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Integrating Artificial Intelligence into Islamic Religious Education: Toward a Model for Ethical and Values-Based Technology Adoption in Faith-Based Schools

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Abstract

This study investigates the perceptions, challenges, and opportunities of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, a faith-based secondary school. While grounded in this specific institutional context, the findings are framed to provide transferable insights for similar Islamic-oriented institutions, serving as both a localized case and a reference for broader models of ethical and values-based AI adoption. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with PAI teachers, the vice principal, and the school principal. The results indicate that AI is appreciated for supporting personalized, inclusive, and efficient learning, yet it cannot replace the teacher's role in moral and spiritual formation. Challenges include ethical concerns, limited infrastructure, and the absence of Islamic contextualized regulations, while opportunities involve curriculum innovation, workload reduction, and adaptive instruction. Theoretically, this study advances the conceptualization of AI in values-based education within the discourse of Islamic Religious Education. Practically, it proposes a transferable framework for ethical and transformative AI adoption, guiding schools, teachers, and policymakers to align technology use with Islamic ethical principles. Future research directions include developing an Islamic AI curriculum, piloting an integrative AI Adab model, and conducting comparative studies across faith-based institutions to identify scalable best practices.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Islamic Religious Education, Teacher Perception, Educational Technology, Ethics

Abstrak

Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah mengeksplorasi persepsi, tantangan, dan Penelitian ini mengkaji persepsi, tantangan, dan peluang integrasi Kecerdasan Buatan (AI)

dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, sebuah sekolah menengah berbasis agama. Meskipun berlandaskan pada konteks institusi ini, temuan penelitian dirancang untuk memberikan wawasan yang dapat diterapkan pada lembaga Islam serupa, berfungsi sebagai studi kasus lokal sekaligus rujukan bagi model adopsi AI yang etis dan berbasis nilai. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru PAI, wakil kepala sekolah, dan kepala sekolah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa AI diapresiasi karena kemampuannya mendukung pembelajaran yang personal, inklusif, dan efisien, namun tidak dapat menggantikan peran guru dalam pembentukan moral dan spiritual. Tantangan yang dihadapi meliputi isu etika, keterbatasan infrastruktur, dan ketiadaan regulasi yang dikontekstualisasikan secara Islami, sementara peluang mencakup inovasi kurikulum, pengurangan beban kerja, dan pembelajaran adaptif. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini memperkuat konseptualisasi AI dalam pendidikan berbasis nilai dalam diskursus Pendidikan Agama Islam. Secara praktis, penelitian ini menawarkan kerangka kerja yang dapat diterapkan untuk adopsi AI yang etis dan transformatif, yang dapat memandu sekolah, guru, dan pembuat kebijakan dalam menyelaraskan penggunaan teknologi dengan prinsip etika Islam. Arah penelitian selanjutnya mencakup pengembangan kurikulum AI Islami, uji coba model integratif AI Adab, dan studi komparatif di berbagai lembaga pendidikan berbasis agama untuk mengidentifikasi praktik terbaik yang dapat diadaptasi secara luas.

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Persepsi Guru, Teknologi Pendidikan, Etika.

Introduction

Islamic Religious Education plays a central role in nurturing character, cultivating spiritual awareness, and establishing a strong foundation of moral values. Through this subject, the values of faith, etiquette, and social responsibility are instilled early as a foundation for life. However, amid the digital transformation era, PAI faces significant adaptive challenges, especially in utilizing technology as a learning tool without losing the essence of its religious values.[1]

As is widely recognized, the digital revolution has brought various technologies into education, one of which is Artificial Intelligence (AI). This technology enables the creation of learning systems that are more responsive, personalized, and data-driven. AI not only assists in automating

[1] Hakim and Anggraini, "Artificial Intelligence in Teaching Islamic Studies: Challenges and Opportunities," MOLANG: Journal Islamic Education 1, no. 2 (June 2, 2023), pp. 58-69. https://ejournal.al-khairat.ac.id/index.php/MOLANGAvailableonlineat:https://ejournal.al-khairat.ac.id/index.php/MOLANG/index.

administrative tasks but also helps tailor instructional content to student learning styles, provides instant feedback, and detects learning difficulties at an early stage.[2]

AI has been used in Islamic education through educational chatbots, automatic assessment platforms, and Islamic-themed animated learning media. According to Hakim and Anggraini, AI holds significant potential to accelerate students' understanding of religious teachings and to bring more vitality and engagement to the learning process.[3] This is in line with the findings of Putra and Wanda, who asserted that AI can enhance teaching practices and professional growth among educators.[4]

Nevertheless, integrating AI into religious education comes with its own set of challenges. A central challenge lies in preserving the contemplative and spiritual essence of Islamic teaching amidst the rapid acceleration of technological utility in the classroom. Ethical concerns such as diminished emotional interaction, erosion of moral values, and the risk of plagiarism are also commonly cited.

However, the extent to which AI becomes an effective classroom tool largely depends on how prepared educators are to embrace it. Evidence from Murniyetti et al. reveals that teachers' openness to AI is intricately linked to factors such as generational background, professional tenure, and competence in navigating digital technologies. Younger teachers generally demonstrate openness and enthusiasm toward AI, while more senior teachers tend to be cautious due to concerns about its impact on spiritual dimensions.[5]

Apart from individual factors, institutional support in the form of training, clear technology policies, and adequate infrastructure is crucial to

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[2] Fatema Al Nabhani, Mahizer Bin Hamzah, and Hassan Abuhassna, "The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Personalizing Educational Content: Enhancing the Learning Experience and Developing the Teacher's Role in an Integrated Educational Environment," Contemporary Educational Technology 17, no. 2 (April 1, 2025), pp. 537-573. https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/16089.

[3] Hakim and Anggraini, "Artificial Intelligence …".

[4] Wiene Surya Putra and Karina Wanda, "Pengelolaan Pembelajaran PAI Dengan Pemanfaatan Teknologi Artificial Intellegence (AI) Bagi Mahasiswa Program Studi PAI" 3, no. 2 (2023), pp. 60–74, https://doi.org/10.51700/attadbir.v3i2.862.

[5] Murniyetti et al., "Respon Guru terhadap Penggunaan Kecerdasan Buatan dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Budi Pekerti (Studi Kasus di Kota Padang)," Agama dan Keagamaan Islam 4, no. 2 (December 1, 2023), pp. 123.

ensuring successful AI adoption. Simorangkir highlighted that limited digital literacy remains a significant barrier for PAI teachers in accessing and optimizing AI tools in their teaching practice.[6]

As stated by Rismawati, the application of artificial intelligence in Islamic education presents an opportunity to elevate teachers' creativity to a more advanced level. Digital platforms like ChatGPT, Quizizz, and augmented reality applications are increasingly motivating teachers to craft dynamic and student-centered lessons, particularly in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes differentiated and independent learning.[7]Introduced in 2022 by Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology under the leadership of Nadiem Makarim, this national curriculum reform emphasizes differentiated and independent learning. Its principles are directly supported by AI integration through personalization and adaptive feedback.

Given these evolving dynamics, the present study focuses on SMAIT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, an Islamic-oriented secondary institution that is currently integrating digital technologies into its educational practices. The selection of SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang as the research site is deliberate, as the school embodies the characteristics of a faith-based institution committed to both academic excellence and the preservation of Islamic values. Its current efforts in AI adoption provide a microcosm through which broader principles of technology integration in Islamic education can be observed, analyzed, and potentially adapted for use in other similar institutions. This context offers a relevant setting to examine how Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers perceive the emergence of Artificial Intelligence and assess their readiness to adapt to this technological transformation.

The fact that teachers serve as the bridge between advancing technology and Islamic values makes their perceptions a key indicator in determining the direction of digital transformation in PAI. By understanding

[6] Rifka Afriyanti Simorangkir, "Persepsi Guru dan Siswa Dalam Penggunaan Artificcial Intelegent Chat GPT Sebagai Pembelajaran di SMA Negeri 8 Medan" (Universitas Medan Area, 2024), pp. 1-96.

[7] Annisa Rismawati, "Pemangaatan Atificial Intelligence untuk Meningkatkan Kreatifitas Guru Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Kurikulum Merdeka(Studi Kasus di SMPN Satu Atap Pesanggrahan 2 Batu)" (UIN Malang, 2024), pp. 1-158.

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their perspectives, schools and policymakers can develop strategies to offer appropriate training, build a healthy digital ecosystem, and preserve the richness of religious values in the educational process.[8]

Accordingly, this article, entitled *Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education Learning: An Analysis of Perceptions, Challenges, and Opportunities at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang*, addresses a critical gap in the literature, as empirical studies on AI integration in Islamic Religious Education remain scarce, particularly within the ethical and spiritual A framework of faith-based schools.

Figure 1 Group Photo After the Interview with the Principal and the Islamic Education Teacher

It aims to explore how AI is perceived, the challenges encountered, and the opportunities offered in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) investigate PAI teachers' perceptions of AI adoption in classroom practices; (2) identify the challenges faced in integrating AI into Islamic education; and (3) explore the potential opportunities that AI presents for enhancing PAI learning in this Islamic school environment. Framed within the conceptual lens of AI in values-based education, the study contributes theoretically by advancing discourse on technology integration in Islamic pedagogy, and practically by offering a transferable framework for ethical and transformative AI adoption in similar educational contexts.

Method

This study applies a descriptive qualitative approach and employs a field study as its primary method. Qualitative research is directed toward understanding social phenomena within their natural settings and is grounded in the idea that knowledge is constructed through interaction with

[8] Rismawati; Simorangkir, "Persepsi Guru ….", pp. 1-96.

participants. The researcher functions as the primary data collection instrument, directly interacting with subjects and contexts.[9]

The epistemological foundation of this study is post-positivism, which emphasizes that reality is not singular or fixed but constructed through social experiences. Therefore, this approach is well-suited to investigate perceptions, beliefs, and values held by Islamic education teachers, particularly in the context of technological change.[10] Post-positivism is especially relevant because it acknowledges the complexity of multiple realities shaped by cultural, ethical, and pedagogical factors, allowing the study to capture how educators interpret and respond to the integration of AI in Islamic Religious Education.

The research was conducted at SMAIT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, focusing on PAI teachers and curriculum stakeholders. Participants were deliberately chosen based on their familiarity with both teaching practices and digital technologies, allowing the study to gather in-depth and contextually meaningful insights. The informants included PAI subject teachers, the school principal, and the vice principal of curriculum affairs**,** all of whom are actively involved in the planning, policy-making, and implementation of Islamic Religious Education in the school. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants with relevant experience in teaching and digital tools, ensuring that the collected data would be rich and context-specific. The study engaged Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, the school principal, and the vice principal for curriculum affairs as key informants, given their direct roles in shaping and executing educational strategies within the institution. Participants were intentionally selected through purposive sampling to ensure they possessed substantial experience in both instructional practice and the use of digital technologies, thus enhancing the relevance and depth of the collected data.[11] While the study is situated within the context of SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, the methodological design intentionally frames the findings for

[9] Zuchri Abdussamad, Buku-Metode-Penelitian-Kualitatif (1), ed. Patta Rapanna, vol. 1 (CV. Syakir Media Press, 2021) pp. 14; Feny Rita Fiantika et.al., Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, ed. Yuliatri Novita, 1st ed., vol. 1 (Padang: PT. Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2022), pp. 3., www.globaleksekutifteknologi.co.id.

[10] Syafrida Hafni Sahir, Metodologi Penelitian, ed. Try Koryati (Medan: Penerbit KBM Indonesia, 2022), pp. 38-40, www.penerbitbukumurah.com.

[11] Abdul Fattah Nasution, Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, ed. Meyniar Albina, Zulfa, and Nita (Bandung: CV. Harfa Creative, 20223)pp.73; Rita Fiantika et.al., Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, pp.85.

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broader applicability to other faith-based schools. This approach ensures that insights derived from the local context can inform a wider discourse on the ethical and values-based adoption of AI in Islamic education.

Data were collected through a systematic process that involved semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and the gathering of information in various forms, including recorded, observable, and digital data. Interviews provided narrative data reflecting teachers' perceptions and experiences, while observation added contextual evidence from classroom practices. Documentation, such as lesson plans and school policies, served to triangulate and validate findings.[12]

To ensure trustworthiness, this study used triangulation, member checking, and audit trails. Triangulation was conducted across different sources (teachers, school leaders, documents), and participants were invited to verify transcripts and interpretations to enhance credibility.[13]

Data were collected through a systematic process that involved semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and the gathering of various forms of documentation. Interviews provided narrative data reflecting teachers' perceptions and experiences. At the same time, classroom observations focused on how AI-based tools, such as Quizizz and ChatGPT, were utilized in teaching practices, student engagement, and classroom interactions. Documentation included lesson plans that illustrated the integration of AI into learning activities, as well as school policy drafts related

Figure 2 Documentation during interviews with the principal, the vice principal for curriculum, and Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers.

[12] Hafni Sahir, Metodologi Penelitian, p.147; Rita Fiantika et.al., Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, pp. 94-99.

[13] Rita Fiantika et.al., Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, p.188; Hafni Sahir, Metodologi Penelitian, p.132.

to digital learning and ethical guidelines, all of which served to triangulate and validate the findings.[14]

The researcher also implemented reflexivity, acknowledging their position as a human instrument and maintaining a neutral, ethical stance throughout the research process. Ethical procedures, such as informed consent and data confidentiality, were strictly upheld.[15]

In summary, this research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach utilizing a case study design to investigate how teachers perceive the integration of AI in Islamic Religious Education. Employing semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document reviews, and reinforced by data source triangulation, the study was structured to produce rich, contextually grounded, and credible insights. It also facilitates an ethical and reflective exploration of the dynamics of technology integration within education grounded in Islamic values

Result And Discussion

The analysis in this section is framed within the theoretical lens of AI in values-based education, which integrates perspectives from technology in Islamic education. This approach draws on Al-Attas's concept of adab and the spiritual aims of education, Hakim and Anggraini's framework of opportunities and challenges for AI in Islamic studies, and Mahmudulhassan's emphasis on ethical, just, and values-based technology adoption. These perspectives are used to interpret the empirical findings from SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, connecting the local context to broader principles of technology integration that preserve Islamic ethical and spiritual values.

1. Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education.

The application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the realm of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang has sparked a spectrum of responses, though most tend to lean toward optimism. The principal, Novalina Setyaningrum, interprets AI as a strategic catalyst capable of reshaping learning experiences to become more personal,

[14] Abdussamad, Buku-Metode.., p. 122.
[15] Rita Fiantika et.al., Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, p. 184.

interactive, and rich in contextual meaning. In her statement, she emphasized that "AI offers learning that is not only interactive and contextual but also touches the personal dimension, thereby strengthening students' spiritual and moral development."[16] Reiser and Dempsey argue that educational technology should not merely function as a supporting tool but as a bridge that leads learning toward greater effectiveness and relevance, especially when it aligns with the pulse of students' individual needs.[17]

Similarly, Eva Dewi Nurkholifah, the vice principal of curriculum, sees AI as a tool aligned with the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka. She emphasized that AI should complement, not replace, Islamic religious sources. According to her, "AI should not be a legal basis for religious instruction, but rather a means to support understanding aligned with Qur'an and Hadith".[18] This perception aligns with Al-Attas's philosophy of Islamic education, which emphasizes that the orientation of learning is not merely about acquiring information but about instilling adab (proper conduct) and nurturing spiritual insight.[19]

From the teacher's perspective, Wahid Solein shared a practical and reflective view. He affirmed that AI had helped him in diagnostic assessment, stating, "AI helps me identify students' weaknesses faster than traditional observation".[20] Yet, he also emphasized AI's moral limitations by stating, "You cannot teach values through a machine".[21] This critical stance reinforces the notion that while AI can support instructional tasks, it lacks the affective and spiritual dimension essential in Islamic education—a view supported by

[16] Novalina Setyaningrum, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[17] Robert A Reiser, "A History of Instructional Design and Technology: Part II: A History of Instructional," *Technology Research and Development*, vol. 49, 2001.

[18] Eva Dewi Nurkholifah, "Interview (Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education Learning: An Analysis of Perceptions, Challenges, and Opportunities at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang)" (Karawang, June 3, 2025), pp. 57-67.

[19] Usiono, "Philosophy Of Islamic Education According To Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas," Proceeding International Seminar on Islamic Studies 4 (n.d.), pp. 524-532.

[20] Wahid Solein, "Interview (Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education Learning: An Analysis of Perceptions, Challenges, and Opportunities at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang)" (Karawang, June 3, 2025), pp. 1-3.

[21] Solein, "Interview..", pp. 1-3."

Hakim and Anggraini[22], who argue that moral and spiritual formation demands a deeply human relational process.

This aligns with Al-Attas's principle that technology in Islamic education should serve as a vehicle for adab and moral formation, rather than replacing the teacher's role as a moral guideThis aligns with Al-Attas's principle that technology in Islamic education should serve as a vehicle for adab and moral formation, rather than replacing the teacher's role as a moral guide[23]. Southworth et al. note that teachers' positive perception of AI often correlates with the availability of ethical training and institutional readiness.[24] Likewise, Gardan et al. suggest that teachers are more likely to embrace AI when schools provide structured support and professional development.[25] Both of which are present at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu through workshops like "AI in the Classroom."

In summary, Ningrum, Nurkholifah, and Solein perceive AI as a valuable yet bounded tool: beneficial in enhancing personalized and effective instruction, but never capable of replacing the teacher's role in transmitting spiritual and moral values. Their critical optimism reflects a nuanced approach that upholds Islamic pedagogical values while embracing the innovative affordances of AI.

These findings reflect Hakim and Anggraini's perspective that AI in Islamic education serves as both a driver of innovation and a source of ethical concern. It can enrich curricula, personalize learning, and increase engagement, yet also risks fostering overreliance, reducing reflective thinking, and diluting moral guidance if not guided by competent teachers.

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[22] Hakim and Anggraini, "Artificial Intelligence ...", p. 1

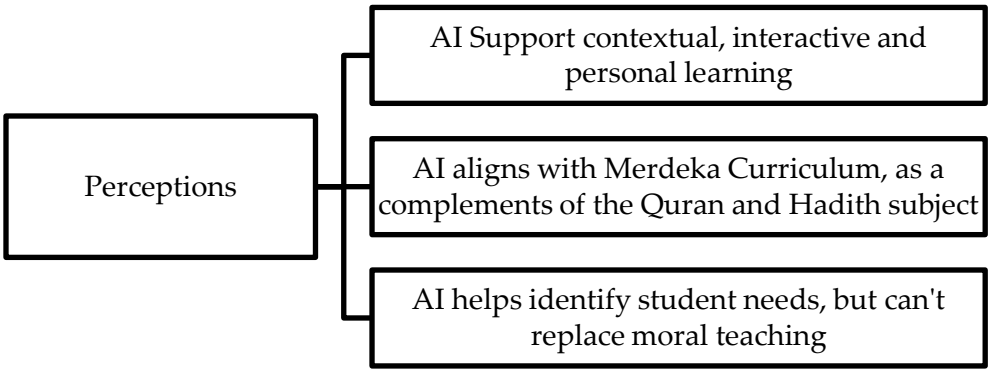
[23] Sanusi Ismail, Al-Attas' Philosophy of Islamic Education (Aceh, 2020), p. 341 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344346758.

[24] Jane Southworth et al., "Developing a Model for AI Across the Curriculum: Transforming the Higher Education Landscape via Innovation in AI Literacy," Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence 4 (January 1, 2023), pp. 1–10, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2023.100127.

[25] Iuliana Petronela Gardan et al., "Adopting AI in Education: Optimizing Human Resource Management Considering Teacher Perceptions," Frontiers in Education 10, no. 1 (February 19, 2025), pp. 1–24, https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1488147.

This underscores the importance of embedding AI within a pedagogical framework that upholds both academic and spiritual objectives.

Figure 3 Perception of AI in Islamic Religious Education



The perceptions of teachers and the principal at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang reveal a shared optimism toward AI as a supportive tool for enhancing contextual, adaptive, and personalized learning, while firmly upholding the irreplaceable role of teachers in moral and spiritual formation. This convergence aligns with Al-Attas' philosophy of Islamic education, which emphasizes the primacy of adab and spiritual objectives, and with Hakim and Anggraini's perspective that AI should enrich pedagogy without undermining human moral guidance. The nuanced balance between enthusiasm for innovation and caution toward ethical boundaries reflects broader trends in AI adoption in faith-based contexts, suggesting that the school's approach resonates with values-based education models while retaining its unique spiritual orientation.

2. **Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education**

Although it promises a pedagogical revitalization, the integration of AI into Islamic teaching also initiates a new discourse on how to sustain ethical harmony, equip teachers with holistic readiness, and ensure that institutional ecosystems move in step with this transformative vision. The findings at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang reveal that these concerns are not merely technical but deeply value-laden.

Novalina Setyaningrum highlighted the ethical risk that AI-generated content may conflict with Islamic values, noting that most AI tools are

developed by external parties with secular orientations. Without strict filtering, such content in the form of text, images, or videos can contradict the beliefs and moral principles of Islamic education.[26]

The ethical dimension of AI adoption reflects Mahmudulhassan et al.'s view that technology in Islamic education must be guided by justice, empathy, and integrity. Without a values-based framework, AI may spread cultural bias, weaken moral agency, and erode holistic character formation. Embedding Islamic ethics into AI use is therefore essential to ensure technology complements rather than compromises the spiritual mission of education.[27]

This issue points to the lack of religious content moderation in mainstream AI platforms and the necessity of institutional frameworks to ensure theological fidelity. Her concern aligns with Zang J, who argued that algorithmic neutrality can often obscure cultural or religious biases embedded in data and models.[28] In other words, even though AI systems are often perceived as objective or neutral, they can still reflect biased worldviews, depending on how and from where the data is collected and how the models are trained.

Eva Dewi Nurkholifah, emphasized that the use of AI needs to be governed by an ethical pedagogical framework. It was clearly recognized by the Vice Principal that "without clear ethics, AI can become a shortcut for students to avoid the actual learning process."[29] According to the Vice Principal of Curriculum, AI can tempt students to rely on automated answers without engaging in reflective and spiritual learning processes. This view echoes the critique by Liew and Kamrozzaman, who note that overreliance on AI can reduce cognitive persistence and promote surface-level learning, especially in values-based education.[30]

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[26] Setyaningrum, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[27] Mahmudulhassan et.al, "Artificial Intelligence in Multicultural ...", pp. 19-26.

[28] Jing Zhang, Wenlong Song, and Yang Liu, "Cognitive Bias in Generative AI Influences Religious Education," Scientific Reports 15, no. 1 (December 1, 2025), pp. 1–15, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-99121-6.

[29] Nurkholifah, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[30] Amy Liew Xiu Jie and Nurul Aisyah Kamrozzaman, "The Challenges of Higher Education Students Face in Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) against Their Learning

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Wahid Solein, a PAI teacher, highlighted that *"the real challenge is not technology, but our readiness as educators to evolve"*.[31] That statement reflects a widespread gap in digital literacy among educators, particularly within religious schools where exposure to AI tools may be limited. This challenge is well documented in Southworth et al., who emphasize that without targeted professional development, educators are likely to underutilize or misuse AI in ways that contradict pedagogical aims.[32]

Figure 4 The Atmosphere of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning at SMAIT Mentari Ilmu

Another challenge lies in the infrastructure and support systems available. Although SMA IT Mentari Ilmu has conducted basic workshops, both Eva and Wahid noted that consistent mentoring and content adaptation are still limited. The lack of Islamic-contextualized AI training modules and resources further complicates the implementation process.

Novalina Setyaningrum also acknowledged that one of the current obstacles is the lack of supporting policy documents related to the use of AI. This is due to the fact that the implementation of AI at SMAIT Mentari Ilmu is a new initiative launched in the 2025–2026 academic year. Although the initial application has already begun, the formal policy development is still in progress. The supporting documents have only recently started to be drafted through the Mid-Term Work Plan (RKJM) meeting of the Mentari Ilmu Karawang Foundation and are scheduled to be ratified by the end of June 2025. This condition indicates that institutional readiness, particularly in terms of internal regulation, still needs to be strengthened to ensure that the

Experiences," Open Journal of Social Sciences 12, no. 10 (2024), pp. 362–87, https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2024.1210025.

[31] Solein, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[32] Southworth et al., "Developing a Model ...", pp. 1-10.

integration of AI can be sustained and aligned with the values of Islamic education.[33]

Although there is a lack of supporting policy documents, the researcher's observations indicate that the physical infrastructure at SMAIT Mentari Ilmu has begun to be strengthened. Several classrooms have been equipped with supporting devices such as smart TVs, although not all rooms are covered yet. In addition, the school has also provided tablets for students to use during the learning process. The use of these devices supports an AI based approach that is more interactive and responsive to students' learning needs. In fact, according to a PAI teacher, the quality of tablets will be upgraded this year from previously using Samsung devices to iPads in order to enhance learning performance. The teacher also emphasized that the use of tablets in AI based learning greatly assists the teaching process, particularly in presenting materials in a more adaptive and engaging manner for students.[34]

Lastly, academic honesty is a growing concern. With students increasingly using generative AI tools to complete assignments, there is a risk of reduced originality and ethical breaches. Wahid observed that some students began depending on AI-generated responses without understanding the material, which can erode the educational integrity of PAI subjects.

In conclusion, while the promise of AI is evident, its integration into Islamic Religious Education must be carefully navigated. Ethical oversight, teacher empowerment, culturally sensitive content, and robust institutional policies are crucial to ensuring that AI enhances rather than undermines the values and goals of Islamic education.

Figure 5 Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education

[33] Setyaningrum, "Interview", pp. 1-3.
[34] Solein, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

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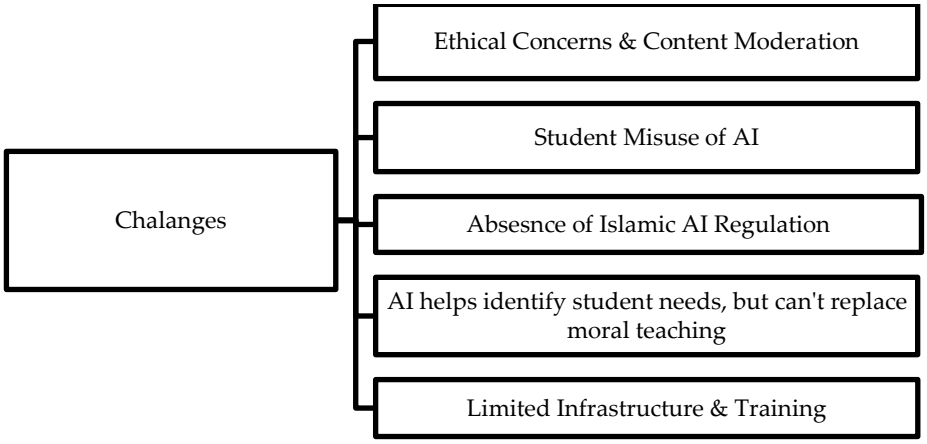

The challenges identified, namely ethical risks, limited infrastructure, inadequate training, and absence of Islamic-contextualized regulations, are consistent with concerns highlighted in the literature. Mahmudulhassan et al. stress that justice, empathy, and integrity must guide AI adoption to prevent cultural bias, loss of moral agency, and erosion of character formation. Similarly, Liew and Kamrozzaman caution against overreliance on AI, which can diminish reflective learning in values-based education. The convergence between the school's experiences and these scholarly concerns underscores the urgent need for a structured ethical framework, targeted teacher capacity building, and policy development to ensure AI integration strengthens rather than compromises Islamic educational values.

3. AI and Its Opportunities at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang.

Despite concerns over ethics and infrastructure, educators at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang recognize that Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds meaningful opportunities to improve Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Rather than posing a threat, AI is viewed as a pedagogical tool that, when grounded in Islamic values and integrated with thoughtful strategies, can enrich learning and teaching alike.

Novalina Setyaningrum sees AI as a way to bring more interactivity, relevance, and personalization to the classroom. *"AI provides learning that is interactive, contextual, and personal, which supports spiritual and moral*

reinforcement".[35] This view is consistent with UNESCO's emphasis on using AI to enhance inclusion, equity, and learner engagement, particularly when AI is adapted to socio-cultural contexts.[36]

This personalization afforded by AI enables teachers to tailor Islamic content to diverse learning needs, promoting a deeper affective engagement with religious teachings. Salim and Rajabiyah emphasize that when AI is embedded within Islamic education, it supports individual spiritual growth by offering context-aware recommendations and adaptable learning materials that resonate with students' personal experiences.[37] In a similar vein, Lestari et al. found that personalized AI tools, when aligned with curriculum objectives, help increase student participation by catering to their learning preferences, including visual, auditory, and text-based modalities.[38] Furthermore, Tariq argues that AI-driven platforms enhance teacher efficiency while simultaneously improving student focus and intrinsic motivation through dynamic and responsive learning environments. [39] Collectively, these studies underscore how personalization in AI serves not only academic goals but also nurtures deeper ethical and religious engagement among learners.

Echoing this, Eva Dewi Nurkholifah, believes AI helps reduce teachers' technical workload and reallocates their energy to guiding students in values and character building. She noted, *"AI helps teachers focus more on character building by supporting technical aspects of lesson planning"*.[40] However, Dawam also reminds us that AI cannot replace the essential human role of educators in shaping ethical reasoning competencies and fostering spiritual

[35] Setyaningrum, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[36] UNESCO, "Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence" (France, November 23, 2022), pp. 5-43. www.unesco.org/open-.

[37] M Agus Salim and Nurlaila Rajabiyah, "Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Islamic Education: Effectiveness, Innovation, and Socio Cultural Influence," Advances Educational Innovation 1, no. 3 (February 10, 2025), pp. 101–12, https://doi.org/10.69725/aei.v1i3.185.

[38] Juwita Tri Lestari et al., "Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Education Curriculum," Journal of Pergunu and Contemporary Islamic Studies 1, no. 1 (December 23, 2024), pp. 55–79.

[39] Muhammad Usman Tariq, "AI-Driven Personalized Learning," Reseach Gate 1, no. 1 (April 23, 2025), pp. 75–96, https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-9770-1.ch004.

[40] Nurkholifah, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

development.[41] Similarly, Mahmudulhassan highlights that while AI can enhance efficiency and access in Islamic education, its implementation must be guided by core Islamic values such as justice, empathy, and integrity.[42] Together, these studies underline that AI should function as a supportive tool, while teachers remain irreplaceable as ethical mentors and facilitators of character formation within Islamic pedagogy.

Meanwhile, Wahid Solein, a PAI teacher, shared a pragmatic appreciation of AI's role in formative assessment and adaptive feedback. *"AI helps me identify students' weaknesses faster than traditional observation*.[43] The teacher also uses tools such as Quizizz and Padlet to create engaging learning environments. According to Dawam, AI's ability to provide timely feedback and analyze learner behavior enables a more personalized and responsive approach to moral education, allowing teachers to adapt instructional strategies based on students' real-time needs.[44] These practices also reflect the principles of the Kurikulum Merdeka, Indonesia's 2022 curriculum reform that emphasizes differentiated and independent learning. Through AI-based tools such as Quizizz and Padlet, teachers were able to design adaptive activities, provide real-time feedback, and create varied learning pathways tailored to students' needs, thereby translating the curriculum's vision into daily classroom practice.

In addition to improving efficiency, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is regarded as a catalyst for inclusive education. Tools such as text-to-speech features, visual learning aids, and automated translation systems contribute to accommodating diverse student needs, thereby advancing the principle of equity within Islamic education. As emphasized Nurkholifah, AI holds the

[41] Ainurrafiq Dawam, Dimyati Sajari, and Rusdi Jamil, "Application of AI in Moral Education for Students," Asian Journal of Social Science and Management Technology, vol. 7, February 10, 2025, pp. 156-157. www.ajssmt.com.

[42] M Mahmudulhassan, M Muthoifin, and Sazirul Begum, "Artificial Intelligence in Multicultural Islamic Education: Opportunities, Challenges, and Ethical Considerations," Solo Universal Journal of Islamic Education and Multiculturalism 2, no. 01 (March 20, 2024), pp. 19–26, https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v2i01.114.

[43] Solein, "Interview", pp. 1-3.

[44] Dawam et.al., "Application of AI in Moral Education for Students", pp. 156-170.

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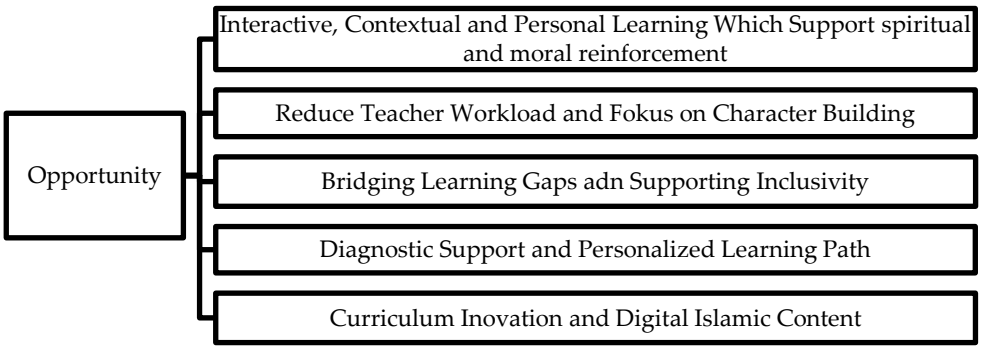
potential to narrow learning disparities among students.[45] The UNESCO roadmap supports this, arguing that responsible AI can foster fairness and learning personalization if guided by local cultural and spiritual norms.[46]

Finally, educators at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu envision broader uses of AI in curriculum innovation, developing digital Islamic modules, facilitating Qur'anic memorization apps, and simulating religious discourse for reflective thinking. As Mahmudulhassan suggests, the potential of AI in Islamic education lies not in replacing traditional pedagogical approaches but in complementing them, particularly when AI is integrated with sensitivity to moral values and designed to support rather than supplant the educator's role.[47]

In conclusion, the educators affirm that AI, when filtered through the lens of Islamic values and pedagogical ethics, can become a meaningful tool to elevate not only how Islamic knowledge is transmitted but also how it is internalized by learners. AI, in this view, is not the end of human teaching but a beginning to a more reflective, adaptive, and inclusive Islamic education.

Figure 6 Opportunities of AI in PAI Learning at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang



The opportunities identified by teachers and the principal at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang converge on the view that AI, when guided by Islamic values, can enhance learning personalization, curriculum innovation,

[45] Nurkholifah, "Interview", pp. 1-3.
[46] UNESCO, "Recommendation ...", pp. 5-43.
[47] Mahmudulhassan et.al, "Artificial Intelligence in Multicultural ...", pp. 19-26.

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and inclusivity. Both groups emphasize that AI reduces technical workload, allowing teachers to focus more on character and values education. These perceptions align with Hakim and Anggraini's assertion that AI can foster pedagogical innovation while preserving moral objectives, and with Mahmudulhassan et al.'s emphasis on embedding justice, empathy, and integrity in the adoption of technology. The school's vision of integrating AI to support Qur'anic memorization apps, digital Islamic modules, and reflective religious discourse mirrors global trends in AI-enabled values-based education, as outlined by UNESCO. This alignment suggests that the institution's readiness to use AI is consistent with best practices identified in the literature. At the same time, its emphasis on spiritual reinforcement distinguishes it from more secular-oriented models.

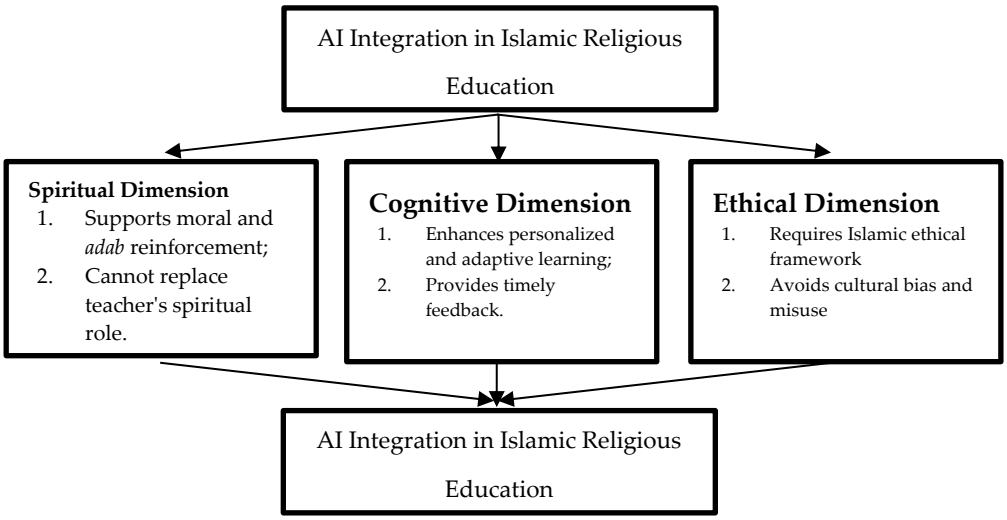

Figure 7 Impact of AI Integration on Spiritual, Cognitive, and Ethical Dimensions in Islamic Religious Education

Overall, the findings indicate that positive teacher perceptions of AI, seeing it as a supportive and adaptive tool, provide a crucial foundation for addressing ethical, infrastructural, and regulatory challenges. At the same time, these challenges have encouraged educators to think creatively and seek innovative solutions, giving rise to new opportunities in curriculum development, personalized instruction, and inclusive practices. Thus, perceptions, challenges, and opportunities should not be viewed as separate

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domains but as interrelated dynamics that collectively shape the way AI is integrated into Islamic Religious Education at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu.

Conclusion

This study examined the perceptions, challenges, and opportunities of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMA IT Mentari Ilmu Karawang, a faith-based secondary school. The findings reveal that while AI is valued for its capacity to support personalized, inclusive, and efficient learning, it cannot replace the moral and spiritual role of teachers. Key barriers include ethical concerns, limited infrastructure, and the absence of Islamic-contextualized regulation, while opportunities involve curriculum innovation, workload reduction, and adaptive instruction.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the discourse of Islamic Religious Education by advancing the conceptualization of AI in values-based education. It frames technology adoption in Islamic schooling as a process that must balance pedagogical innovation with the preservation of adab and spiritual integrity, offering a nuanced understanding that extends beyond purely technical or secular models of AI integration.

Practically, the study proposes a transferable framework for ethical and transformative AI adoption in faith-based contexts. Schools should establish Islamic value-based internal policies for AI use and develop contextualized AI training modules that embed Islamic ethics into practice. Continuous professional development is needed to address the digital literacy gap among teachers, while infrastructure upgrades should be aligned with pedagogical goals rather than technology for its own sake. Teachers can employ AI to support lesson personalization and formative assessment, while policymakers should formulate guidelines that safeguard moral principles and promote responsible innovation in Islamic education.

For future research, this study suggests the development of an Islamic AI curriculum, the piloting of an integrative AI–Adab model, and comparative studies across diverse faith-based institutions to identify scalable best practices. Such investigations will deepen understanding of how

AI can be ethically embedded in Islamic education while maintaining its transcendent values.

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