strengthening educator training and curation of the content used. Therefore, Islamic religious education in the technological era requires collaborative efforts between schools, teachers, and educational institutions to ensure that technology is optimally utilized to support the teaching of religious values.

Integration of Islamic Ethics in the Digital World

The integration of Islamic ethics in the digital world refers to the application of moral and ethical principles taught in Islam to the use of information technology, social media, and the internet in general. In practice, this encompasses how society, particularly the younger generation, is influenced by Islamic teachings to maintain religiously compliant behavior online. It also involves efforts by educators and parents to guide children in using technology wisely and avoiding misuse that could damage their morals and ethics. In practice, there are challenges in ensuring that Islamic-based digital ethics principles are consistently applied, given the abundance of unfiltered information online.

The following are observations regarding the application of Islamic ethics in the digital world, consisting of the main indicators observed during the research:

Table 1. Integration of Islamic Ethics in the Digital World

Observation	Indicator	Percentage of Observations
Wise use of social media by students	Ethical Use of Social Media	30%
Monitoring of digital content accessed by students	Digital Content that is by Teachings	20%
Religious learning uses digital platforms with Islamic values	Digital-Based Religious Learning	25%
Discussion on the negative impact of social media on religion classes	Understanding the Negative Impacts of Social Media	25%

Observations showed that students' wise use of social media, an indicator of strengthening digital ethics, was recorded in 30% of the total observations. This indicates that only a small proportion of students actively maintain their ethics when using social media, although many of them stated that they had been instructed on the correct way to use digital platforms. The second indicator, digital content that aligns with Islamic teachings, was

recorded at only 20%. This suggests that while some efforts have been made to ensure students' access to educational materials, much online content does not fully align with Islamic principles. The implementation of digital-based religious learning was recorded at 25%, indicating that some madrasas and schools have used technology to convey religious values, but there are still limitations in terms of access and quality of the materials provided. Finally, the indicator for discussions on the negative impacts of social media was also recorded at 25%, indicating that while some efforts have been made to discuss the negative impacts of social media within the context of religious education classes, the discussions have not been in-depth enough to provide a significant understanding to students.

Interpretation of these observational data indicates that although efforts to integrate Islamic ethics into digital media use have begun, implementation remains limited. Only a small proportion of students consistently apply the ethics taught in their religion when using social media. Digital-based religious instruction has begun in some schools, but challenges in the quality and access to materials remain major obstacles. These data also indicate a gap in students' understanding of the negative impacts of social media, with discussions on this subject being minimal and lacking a deep understanding of how Islamic ethics can be applied to everyday social media use.

The patterns emerging from the data above indicate that although most schools and madrasahs have attempted to integrate Islamic ethics into their use of technology, the main challenges faced are limited quality and access to materials that align with religious values, as well as a lack of oversight of the content students access. Furthermore, while discussions on the negative impacts of social media have been conducted, these remain insufficiently in-depth and do not actively engage students in reflecting on and applying Islamic ethics in the digital world. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of improving Islamic-based digital curricula and stricter oversight of the digital content students have access to, ensuring that they not only understand religious values but also apply them in their digital lives.

The Role of Technology in Strengthening Moral Education

The role of technology in strengthening moral education in the digital era refers to the use of various digital platforms, such as learning apps, social media, and educational videos, to convey moral values that support students' character development. Technology offers great potential to expand the reach of moral education beyond the conventional classroom, enabling more interactive and accessible learning. Furthermore, technology also provides opportunities to introduce moral concepts in ways that are more engaging and relevant to

students' daily lives, such as through educational games, learning videos, and apps designed to teach ethical behavior online. However, the use of technology also presents challenges, particularly in terms of content monitoring and students' tendency to access materials that do not align with expected moral values.

The flow related to the role of technology in strengthening moral education can be explained by examining how schools and Islamic schools utilize technology to provide instruction that leads to character building. In some schools, technology is used to support moral learning by providing students with access to digital-based programs that teach good values, such as respect for others, sharing, and responsibility. For example, through the use of mobile applications that invite students to participate in social challenges that support moral values. Furthermore, social media and video platforms are also utilized to disseminate moral messages that can be accessed by students at any time. However, the challenge is how to manage and ensure that the content students access truly supports moral education and does not foster behavior that conflicts with those values.

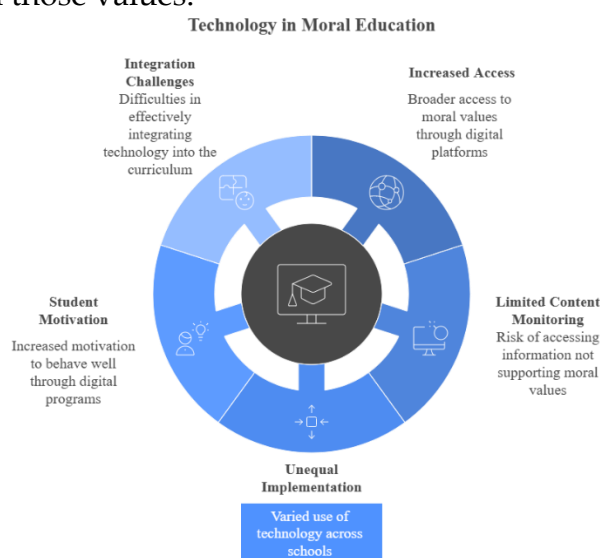


Figure 1. The Role of Technology in Strengthening Moral Education

Field observations indicate that although technology has been widely used in many schools to strengthen moral education, its implementation remains limited to certain aspects. Most schools only use technology to deliver general lesson materials, with little attention paid to strengthening students' character through digital media. Some more advanced schools have attempted to integrate moral education into their learning using platforms like YouTube or educational apps that offer content related to religious and moral values. However, supervision of technology use remains minimal, resulting in some students accessing less educational and even harmful content, such as videos

depicting negative behavior. Nevertheless, some students who participate in technology-based moral learning programs report feeling more inspired to behave well and responsibly online.

The researchers' interpretation of this data suggests that while technology has the potential to strengthen moral education, its proper implementation and oversight remain major challenges. On the one hand, technology can provide students with more opportunities to learn about moral values interactively and enjoyably. However, on the other hand, a lack of oversight of technology use can lead to students accessing content that is not in line with the intended moral education. Therefore, it is crucial for educators not only to integrate technology into moral learning but also to provide adequate guidance, both directly and through the development of policies that can guide the use of technology in a more responsible manner.

The patterns emerging from the data above indicate that while technology can strengthen moral education by providing broader access and more engaging learning, its implementation in practice has been suboptimal due to a lack of control and curation of the content consumed by students. Despite efforts to introduce moral values through technology, numerous challenges remain in ensuring that the use of such technology truly supports character formation and moral behavior consistent with religious and cultural teachings. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of stricter oversight and a more deliberate strategy for integrating technology into moral education in schools.

Discussion

Islamic religious education in the technological era demonstrates a gap between expectations and reality in the application of technology in religious learning. This study's findings note that while technology enables the wider dissemination of religious values, especially in remote areas, the main challenge lies in the quality and alignment of the content with true Islamic teachings. This aligns with previous studies that stated that while information technology has great potential in religious education, the greatest challenge is ensuring that the material delivered aligns with authentic religious principles (Takács & Pogátsnik, 2024; Yoon, 2021; Zheng et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the findings of this study indicate that the use of digital learning applications and platforms is increasingly widespread, but not all available content meets the desired standards of Islamic education. In this regard, this study underscores the need for stricter curation of the materials selected for students.

Furthermore, regarding the integration of Islamic ethics in the digital world, research findings indicate that although a small percentage of students

practice proper ethics when using social media, few schools explicitly integrate religious teachings into digital activities. This indicates a discrepancy with the literature, which states that teaching religion-based digital ethics is important to help students avoid negative behavior online (Kamenskaya & Tomanov, 2022). This study also noted that despite efforts to provide learning materials through digital platforms, most students still struggle to apply moral principles online. Unequal oversight of digital content is also a concern, which aligns with previous findings that supervision and guidance in online environments are still limited (Khan et al., 2024; Meston, 2024). The implications of these findings demonstrate the importance of training educators to become more skilled in managing and supervising digital content to ensure it aligns with Islamic teachings.

Regarding the role of technology in strengthening moral education, research findings indicate that although technology offers significant opportunities for teaching moral values, many schools are still limited in utilizing this potential. Consistent with this, previous literature highlights that technology can introduce moral concepts in a more engaging and relevant way to students' lives, such as through learning videos or educational apps (Mohammed & Bamasoud, 2022; Yafooz et al., 2022). However, the study's findings also noted gaps in the quality of moral instruction through technology, particularly regarding the monitoring of the content students access. This suggests that while technology can expand the reach of moral education, rigorous oversight and more strategic integration remain challenges that need to be addressed (AlShabibi & Al-Suqri, 2021). Researchers also emphasized the need for clearer policies guiding the use of technology in schools to support the strengthening of moral education.

The theoretical implications of these findings suggest that while technology has great potential to strengthen religious and moral education, effective implementation requires more than just the use of digital tools. Islamic religious and moral education through technology requires a well-integrated approach, in which educators play a key role in selecting, curating, and monitoring the materials provided to students (Castro et al., 2021; Nyikes et al., 2022). In the context of moral education, the theory of technology-enhanced learning needs to be further developed to strengthen the religion-based moral education curriculum (Moreno & López-Ornelas, 2022; Winger et al., 2024). Practically, the results of this study provide recommendations for schools to improve teachers' capacity in managing and integrating technology effectively in religious and moral education, as well as the importance of involving parents in supervising and strengthening students' moral values in the digital world.

The patterns emerging from the data above indicate that while

technology opens new opportunities in religious and moral education, the successful implementation of technology in education depends heavily on educators' ability to utilize it wisely. The use of technology for religious and moral education still faces significant challenges related to content quality and oversight. Therefore, this study highlights the need for improved training for educators and strengthened policies to ensure optimal use of technology to support the teaching of religious and moral values. A more strategic implementation of technology integration into Islamic religious and moral education is crucial to maximize the positive impact of technology in shaping students' character in the digital world.

CONCLUSION

This study, "Digital Ethics from an Islamic Education Perspective: Cultivating Religious Awareness in Cyberspace," reveals that while technology offers significant opportunities to increase the accessibility of religious education, the primary challenge lies in the quality of the content provided to students. While digital platforms enable the wider dissemination of religious values, content oversight and curation remain significant obstacles. Only a small proportion of students consistently apply Islamic ethics online, while most educators lack the skills to manage digital content by religious principles. This study highlights the importance of improving training for educators and strengthening policies to ensure that technology is optimally used to support religious and moral education.

The strength of this study lies in its contribution to providing insights into the application of Islamic ethical principles in the digital world, as well as demonstrating the urgent need for monitoring and curating digital content in religious education. However, this study has limitations in that its scope is limited to a few madrasahs (Islamic schools) and schools, and its reliance on interviews and observations. Future research could expand the scope of the study, involve more in-depth experiments, and further explore how social media and technology can be more effectively integrated into the Islamic religious education curriculum to strengthen students' character development.

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