

Ethical Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education: Perspectives of Madrasah Aliyah Teachers and Students in Banjarmasin

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ABSTRACT

The growing use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in education has created new opportunities for instructional innovation while simultaneously raising concerns regarding academic integrity, cognitive dependence, information accuracy, and ethical responsibility. These concerns are particularly significant in Islamic Religious Education, where learning is directed not only toward knowledge acquisition but also toward the formation of morality, spirituality, and proper conduct. This study examines the ethical use of GenAI from the perspectives of Madrasah Aliyah teachers and students in Banjarmasin. Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, and were analyzed thematically. The findings show that teachers primarily used GenAI as a pedagogical support tool for preparing materials, contextual examples, discussion questions, and assessments, while students used it to obtain explanations, summarize content, generate ideas, and complete assignments. However, differences emerged in ethical perceptions: teachers emphasized honesty, responsibility, and the learning process, whereas students often prioritized efficiency and convenience. The study also identified risks related to uncritical copying, cognitive dependence, inaccurate religious information, and unclear boundaries of acceptable AI assistance. Responsible use therefore requires the integration of AI literacy with the Islamic principles of *ṣidq*, *amānah*, *adab*, *tabayyun*, *maṣlaḥah*, and *ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*. The study concludes that GenAI should function as a *wasīlah* that supports learning rather than replacing teachers, intellectual effort, or religious authority. Clear institutional guidelines, teacher mediation, source verification, and assessment redesign are necessary to ensure ethical and responsible AI use in *madrasah* education.

Keywords: *Generative Artificial Intelligence, Islamic Religious Education, AI Ethics, Madrasah Aliyah, Academic Integrity, Digital Literacy.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has transformed how teachers and students access information, design learning activities, and complete academic tasks. Applications such as ChatGPT can generate explanations, summaries, questions, lesson plans, and written responses within seconds. As a result, GenAI has become part of contemporary learning environments by supporting instructional planning, student engagement, assessment, and knowledge production. Its educational potential includes expanding access to resources, providing immediate feedback, supporting personalized learning, and reducing teachers' administrative workload.¹ However, its increasing use also raises important pedagogical and ethical questions concerning the appropriate boundaries of technological assistance.

Teachers commonly use GenAI to prepare learning materials, formulate assessment questions, generate contextual examples, and adapt content to students' needs. Students use it to obtain explanations, summarize texts, generate ideas, construct assignment outlines, and answer academic questions. These practices can improve efficiency and accessibility when guided by clear pedagogical purposes.² Nevertheless, GenAI may shift from functioning as a learning-support tool to becoming a task-completion mechanism when students submit AI-generated responses without analysis, verification, or meaningful intellectual engagement.

Previous studies have identified several risks associated with GenAI, including plagiarism, unclear authorship, fabricated references, algorithmic bias, privacy concerns, cognitive dependence, and reduced critical engagement. Instant responses may encourage learners to delegate intellectual responsibility to AI rather than develop arguments, evaluate evidence, or formulate answers independently.³ Teachers and students may also interpret ethical boundaries differently. Teachers generally emphasize originality, responsibility, and the learning process, whereas students may evaluate AI primarily in terms of efficiency and task completion.⁴ These differences indicate that technical competence alone is insufficient.

¹ Katia Ciampa et al., "ChatGPT in Education: Transforming Digital Literacy Practices," *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 67, no. 3 (2023): 186–95, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1310>; Enkelejda Kasneci et al., "ChatGPT for Good? On Opportunities and Challenges of Large Language Models for Education," *Learning and Individual Differences* 103 (April 2023): 102274, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2023.102274>; Xiaoming Zhai, "Transforming Teachers' Roles and Agencies in the Era of Generative AI: Perceptions, Acceptance, Knowledge, and Practices," *Journal of Science Education and Technology* 34, no. 6 (2025): 1323–33, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10956-024-10174-0>.

² Salem M. M. Al-Ghamdi et al., "Teachers' Perceptions of the Feasibility of Using Generative Artificial Intelligence in Developing Multiple-Choice Questions for Formative Assessment in Saudi Arabia," *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 25, no. 4 (2026): 160–84, <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.25.4.8>; Elena Carrión Candel et al., "Generative Artificial Intelligence in Teacher Education: Perceptions, Attitudes, and Transformative Digital Resources," *Cogent Education* 13, no. 1 (2026): 2641323, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2026.2641323>; Mohamed Soltani et al., "Promoting Generative AI Literacy among Students and Teachers," in *AI Roles and Responsibilities in Education*, ed. Stamatios Papadakis (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-96855-6_12.

³ Promethi Das Deep and Yixin Chen, "The Role of AI in Academic Writing: Impacts on Writing Skills, Critical Thinking, and Integrity in Higher Education," *Societies* 15, no. 9 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc15090247>; Prince D. N. Ncube et al., "Redefining Student Assessment in AI-Infused Learning Environments: A Systematic Review of Challenges and Strategies for Academic Integrity," *AI and Ethics* 6, no. 1 (2025): 68, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43681-025-00871-w>; Nurhamimah Rambe, "The Use of AI by Elementary Teacher Education Students: Between Innovation and Dependency," *Journal of Classroom Action Research* 4, no. 2 (2025): 60–71, <https://doi.org/10.52622/jcar.v4i2.467>.

⁴ Samia Haroud and Nadia Saqri, "Generative AI in Higher Education: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives on Support, Replacement, and Digital Literacy," *Education Sciences* 15, no. 4 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15040396>; Hillary Walker et al., "Beyond CheatBots: Examining Tensions in Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Cheating and Learning with ChatGPT," May 7, 2024, https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/14/5/500?utm_source=chatgpt.com; Misbah Yasmeen et al.,

Users also require AI literacy that enables them to understand, evaluate, and responsibly use AI-generated content.

AI literacy encompasses awareness of how AI systems operate, recognition of their limitations, critical evaluation of generated information, understanding of privacy and bias, and ethical judgment regarding appropriate use.⁵ In secondary education, this competence is particularly important because students may not yet possess the epistemic maturity needed to assess the reliability and implications of machine-generated responses.⁶ Teachers likewise need pedagogical and ethical competence to design appropriate AI-supported activities, guide students, and maintain academic integrity.⁷

These concerns become more significant in Islamic Religious Education (IRE), where learning is directed not only toward cognitive mastery but also toward the formation of faith, morality, spiritual awareness, and proper conduct. GenAI can support IRE by helping teachers develop instructional materials, contextual moral cases, assessment questions, and alternative explanations of religious concepts. Students can also use it to clarify difficult topics and expand access to Islamic learning resources.⁸ When guided appropriately, AI may also support critical thinking, moral reasoning, and reflective learning.⁹

However, the use of GenAI in IRE presents distinctive epistemological risks. AI-generated religious information may be inaccurate, decontextualized, unsupported by authoritative sources, or unable to explain differences among legal, theological, and interpretive traditions. Students may therefore accept convincing answers without examining their sources or consulting qualified teachers. This may lead to epistemic dependence in which technological fluency is mistaken for reliable religious understanding.¹⁰ Generative AI

“Generative AI in Secondary Educators’ Perspectives on Academic Learning and Integrity,” *Al-Ajazz Research Journal of Islamic Studies & Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2024): 119–28.

⁵ Stuart Marshall Bender, “Awareness of Artificial Intelligence as an Essential Digital Literacy: ChatGPT and Gen-AI in the Classroom,” *Changing English* 31, no. 2 (2024): 161–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2024.2309995>; Kelly Mills et al., *AI Literacy: A Framework to Understand, Evaluate, and Use Emerging Technology* (Digital Promise, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.51388/20.500.12265/218>.

⁶ Xiaoxuan Fang and Chenguang Du, “A Systematic Review of Empirical Studies Fostering Generative AI Literacy in Primary and Secondary Education,” in *From AI Literacy to Generative AI Literacy: Theory, Policy and Practice*, ed. Davy Tsz Kit Ng et al. (Springer Nature, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-95-0950-8_7.

⁷ Lucas Kohnke et al., “Preparing Pre-Service Teachers for Responsible Generative AI Use: Curriculum Implications for Ethics, Privacy, and AI Literacy,” *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence* 10 (June 2026): 100617, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2026.100617>; Arnab Kundu et al., “Exploring Teachers’ AI Literacy: Cognitive, Pedagogical, Ethical, and Contextual Insights from Indian Schools,” *Teaching Education* 0, no. 0 (2025): 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2025.2570227>.

⁸ Amilusholihah Amilusholihah and Narendra Jumadil Haikal Ramadhan, “Exploring The Implementation of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Education: A Systematic Literature Review,” *Ngaji: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2025): 3–17, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ngaji.v5i1.95>; Aji Setiaji, “Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education: Pedagogical Opportunities, Ethical Challenges, and Teacher Competencies,” *EDUKASIA Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 7, no. 1 (2026): 677–88, <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v7i1.2152>; Saca Suhendi et al., “The Emergence Of Chatgpt: Exploring Its Potential In Designing Islamic Religious Education Learning,” *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 02 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v13i02.5894>.

⁹ M. Agus Salim and Fajri Habibi, *AI ChatGPT Based Islamic Religious Education to Enhance Students’ Critical Thinking and Moral Reasoning* | ISLAMIKA, September 27, 2025, <https://ejournal.stitpn.ac.id/index.php/islamika/article/view/5915>; Hadi Suryanto, “Integrating Generative Artificial Intelligence into Islamic Character Education: Practices and Challenges in Indonesian Islamic School,” *EDUKASIA Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 7, no. 1 (2026): 317–32, <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v7i1.2034>.

¹⁰ Muhammad Afzainizam and Muhammad Faidhur Rahman, “Constructing Digital Religious Agency: Generative AI Literacy and Islamic Learning within the Merdeka Curriculum Framework,” *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 1 (2026): 16–32, <https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v17i1.30279>; Salsabila Mustopa et al., “ChatGPT and the Reconfiguration of Religious Authority: An Islamic Epistemological Perspective on

may assist in locating and organizing information, but it cannot replace the interpretive competence, contextual judgment, spiritual guidance, and moral example provided by teachers and Islamic scholars.

The central issue is therefore not simply whether GenAI should be used in IRE, but how its use can remain consistent with Islamic educational ethics. The principles of *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *adab* (proper conduct), *tabayyun* (verification), and *maṣlaḥah* (benefit) provide a relevant ethical foundation. Submitting unprocessed AI outputs as original work conflicts with *ṣidq* and *amānah*, while accepting religious information without verification neglects *tabayyun*. Excessive dependence may also undermine *ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*, because educational technology should strengthen rather than replace human reasoning.¹¹

This ethical orientation is consistent with the concept of *taʿdīb*, which views education as the cultivation of knowledge, morality, responsibility, and proper conduct. From this perspective, the value of GenAI cannot be measured solely by speed or productivity. Its use should also be assessed according to whether it strengthens honesty, intellectual discipline, critical reflection, and responsible relationships with knowledge. AI should therefore be positioned as a *wasīlah*—a means of supporting learning—rather than as a substitute for teachers, intellectual effort, or moral responsibility.¹²

Previous studies on AI in Islamic education generally fall into three categories. The first examines instructional potential, including lesson planning, learning resources, and assessment.¹³ The second develops normative frameworks based on Islamic ethics and *Maqāṣid al-Shariʿah*.¹⁴ The third explores teachers' and students' perceptions, although most studies are conducted in general or higher education settings.¹⁵ Empirical research that simultaneously examines teachers' and students' experiences of ethical GenAI use in secondary-level IRE remains limited.

Accordingly, this study investigates the ethical use of generative artificial intelligence in Islamic Religious Education from the perspectives of Madrasah Aliyah teachers and students in Banjarmasin. It examines how they use GenAI, how they understand its ethical

Artificial Intelligence in Education,” *IJIE International Journal of Islamic Education* 5, no. 1 (2026): 79–98, <https://doi.org/10.35719/ijie.v5i1.2659>.

¹¹ Ezieddin Elmahjub, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Islamic Ethics: Towards Pluralist Ethical Benchmarking for AI,” *Philosophy & Technology* 36, no. 4 (2023): 73, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-023-00668-x>; Ahmad Saifuddin Maʿsum and Irmawan Jauhari, “Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education: The Perspective of the Qurʿan, Hadith, and Maqāṣid al-Shariʿah in the Era of Society 5.0,” *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains, Geologi, Dan Geofisika (GeoScienceEd Journal)* 7, no. 3 (2026): 2200–2212, <https://doi.org/10.29303/goescienceed.v7i3.2021>; Jazli Zakwan Ahmad Taha et al., “The Use of Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT) in Islamic Education: An Analysis of Challenges, Opportunities, and Ethical Considerations Based on Maqasid Shariah,” *Journal of Research, Innovation, and Strategies for Education (RISE)* 2, no. 3 (2025): 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.70148/rise.v2i3.3>.

¹² Amrina Rosyada Al Hadi et al., “Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Educational Management: An Integrative Ethical Framework for Society 5.0,” *Academicus: Journal of Teaching and Learning* 5, no. 2 (2026): 240–56, <https://doi.org/10.59373/academicus.v5i2.155>; Dr Aatur Rehman, “Faithful and Responsible Artificial Intelligence: An Ethical Framework for Education, Faith Communities, and Public Life,” *Islamic Research Journal* 4 {القدوة}, no. 02 (2026): 1–17; Anggun Pamela Rizqia and Triono Ali Mustofa, “Islamic Ethics-by-Design for Artificial Intelligence: A Conceptual Framework for Digital Ethics in Islamic Education,” *Proceeding ISETH (International Summit on Science, Technology, and Humanity)*, 2025, 674–82.

¹³ Amilusholihah and Ramadhan, “Exploring The Implementation of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Education”; Setiaji, “Integrating Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education”; Suhendi et al., “THE EMERGENCE OF CHATGPT.”

¹⁴ Elmahjub, “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Islamic Ethics”; Rizqia and Mustofa, “Islamic Ethics-by-Design for Artificial Intelligence”; Taha et al., “The Use of Artificial Intelligence (ChatGPT) in Islamic Education.”

¹⁵ Haroud and Saqri, “Generative AI in Higher Education”; Kundu et al., “Exploring Teachers’ AI Literacy”; Yasmeen et al., “Generative AI in Secondary Educators’ Perspectives on Academic Learning and Integrity.”

boundaries, and what strategies are needed to ensure that it supports academic integrity, critical thinking, and Islamic educational values. The novelty of this study lies in integrating empirical teacher–student perspectives with AI literacy and the Islamic principles of *ṣidq*, *amānah*, *adab*, *tabayyun*, and *maṣlaḥah* to formulate a contextually grounded framework for responsible GenAI use in madrasah education.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine the ethical use of generative artificial intelligence in Islamic Religious Education from the perspectives of teachers and students. The research was conducted in several Madrasah Aliyah in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Participants consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers and students who had direct experience using ChatGPT or similar generative AI applications in teaching and learning activities. They were selected through purposive sampling based on their involvement in instructional planning, information searching, learning-material development, assignment completion, or classroom supervision involving generative AI.¹⁶

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews with teachers explored the purposes of AI use, perceived pedagogical benefits, supervision practices, concerns regarding academic integrity, and the reliability of AI-generated religious information. Student interviews examined their motives for using AI, the types of tasks completed with its assistance, their understanding of acceptable and unacceptable use, verification practices, and perceptions of honesty, responsibility, and technological dependence. With participants' consent, the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.¹⁷ Classroom observations focused on teacher instructions, student responses, the use and verification of AI-generated content, and forms of pedagogical supervision. Relevant documents, including lesson plans, learning materials, student assignments, assessment guidelines, school regulations, and examples of AI-generated outputs, were also examined to strengthen the contextual interpretation of the findings.

The researcher served as the primary research instrument, supported by interview guides, observation sheets, and document-analysis protocols. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The process included repeated reading of the transcripts and field notes, initial coding, grouping related codes into themes, reviewing and refining the themes, and interpreting them in relation to AI literacy, academic integrity, and Islamic educational ethics. The analysis combined inductive coding, derived from participants' experiences, with deductive interpretation using the principles of *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *adab* (proper conduct), *tabayyun* (verification), *maṣlaḥah* (beneficial use), and *ḥifẓ al-ʿaql* (protection and development of reasoning).

Trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation among teachers, students, and documents, as well as methodological triangulation across interviews, observations, and document analysis. Member checking was conducted by confirming selected interview summaries and preliminary interpretations with participants. An audit trail was maintained to document data-collection procedures, coding decisions, and theme development. Research permission was obtained from the participating madrasahs, informed consent was secured from all participants, and additional authorization was obtained for students below

¹⁶ Matthew B. Miles et al., *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 3rd ed. (SAGE Publications, 2014).

¹⁷ Hardani Hardani et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif & Kuantitatif* (CV. Pustaka Ilmu, 2020).

the age of eighteen. Participant identities and institutional information were anonymized, and all research data were stored securely.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Patterns of Generative AI Use in Islamic Religious Education

The findings show that generative artificial intelligence has become part of Islamic Religious Education learning practices in Madrasah Aliyah in Banjarmasin. Teachers and students used applications such as ChatGPT for different but interconnected purposes. Teachers generally positioned generative AI as a pedagogical support tool, whereas students used it to obtain explanations, summarize learning materials, generate ideas, prepare assignment outlines, and, in some cases, produce complete answers. Teachers primarily used generative AI during instructional preparation. Its functions included generating preliminary ideas, developing contextual examples, formulating discussion questions, simplifying explanations, and preparing assessment items. One teacher explained:

“I usually use ChatGPT to generate initial ideas for lesson materials, discussion questions, and assessment items. However, I never use the output directly because it still needs to be checked and adjusted to the curriculum, the students’ level, and the context of Islamic Religious Education.”

This statement indicates that teachers did not consider AI-generated content immediately suitable for classroom use. They continued to exercise professional judgment by checking its relevance, accuracy, language level, and consistency with curriculum objectives. The technology was therefore used to accelerate initial preparation rather than replace the pedagogical role of the teacher. Another teacher described its usefulness in developing contemporary and contextual learning materials:

“Generative AI helps me save time when preparing learning materials. For example, I can ask it to provide contemporary cases related to honesty, responsibility, or social ethics, and then I revise the examples before using them in class.”

This use reflects the potential of generative AI to connect Islamic teachings with situations that students encounter in contemporary society. In Islamic Religious Education, contextual cases can help students move beyond the memorization of concepts and apply religious values to social, academic, and digital dilemmas. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that generative AI can assist teachers in lesson planning, instructional-material development, and the design of adaptive learning activities.¹⁸ Students, meanwhile, used AI primarily as a readily accessible learning assistant. They asked ChatGPT to explain difficult concepts, simplify textbook language, provide examples, summarize lengthy materials, and organize assignments. One student stated:

“I use ChatGPT when I do not understand the explanation in the textbook. Sometimes I ask it to explain the material in simpler language or provide an example that is easier to understand.”

Such use demonstrates the potential of AI to support differentiated learning. Students who find formal textbook explanations difficult can obtain alternative explanations suited to their level of understanding. This can encourage independent learning outside classroom hours, provided that the generated information is evaluated and connected to reliable sources. Another student explained:

¹⁸ Suhendi et al., “THE EMERGENCE OF CHATGPT”; Zhai, “Transforming Teachers’ Roles and Agencies in the Era of Generative AI.”

“I usually use AI to summarize long materials and help me prepare an assignment outline. It is useful because I can obtain the main points quickly before reading the material in more detail.”

In this example, AI functions as a form of cognitive scaffolding. It helps the student identify the structure of a topic before undertaking more detailed reading. This pattern can be considered pedagogically constructive because the technology supports, rather than replaces, the subsequent learning process. Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that some students used AI primarily as a task-completion tool. When assignment deadlines approached, they sometimes requested complete answers and submitted them after making only limited changes. One student acknowledged:

“When the assignment deadline is close, I sometimes ask ChatGPT to provide a complete answer. I usually change several sentences, but I admit that I do not always check all the information carefully.”

This practice demonstrates a shift from supportive use to substitutive use. Rather than helping students understand a topic, AI replaces parts of the reading, reasoning, and writing process. The educational value of generative AI therefore depends not merely on whether it is used, but on how it is integrated into students’ cognitive activities. Rambe (2025)¹⁹ and Ncube et al. (2025)²⁰ similarly warn that AI can either strengthen learning or encourage cognitive dependence, depending on whether learners remain intellectually engaged with the task.

Teachers responded to this challenge through different forms of supervision. Some required students to compare AI-generated answers with textbooks, explain the answers orally, or disclose the use of AI. One teacher stated:

“I allow students to use AI as a learning aid, but they must compare the answer with their textbook or another reliable source. I also ask them to explain the answer orally so that I can see whether they really understand it.”

This strategy shifts assessment from product evaluation to process verification. Oral explanation helps teachers determine whether students have understood, revised, and internalized the generated information. It also discourages the submission of unprocessed AI outputs.

Overall, three patterns of generative AI use were identified: pedagogical preparation by teachers, learning support for students, and task completion by students. The first two patterns can improve efficiency and access to learning when accompanied by critical evaluation. The third pattern presents a greater risk because it may reduce intellectual engagement and obscure students’ actual contributions. The findings therefore suggest that generative AI should be integrated as a scaffold for explanation, inquiry, and reflection rather than as an automatic answer-producing mechanism.

Ethical Tensions in Teachers’ and Students’ Use of Generative AI

The findings reveal significant differences between teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the ethical boundaries of generative AI. Teachers generally evaluated AI use through the principles of honesty, responsibility, learning objectives, and character formation. Students, however, frequently interpreted its acceptability through practical considerations, such as efficiency, convenience, and the absence of explicit prohibition.

¹⁹ Rambe, “The Use of AI by Elementary Teacher Education Students.”

²⁰ Ncube et al., “Redefining Student Assessment in AI-Infused Learning Environments.”

Teachers considered the direct submission of AI-generated work without acknowledgment or meaningful revision to be academically dishonest. One teacher explained:

“The ethical problem begins when students copy an AI-generated answer and submit it as if it were entirely their own work. The issue is not only plagiarism but also honesty and responsibility in the learning process.”

This statement indicates that the ethical issue is broader than textual similarity. The central concern is the misrepresentation of intellectual effort. A student may submit a grammatically original text generated by AI, yet still act dishonestly by presenting the work as the outcome of independent thought. From the perspective of Islamic educational ethics, such practice conflicts with *ṣidq* and *amānah*. *Ṣidq* requires truthfulness regarding the origin and process of academic work, while *amānah* requires students to fulfil the responsibility entrusted to them through learning tasks. Assignments are designed not only to produce correct answers but also to develop understanding, reasoning, and discipline. Another teacher emphasized this process-oriented dimension:

“An assignment is not merely about producing the correct answer. It is intended to train students to read, think, and construct an argument. When the whole process is handed over to AI, the educational purpose is lost.”

This finding reinforces the idea that academic ethics cannot be separated from pedagogical purpose. AI use becomes problematic when it enables learners to obtain the final product without undergoing the intended intellectual process. Students did not always immediately recognize this distinction. One student stated:

“At first, I thought using ChatGPT was the same as searching on Google. I did not realize that copying a complete AI response without mentioning it could be considered academically dishonest.”

This response shows that students may perceive AI as an information-retrieval tool rather than as a system capable of generating substantial academic content. The boundary between searching, receiving assistance, and outsourcing authorship may therefore remain unclear. Another student explained:

“I think using AI is acceptable as long as the teacher does not prohibit it. However, I am still unsure about how much of the AI-generated answer may be used and whether we must mention it in the assignment.”

This uncertainty reflects the absence of clear institutional guidelines. When teachers apply different standards, students may evaluate ethical acceptability based on whether an activity has been explicitly prohibited rather than on whether it supports the learning objectives. This finding aligns with Walker et al. (2024)²¹ and Yasmeen et al. (2024),²² who show that teachers and students often hold different understandings of cheating and legitimate AI assistance.

²¹ Hillary Walker et al., “Beyond CheatBots: Examining Tensions in Teachers’ and Students’ Perceptions of Cheating and Learning with ChatGPT.”

²² Yasmeen et al., “Generative AI in Secondary Educators’ Perspectives on Academic Learning and Integrity.”

A further ethical issue concerns cognitive dependence. Teachers observed that some students consulted AI before attempting to read, reflect, or answer independently. One teacher stated:

“Some students immediately open ChatGPT before trying to answer the question themselves. If this habit continues, they may become less confident in their own thinking and increasingly dependent on instant answers.”

This dependence was also acknowledged by students:

“Sometimes I become too dependent on AI because it gives an answer immediately. When I try to answer without it, I feel slower and less confident, even though I know that I should think independently first.”

Cognitive dependence does not simply refer to frequent use. It occurs when students repeatedly transfer intellectual decisions to AI and gradually lose the habit of independent reasoning. In Islamic Religious Education, this is especially significant because learning involves reflection, moral judgment, and the interpretation of religious teachings in different contexts. The principle of *ḥifẓ al-‘aql* offers an important ethical perspective. The protection of reason includes developing intellectual capacity and preventing practices that weaken independent judgment. From this perspective, AI is ethically beneficial when it stimulates questions, comparison, and reflection. It becomes problematic when it replaces the cognitive activities that education is expected to cultivate. Not all students used AI passively. Some had begun to revise generated responses, consult textbooks, and use AI only as a preliminary reference. One student explained:

“Now I try to use AI only as an initial reference. I rewrite the answer in my own words and compare it with the textbook or the teacher’s explanation before submitting the assignment.”

This practice reflects emerging ethical and critical awareness. Rewriting alone is not sufficient, but combining revision with source comparison and understanding demonstrates a more responsible form of AI-assisted learning. The findings suggest that ethical guidance should be operational rather than merely normative. Students need explicit explanations of when AI may be used, how much assistance is acceptable, how its contribution should be acknowledged, and which learning tasks require independent work. As one teacher noted:

“Students need clear guidance about when AI may be used, what kind of assistance is acceptable, and how its use should be acknowledged. Without clear rules, they may not understand the difference between assistance and dishonesty.”

Therefore, the main ethical boundary does not lie in AI use itself but in the transfer and concealment of intellectual responsibility. AI use becomes unethical when learners submit unprocessed outputs, hide substantial assistance, fail to understand their work, or allow technology to replace the intellectual effort required by the task. Responsible use requires honesty, disclosure, critical engagement, and continued human accountability.

Verification, Religious Authority, and an Islamic Ethical Framework for Responsible AI Use

The findings also reveal that generative AI raises distinctive epistemological concerns in Islamic Religious Education. Unlike general educational content, religious knowledge is closely connected to authoritative sources, interpretive methodologies, scholarly traditions, and contextual judgment. Teachers expressed concern that AI-generated answers could be

inaccurate, incomplete, unsupported by clear evidence, or insensitive to differences among Islamic legal and theological traditions.²³ One teacher stated:

“Religious answers generated by AI cannot be accepted immediately. Information about Islamic law, Qur’anic interpretation, or hadith must be checked against authoritative books, reliable scholars, and appropriate scholarly methods.”

This statement emphasizes that religious information requires more than linguistic plausibility. A response may appear coherent while lacking methodological validity or reliable attribution. Generative AI can produce answers that combine different scholarly opinions without identifying their origins or differences. Another teacher described a concrete example:

“I once found an AI response that mentioned a hadith but did not provide a clear source. The wording sounded convincing, but after checking it, the reference was inaccurate. This is why students must be trained to verify religious information.”

This example illustrates the risk of fabricated or inaccurate religious references. The confident style of AI-generated text can obscure uncertainty and encourage users to accept its output as authoritative. This supports the argument of Mustopa et al. (2026)²⁴ that conversational AI may reshape perceptions of religious authority by offering immediate and apparently comprehensive answers. Students also recognized this difficulty. One student explained:

“The difficulty is that AI answers usually sound confident. As a student, I cannot always determine whether the explanation is correct, especially when it discusses differences in Islamic law or interpretation.”

This finding shows that students’ ability to access religious information through AI may exceed their ability to assess its validity. Technological access without epistemic literacy can therefore create a false sense of understanding. Some students attempted to address the problem through source comparison and consultation with teachers:

“When ChatGPT gives an answer about religion, I usually compare it with the textbook. If the answer is different or unclear, I ask the teacher because I do not want to use incorrect religious information.”

This practice embodies the principle of *tabayyun*, which requires verification before information is accepted or disseminated. In the context of AI-assisted Islamic learning, *tabayyun* involves checking Qur’anic verses, hadith references, textbooks, scholarly works, and explanations from qualified teachers. The findings confirm that teachers retain an essential epistemic and moral role. One teacher stated:

²³ Fuad Hasyim et al., “Students’ Level of Understanding of Fiqh Ubudiyah and Its Implications in Daily Life,” *Al-Munawwarah: Journal of Islamic Education* 1, no. 2 (2025): 180–88, <https://doi.org/10.38073/almunawwarah.v1i2.3802>.

²⁴ Mustopa et al., “ChatGPT and the Reconfiguration of Religious Authority”; Muhamad Abdul Muid et al., “Information Evaluation Skills in the Era of ChatGPT: Implications for Academic Writing and Language Education,” *Locana: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 50–67, <https://doi.org/10.67245/locana.v1i1.21>.

“AI may help students obtain an initial explanation, but it cannot replace the teacher. A teacher provides context, explains differences of opinion, corrects misunderstandings, and guides students in applying religious values.”

Similarly, a student explained:

“Discussion with the teacher is still necessary because AI sometimes gives a general answer, while the teacher explains the background, the source, and why scholars may have different opinions.”

These responses demonstrate that AI and teachers should not be positioned as competing authorities. AI may support initial exploration, whereas teachers provide validation, contextual interpretation, pedagogical judgment, and moral guidance. Based on the findings, responsible generative AI use in Islamic Religious Education can be structured through six interconnected principles. The first is purposeful use, meaning that AI should support defined learning objectives rather than merely accelerate task completion. The second is honesty and disclosure, requiring users to acknowledge substantial AI assistance and avoid misrepresenting generated work as independent authorship.

The third is critical engagement, which requires students to analyze, revise, and develop AI-generated information. The fourth is verification through *tabayyun*, requiring religious and academic claims to be checked against authoritative sources. The fifth is teacher mediation, positioning educators as instructional guides, ethical supervisors, and validators of religious knowledge. The sixth is human responsibility, emphasizing that the user remains accountable for the final content and consequences of AI-assisted work. One teacher summarized these principles:

“Responsible use of AI should be based on honesty, verification, and benefit. Students should acknowledge its use, examine the information, and ensure that the technology supports their thinking rather than replaces it.”

These principles are grounded in the Islamic values of *ṣidq*, *amānah*, *adab*, *tabayyun*, *maṣlaḥah*, and *ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*. *Ṣidq* regulates honesty in authorship and disclosure. *Amānah* emphasizes responsibility for learning. *Adab* governs the learner’s relationship with teachers, sources, and knowledge. *Tabayyun* requires verification, while *maṣlaḥah* evaluates whether technology produces meaningful educational benefit. *Ḥifẓ al-ʿaql* ensures that AI strengthens rather than weakens reasoning. At the institutional level, the findings reveal the need for clear madrasah policies. One teacher stated: *“The madrasah needs a clear guideline on AI use. The guideline should regulate acceptable assistance, disclosure, source verification, data privacy, and the teacher’s role in supervising students.”* A student similarly expressed the need for consistent rules:

“I would find it helpful if the school provided clear rules. At present, different teachers have different expectations, so students are sometimes confused about what is allowed and what is considered cheating.”

Madrasah guidelines should therefore define acceptable and unacceptable AI assistance, establish disclosure procedures, protect personal data, and require verification of religious information. Assessment should also emphasize personal reflection, oral explanation, contextual application, and source evaluation so that students cannot rely solely on generated answers. Overall, generative AI should be positioned as a *wasīlah* rather than a *ghāyah* or an independent source of religious authority. Its ethical value depends on whether it strengthens understanding, critical reasoning, honesty, and beneficial knowledge. An

Islamic ethical approach does not reject AI but places its use within a framework of human responsibility, scholarly verification, teacher mediation, and the moral objectives of Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that generative artificial intelligence has become part of Islamic Religious Education practices in Madrasah Aliyah in Banjarmasin. Teachers primarily use generative AI as a pedagogical support tool for developing materials, contextual examples, discussion questions, and assessments, while students use it to obtain explanations, summarize content, generate ideas, and complete assignments. Its educational value depends on whether it supports meaningful learning or replaces the intellectual processes of reading, reasoning, verification, and independent writing.

The findings also reveal different ethical orientations between teachers and students. Teachers tend to evaluate AI use through academic honesty, responsibility, learning objectives, and character formation, whereas students often assess it according to efficiency, convenience, and the absence of explicit restrictions. Responsible use should therefore be grounded in the Islamic principles of *ṣidq*, *amānah*, *adab*, *tabayyun*, *maṣlaḥah*, and *ḥifẓ al-‘aql*. These principles require users to disclose substantial AI assistance, critically examine generated content, verify religious information through authoritative sources, and ensure that AI strengthens rather than weakens human reasoning.

The study concludes that generative AI should be positioned as a *wasīlah* that supports learning rather than as a substitute for teachers, intellectual effort, or religious authority. Madrasahs need clear institutional guidelines governing acceptable AI assistance, disclosure, source verification, academic integrity, data privacy, and teacher supervision. They should also strengthen teachers' and students' AI literacy and redesign assessments to emphasize reflection, oral explanation, source evaluation, and contextual application. Future studies may compare different madrasahs or employ mixed methods to examine the relationship between ethical AI literacy, academic integrity, critical thinking, and religious understanding.

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