

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CIVIC EDUCATION TEACHERS IN PREVENTING MORAL DECLINE AMONG STUDENTS AT STABAT STATE VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL 1 IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

Moral decline has become a growing concern in education during the digital era, particularly among adolescents in vocational high schools. This study aims to explore the contributions of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in addressing students' moral decline at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, interviews with 5 PAI teachers and 8 students, and documentation. The data were analyzed using techniques of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that PAI teachers contribute significantly by habituating students to pray before and after lessons, embedding Islamic values in digital behavior, teaching critical digital literacy, encouraging ethical and productive use of technology, promoting tolerance, and fostering responsibility. A key finding highlights that consistent religious habituation combined with digital literacy education helps build students' ethical resilience. Obstacles faced include limited student understanding of social media ethics and low parental engagement. Overall, PAI teachers serve as moral guides who integrate religious principles with digital awareness to counteract moral degradation in the digital age.

Keywords: *Contribution of PAI Teachers, Moral decline, Student, Digital Era*

A. Introduction

In the world of education, developing students' morals is a fundamental goal that must be prioritized by every educator, particularly Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers. Morality is the foundation for students' character and behavior, shaping how they interact in society. However, in the context of SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, indications of moral decline among students have become increasingly visible. These include lack of respect for teachers, undisciplined behavior, and inappropriate use of digital media. Such conditions are exacerbated by students' limited understanding of Islamic values and weak parental control in the digital environment. Given these challenges, the role of PAI teachers in shaping students' moral awareness becomes even more strategic. This study seeks to explore the specific contributions of PAI teachers in addressing moral issues faced by students in this vocational school setting, especially in responding to the moral challenges of the digital era.

The teaching profession is considered noble due to its willingness to dedicate itself to guiding and shaping the character of the nation's next generation. Law Number 14 of 2005, Article 1 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, states that teachers are professional educators with the primary responsibility to educate, teach, guide, direct, and train students, as well as to assess and evaluate their learning. (Safitri, 2019). The contribution of Islamic Education teachers in the digital era is to guide and guide students so they can develop well (Oktavia & Khotimah, 2023). Teachers have an important role in facilitating learning (Akhyar dkk, 2024). Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers have the primary responsibility to shape morals and teach legal norms related to behavioral values on social media, while simultaneously instilling an awareness of individual responsibility for their actions, both in this world and in the hereafter. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers instill moral values through habituating worship, providing examples, strengthening faith, and guiding students to be able to control themselves from the negative influences of technology and social media. (Vernando & Junaidi, 2024).

Teachers are an educational element that has the responsibility to change students besides that, they are also the most important in developing students' knowledge. (Mujiono & Bahrudin, 2022). Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, in particular, are expected to understand the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of students socially, culturally, and psychologically to design more effective approaches to moral development (Azimi, 2022). In the era of digitalization, PAI teachers are also increasingly utilizing social media and digital technology to innovate in teaching, supervision, and the delivery of materials that are both engaging and accessible (Munawaroh & Khoiri, 2025). Moral decline among adolescents has become a concerning phenomenon, marked by a weakening of ethical values, diminished respect for authority, and increased exposure to negative influences from digital media.

Adolescence, as a transitional and identity-forming stage, is highly vulnerable to these shifts. While previous studies have broadly examined the role of teachers in moral education, there remains a limited number of studies that specifically explore how PAI teachers respond to and manage moral challenges in vocational school environments, such as SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, especially in the context of students' daily interactions with digital media. This research aims to fill that gap by investigating the concrete contributions and strategies employed by PAI teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat in preventing moral decline among students in the digital era. Unlike prior studies that tend to discuss moral education in general terms, this study offers a contextual and practical focus on how moral formation is implemented at the school level through religious instruction, digital adaptation, and teacher-student interaction.

The rise in moral degradation among adolescents today is influenced by various factors, including the role of family or parents, the surrounding environment (both inside and outside of school), technological advances in the digital age, and adolescents' intense curiosity (Eka Fitria Ningsih dkk, 2023). According to Heri Gunawan, the term "moral"

comes from the Latin "mores," meaning customs. In Indonesian, "moral" is translated as "susila," so morality can be understood as something related to rules and behavior that judge something as right or wrong (Supriatna dkk, 2014). Morals are a person's actions, behavior, or words when interacting with others. If these actions align with societal values and are accepted and have a positive impact on their surroundings, then the person is considered to have good morals. Conversely, if they are not, they are considered less good. Morals are the result of cultural and religious influences (Rubini, 2019). Morals are or efforts made to make human children moral or humane (Sinurat dkk, 2022).

Therefore, morals are closely related to the behavior a person exhibits in everyday life. Morals can also be defined as the attitudes, actions, or behaviors a person displays when attempting to do something based on their experiences. Morals are forms of politeness, customs, traditions, and rules of behavior that have become customary for members of a culture. Morals can also be defined as a set of values that govern various types of behavior and must be adhered. Morals are the benchmarks used by society to determine good and bad actions or human society as human beings. (Susanti & Amri, 2019). Meanwhile, Imam Ghazali considers that character is more closely related to morality, namely as spontaneity in behavior or actions that are inherent and integrated within a person, so that when they appear, these actions are carried out without needing to be thought about first. (Gunawan, 2022). Based on the definitions above, morality can be interpreted as a set of values, norms, or principles that govern human behavior, distinguishing between good and bad, right and wrong. These moral values are usually influenced by religious teachings, culture, and social norms within a community.

As stipulated in the 1945 Constitution Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, education is viewed as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning process and a supportive environment so that students can actively develop their potential. Through education, students are expected to acquire noble character, good personality, spiritual strength, intelligence, self-control, and adequate social skills. (Amelia & Chairunnisa, 2019). The implementation of moral education is largely the responsibility of religious teachers. The material taught is not only aimed at developing intelligent individuals, but also at developing individuals with noble morals and character. Good morals are expected to foster enthusiasm and interest in continuing to seek knowledge (Muhammad Rishan dkk, 2024). Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, as educators, have a significant responsibility in shaping students' personalities and morals. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, morality is not only seen as an ethical aspect but also as part of religious teachings. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers need to design strategies that can instill moral values in accordance with Islamic law in students. These strategies should encompass a variety of methods and approaches relevant to the students (Bascanti Ritonga, 2024).

The contribution of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers is especially crucial in shaping students' character and preventing moral decline. While all teachers carry the

responsibility of instilling discipline and promoting positive values, PAI teachers hold a unique and strategic role in guiding students' moral and spiritual development through a religious framework. Their responsibilities go beyond delivering academic content they are also tasked with internalizing religious teachings that directly shape students' behavior, attitudes, and ethics (Betha Agustian dkk, 2024).

Islamic education teachers are expected not only to share knowledge, provide motivation, and convey information regarding Islamic values, but also to serve as role models and moral educators who consistently conduct evaluations, provide direction, guidance, and foster spiritual awareness in students. Through structured religious learning, spiritual mentoring, and integration of Islamic ethics in everyday school life, PAI teachers contribute in ways that are distinct from other subject teachers. Their approach includes the inculcation of values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), responsibility (*amānah*), respect (*ta'āwun*), and discipline (*iṣlāḥ*), which are essential in counteracting the moral challenges faced by students in the digital era.

Therefore, the professional conduct and pedagogical attitude of PAI teachers, aligned with Islamic teachings and professional standards, play a decisive role in shaping students' moral integrity. In this context, the moral decline among adolescents manifested in attitudes such as disrespect, dishonesty, and social deviance requires a preventive and curative approach that is rooted in religious education. This positions PAI teachers as central agents in the moral safeguarding of students in contemporary educational settings.

The rapid development of technology and information technology has a significant impact on the behavior of adolescents, including high school students. Unlimited access to information often leads some students to be influenced by negative content that can damage moral values, such as promiscuity, brawls, lack of ethics, and reduced spiritual and social awareness (Kurniawan dkk, 2023). This poses a serious challenge to the world of education, particularly in shaping students' morals. Today, life presents a variety of phenomena, one of which is related to morals. Amidst the advancement of the Industry 4.0 era, many foreign cultures have entered and exerted influences, both positive and negative (Bahri, 2015). Social media often displays content that is inconsistent with positive moral values. Students can be exposed to negative behaviors such as cyberbullying, hate speech, and the spread of false information, which can potentially influence their views on morality. Exposure to unfiltered digital media, misinformation, and the influx of foreign values can lead to a crisis of trust, hedonism, and a weakening of moral convictions among students. (Gkeredakis, 2021). Moral decline itself is the loss of character, attitudes and behavior related to a person's goodness.

A glamorous and luxurious lifestyle, which has become the benchmark of success in the eyes of the younger generation, has led to a decline in morals among teenagers (Uzma & Masyithoh, 2024), lack of religious understanding which causes loss of self-control by parents, the influx of materialistic, hedonistic and secular lifestyles and the influence of information technology, such as cell phones, computers and social media (Syamsu, 2016),

This is a concern that must be met and resolved immediately. The decline in ethics and morals can be influenced by family factors, school and insight, deviant beliefs, culture (Hudi dkk, 2024). Therefore, to address this moral decline, collaboration between parents, schools, and the community is needed to provide moral education that aligns with technological developments and digital ethics. With the right approach, students can use technology wisely while maintaining positive moral values. By utilizing the internet and various types of hardware, anyone can realize their desires relatively quickly. The emergence of the digital world has changed and made many things easier for students (Khoiriyah, 2024).

They are brought into a situation where they can enjoy the various facilities available on the internet. Currently, the world of education is facing various challenges experienced by students during their teenage years, one of which is the issue of moral decline. This term refers to the weakening of moral values and character among adolescents. This problem is found across all levels of society, with adolescents being the most vulnerable group. Adolescence itself is a stage of life that is heavily influenced by experiences from childhood and also impacts life in adulthood. (Ekasari & Mia Fatma, 2022). Therefore, negative actions and deviant behavior displayed by adolescents or students reflect a moral decline, which is inseparable from the influence of current culture and social conditions.

The rapid development of digital technology in the 21st century has not only brought positive impacts but also raised concerns about the moral degradation of students, particularly among Generation Z. Excessive exposure to digital content, social media, and the internet has influenced students' behavior, often resulting in a decline in values such as respect, honesty, discipline, and responsibility. This phenomenon is increasingly worrying as it affects the attitudes and actions of students both in and outside the school environment.

Character education has become an important agenda in addressing this issue. One key component in character education within schools is Islamic Religious Education (PAI), which specifically aims to internalize Islamic values and guide students in moral and spiritual development. While all teachers play a role in building character, PAI teachers have a unique position in preventing moral decline through a religious and ethical framework. Their role includes not only transferring knowledge but also shaping behavior, mentoring students spiritually, and embedding Islamic ethics into daily school life.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of integrating character education into the management of Islamic education. For example, research conducted by (Hasan, 2024) found that character education embedded within curriculum content, extracurricular activities, and school culture can significantly influence students' moral development. This underscores the necessity for a systematic and value-based educational approach, especially for school-aged children who are still in the formative phase of personality and moral development. Based on preliminary observations at SMK Negeri 1

Stabat, it was found that students face moral challenges such as lack of discipline, low respect for teachers, and negative influence from online media. In this context, the role of PAI teachers becomes increasingly important as moral educators who can serve as role models and spiritual mentors for students in confronting the challenges of the digital age.

Based on the background described above, the research problem can be formulated as follows. What is the contribution of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in preventing moral decline among students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat in the digital era. The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the contribution of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in preventing moral decline in students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat in the digital era.

B. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the contribution of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in preventing student moral decline in the digital age. The research method used is field research, which is research conducted directly on-site to examine social phenomena contextually. The informants in this study consisted of the principal, two PAI teachers, and six students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat.

Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which involves intentionally selecting informants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The informant selection criteria included: (1) experience or direct involvement in the Islamic Religious Education learning process, (2) understanding the students' moral situations and conditions, and (3) willingness to provide open and in-depth information. Data collection was conducted through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to observe interactions between teachers and students during the PAI learning process and students' moral behavior in the school environment.

Interviews were conducted semi-structured to explore the views, experiences, and strategies implemented by PAI teachers in fostering student morality. Documentation was used to collect secondary data, such as syllabi, teaching materials, school regulations, and photographs of religious activities or moral development. The data obtained were analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman, which involves three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis process was conducted reflectively and continuously during and after data collection, paying attention to the dynamics of interactions between researchers and informants to maintain exploratory depth and data validity. collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Finding

Based on the results of observations, interviews and documentation at State Vocational School 1 Stabat, several contributions of Islamic Religious Education teachers can be obtained in preventing the decline in student morals in the digital era:

Praying before and after studying

Praying before studying is usually done at the beginning of the morning before the first lesson begins. The Islamic Religious Education teacher enters the classroom and instructs students to sit quietly and reverently. Afterward, a student or class representative leads the class in saluting and praying together. This activity is a routine practice at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat. Prayer fosters students' spiritual attitudes, accustoms them to relying on God in all their activities, and instills the values of sincerity, earnestness, and gratitude in the learning process. The prayer recited before studying by students at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat is as follows.

عِلْمًا، وَارْزُقْنِي فَهْمًا، وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ هُمْ زِ اللّٰهُمَّ

Meaning: *O Allah, increase me in knowledge, and grant me the grace to understand it, and make me among the righteous.*

The post-lesson prayer is held after all learning activities have concluded. Students are invited to return to their seats quietly and recite a prayer as an expression of gratitude for the knowledge gained. The prayer also includes a request that the knowledge gained be beneficial for the students' lives and futures. This habit of prayer is indirectly encouraged to teach students that there is nothing more noble than prayer.

Similarly, an interview with a religious education teacher at State Vocational School 1 Stabat stated:

Students at State Vocational School 1 Stabat are encouraged to pay respects and pray before and after lessons.

Prayer has many meanings, particularly in the explanation of the Asmaul Husana (the Beautiful Names of Allah). Prayers are frequently mentioned in the Quran, each with a specific meaning, as in Surah Yunus 106:

الظَّالِمِينَ مِّنْ إِذَا فَاِنَّكَ فَعَلْتَ فَاِنَّ يَضُرُّكَ وَلَا يَنْفَعُكَ لَا مَا لِلّٰهِا دُونَ مِنْ تَدْعُ وَلَا

Meaning: *And do not worship something that does not benefit you and does not (also) bring disaster to you other than Allah, because if you do (that), then indeed you will be one of the wrongdoers."*

Allah explained to the Prophet SAW the prohibition on praying and worshiping other than Allah, because only Allah is able to provide benefits and harms, as well as

pleasure and trouble both in this world and in the afterlife. If the Apostle did this, then he would be among those who wronged himself. There is no sin greater than shirk, because people who commit shirk hand over human affairs to other than Allah. Therefore, return to Allah and pray only to Him, because prayer is a very important worship, it is even considered the core of all worship. (Al-Quran-Kementarian Agama, 2015). Prayer according to (Mufidah, 2019), "Istighasah" also means asking for help, assistance, requesting, supplication, conversation, calling, and praise.

Pedagogically, (Betha Agustian et al, 2024) state that the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers extends beyond delivering religious material, but also provides comprehensive spiritual habits, training, and guidance. Islamic Religious Education teachers are at the forefront of shaping students' religious habits within the school environment. By accustoming students to prayer, Islamic Religious Education teachers instill the values of sincerity, earnestness, and submission to God. Prayer also creates a psychological state of calm and readiness to receive learning, as explained by Al-Ghazali, who argued that peace of mind is a prerequisite for the entry of knowledge into the soul (Al-Ghazali, Ihya' 'Ulumuddin). The habit of praying before and after class at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat is not simply a formal routine, but rather a character education strategy imbued with spiritual and pedagogical significance. This activity has been shown to positively impact the development of students' religious character, particularly in areas such as gratitude, peace of mind, awareness of dependence on God, and readiness to learn. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a central role in maintaining the consistency of this practice through role modeling, guidance, and reinforcement of Islamic values.

Essentially, the teacher emphasized the importance of students praying at the beginning and end of activities. Prayer is considered essential for building students' Islamic character, particularly in the spiritual and religious aspects of learning. Through prayer, students express gratitude, ask for help, and acknowledge their dependence on Allah. Through prayer, students become calmer and more prepared to face the learning that lies ahead.

Instilling Islamic values in digital life

In today's modern era, digital life has become an integral part of daily activities. The use of technologies such as social media, the internet, and various digital platforms is increasingly widespread, especially among the younger generation. Therefore, teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, consistently instill Islamic values in their students in every aspect of life, ensuring that technology usage remains steadfast in religious and moral principles.

Islamic values such as honesty, politeness, respect, and responsibility must be applied in digital interactions. For example, when communicating on social media, individuals are encouraged to use polite language, avoid slander, and refrain from spreading false news (hoaxes). Furthermore, it is crucial to maintain privacy and respect

the rights of others, in accordance with Islamic teachings regarding maintaining the honor of oneself and others.

Finding 1: The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Instilling Islamic Values in the Digital Era

Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat play an active role in guiding students to use technology wisely and in accordance with Islamic teachings.

"I always emphasize to students the importance of behaving according to Islamic teachings, including in cyberspace." (Interview, Islamic Religious Education Teacher, SMK Negeri 1 Stabat)

Interpretation:

Teachers not only teach religious material theoretically, but also apply it in the context of digital life, to protect students from ethical deviations on social media.

Finding 2: Islamic Values Emphasized in Digital Interactions

Values such as honesty, courtesy, mutual respect, and responsibility are emphasized in the use of digital media.

"Students are encouraged to use polite language, refrain from spreading hoaxes, and respect the privacy of others." (PAI Activity Documentation)

Interpretation:

Teachers strive to internalize Islamic values as guidelines for digital ethics, in line with the Islamic principle of maintaining the honor of oneself and others.

Finding 3: Digital Challenges to Student Morality

Ease of access to digital information brings challenges in the form of the spread of negative content and the erosion of ethical communication.

"Today's children are indeed technologically advanced, but the challenges are significant. Therefore, we must frequently remind them to adhere to Islamic morals." (Interview, Islamic Religious Education Teacher)

Interpretation:

Teachers recognize that digital literacy alone is not enough; it requires mentoring with moral and religious values so that students can filter information wisely.

This finding aligns with (Mulyana, 2004). view that values education encompasses the habit of acting based on norms of truth and goodness. It also aligns with Ahmad & Manusia (2018), who emphasize the importance of equipping students with practical knowledge in navigating the digital era. The Prophet Muhammad's hadith, "I was sent to perfect noble morals" (Narrated by Ahmad: 8952), serves as religious reinforcement that technology use must be accompanied by noble morals.

Based on the results of interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, it was revealed that the younger generation although proficient in digital technology faces various moral challenges such as exposure to hoaxes, hate speech, and online bullying. The teacher explained:

"The younger generation, who are very familiar with digital technology, brings many conveniences, but also challenges, such as the spread of negative information and a lack of ethical behavior in

interactions. Therefore, I always emphasize to my students the importance of behaving according to Islamic teachings, even in the virtual world."

One of the methods used to instill Islamic values is starting and ending each class session with prayer. This practice is not merely ritualistic, but serves as a consistent reminder for students to maintain spiritual consciousness before engaging in any activity including their interaction in digital spaces. The spiritual routine fosters internal awareness (*muraqabah*), which strengthens self-control when using social media or digital platforms.

This aligns with (Mulyana, 2004). who emphasized that value education involves guiding students to consistently act based on truth, goodness, and beauty. Spiritual practices such as prayer help in anchoring students' digital behavior to moral consciousness. For example, students are taught that using polite language, avoiding slander, refraining from spreading hoaxes, and respecting others' privacy are not just social norms, but reflections of Islamic virtues. Ahmad & Manusia (2018) argue that integrating Islamic values in digital interactions equips students with both ethical and practical competencies in navigating online spaces. The prophetic hadith "*I was sent to perfect noble morals*" (HR. Ahmad: 8952) becomes a guiding principle not just in real life, but also in virtual interactions. Thus, through the integration of consistent spiritual practices such as prayer, moral reminders, and ethical instruction, students develop greater self-restraint and responsibility in the digital realm. They are not only digitally literate, but also morally grounded.

Islamic values in the digital world according to (Ahmad & Manusia, 2018) bringing students with various knowledge and virtues, both practical knowledge, welfare, social environment, and social media. As stated in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW which explains that *"I was sent to perfect noble morals."* (HR. Ahmad: 8952) (Al-Qaradhawi, 2022). This hadith emphasizes that the primary mission of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not merely to convey revelation, but also to perfect and instill noble morals in the lives of mankind. These morals encompass all human behavior and attitudes, both in real life and in the virtual (digital) world. Therefore, it can be concluded that this hadith reminds us that technology is merely a tool. Morals determine whether technology is used for good or evil. Therefore, as Muslims, we must continue to instill and practice Islamic values in our digital lives. The virtual world is not free from real challenges that arise, and noble morals are the difference between digital users who are merely intelligent and those who are truly faithful.

Teaching critical digital literacy

In today's digital era, digital literacy skills are crucial for students, especially those in vocational high schools (SMK), which prepare students for a world of work that increasingly relies on technology. They also emphasize the development of critical thinking and a deep understanding of information obtained digitally. Students are taught

how to distinguish valid and reliable information from hoaxes or misleading information, as well as how to maintain ethics and security in the digital age.

During the learning process, teachers use various interactive methods, such as discussions, case studies, and simulations of real-world situations in the digital world. This aims to ensure that students become active, critical, and responsible users of technology, not merely passive users.

This is in line with the results of an interview with the Principal who said:

Critical digital literacy is crucial, especially in today's era where information spreads rapidly through digital media. Students are taught not only to use technology but also to distinguish between true information and hoaxes or untrustworthy information. This also aligns with religious values, which include always seeking the truth and avoiding the spread of misinformation.

As in the history of Sahih Al-Bukhari: 6136 Rasulullah SAW said:

"If you hear news, then check (its truth) before you follow (spread it). Indeed, one of you when he hears a news and says, 'Perhaps this is true,' is like someone who eats milk and pus comes out of the milk." (Saputra dkk, 2025).

This hadith teaches us the importance of being cautious and thorough when receiving and conveying information. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) warned his followers not to easily believe or immediately spread news they hear without first verifying its veracity. This demonstrates that spreading unverified information can have detrimental consequences, both for oneself and others. In a modern context, this hadith is highly relevant to the phenomenon of the spread of hoaxes or fake news, especially on social media. Islam teaches that a Muslim must be honest, responsible, and refrain from spreading slander.

This is related to the opinion of social psychology. (Novella, 2018) explains that hoaxes are often designed to provoke negative emotions, such as fear and anger, which can lead to social unrest and division between groups. According to (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017), According to a media literacy expert, hoax news confuses the public in filtering out genuine and fake information, thus reducing trust in the media and certain official institutions. So, the lesson we can learn from the explanation above is the importance of teaching critical digital literacy to students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat to prepare them for the challenges of an increasingly complex digital world. With critical digital literacy, students are not only proficient in using technology technically, but also able to sort, evaluate, and utilize digital information wisely and responsibly. This greatly helps them avoid the spread of fake news (hoaxes), protect personal data, and foster ethical attitudes in using social media.

Using technology for social and good purposes

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers also teach students to use technology for positive social purposes, such as sharing knowledge, participating in platforms for learning about kindness, or helping others through digital platforms. At SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, technology is not only focused on learning and vocational skills, but also directed towards supporting social and charitable activities within the school and surrounding community. Students and teachers utilize various digital technologies, such as social media, communication apps, and creative software, to disseminate positive information, organize social activities, and share knowledge.

This is in line with the results of an interview with a PAI teacher who said:

Technologies like social media and communication apps can be effective tools for spreading positive values, organizing social activities, and helping communities. However, it's crucial for us as educators to continue guiding students to use technology wisely and responsibly.

This relates to Sherry Turkle's opinion that digital technology, particularly social media, has great potential to foster empathy and social awareness if used consciously and responsibly. However, technology use must also be accompanied by moral education to prevent negative impacts (Arnd-Caddigan, 2015).

Therefore, it is emphasized that using social media to share knowledge and achieve social good is an effective way to strengthen solidarity and social awareness. This aligns with Islamic teachings, which encourage its followers to always help others and share with those in need (QS. Al-Baqarah: 177). Thus, the lesson learned is that technology plays a crucial role in supporting social activities and community well-being. With wise and responsible use, technology can be an effective tool for spreading positive values, strengthening solidarity, and facilitating collaboration in various social programs. Students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat must be equipped with the awareness and ability to use technology productively for the common good and well-being of society.

Teaching tolerance

Tolerance at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat is crucial, especially in this digital age, for building harmonious student character and respect for diversity. At this school, students are taught to respect differences in ethnicity, religion, culture, and perspectives within their community. Through various learning and extracurricular activities, students are encouraged to interact positively with peers from diverse backgrounds, creating an inclusive and understanding environment. Teachers at State Vocational High School 1 Stabat also provide concrete examples of tolerance in their daily lives, guiding students to resolve conflicts peacefully and respect the opinions of others. In this way, tolerance becomes an ingrained value in students, helping them grow into mature, open individuals capable of coexisting harmoniously in a diverse society.

Students at State Vocational School 1 Stabat said that:

Our teachers often provide real examples of how we should respect differences, for example, when there are students of different religions, the teacher invites us to respect each other and not judge.

As mentioned in (HR. Abu Dawud: 3055) the Prophet Muhammad SAW explained:

"Whoever hurts a dhimmi (non-Muslim living in an Islamic country), then I will be his opponent on the Day of Judgment." (Haq dkk, 2022).

This hadith confirms that the Prophet SAW forbade Muslims from hurting or tyrannizing non-Muslims who lived under the protection of the Islamic state (called dhimmi). These dhimmi people have rights and obligations regulated by state law, and they receive protection and security guarantees. This is related to Western Philosophers (Locke, 1983), He emphasized that religious freedom and freedom of expression are fundamental rights for every individual. He believed that tolerance is an essential foundation for social life, ensuring peace and freedom. According to Locke, without tolerance, conflict and strife would be difficult to avoid. According to the spiritual leader and peace activist (Mahatma Gandhi, 2025), He believes that tolerance is the key to overcoming differences and conflict. For him, respecting diversity is not only about acceptance, but also about mutual understanding and cooperation for a common goal. Indonesian education expert Prof. Dr. H. A. R. Tilaar believes that tolerance education is crucial for shaping a national character that is inclusive and respects diversity. With education that instills the value of tolerance from an early age, society will more easily accept differences and live side by side harmoniously (Puspita, 2018).

So, the lesson we can learn from the explanation above is that tolerance and respect for differences are fundamental values that are vital in social life. Tolerance is an attitude of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence amidst ethnic, religious, and cultural differences (Rizal & Kharis, 2022) With mutual respect, we can live together harmoniously, despite coming from diverse religious backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. Education about tolerance from an early age is crucial for developing individual character that respects diversity. Therefore, rejecting all forms of discrimination and violence against others is crucial for maintaining unity and peace in society.

Instilling a sense of responsibility

At SMK Negeri 1 Stabat, instilling a sense of responsibility is a crucial part of shaping students' character, preparing them for the workforce and continuing their education. The school focuses not only on academic and vocational skills but also on instilling the values of discipline, honesty, and commitment in all activities. Students are encouraged to arrive on time, maintain practical equipment, complete assignments properly, and maintain a clean school environment.

Based on the results of interviews with Islamic Education teachers at State Vocational School 1 Stabat, he said that:

A sense of responsibility is crucial, especially for vocational high school students who will eventually enter the workforce. Here, we strive to shape students' character so that they are not only academically and professionally proficient, but also responsible for their tasks, time, and behavior.

As mentioned in (HR. Bukhari No: 893) the Prophet Muhammad SAW explained:

"Each of you is a leader and each of you will be asked to account for your leadership..."

This hadith emphasizes that everyone, regardless of position, has responsibilities. Not only national leaders, but also fathers at home, teachers at school, and even students in class all have a trust to uphold.

This is in line with the book (Riyadi, 2022), Instilling a sense of responsibility means guiding someone to be aware of their obligations and roles in social life, as well as getting used to carrying out tasks seriously and consciously. Responsibility education must begin early in order to form a disciplined and independent character. This is also related to Koentjaraningrat. Instilling responsibility is a social learning process that makes individuals aware of the consequences of their actions and the importance of carrying out obligations consciously. This process can be done through formal or informal education by providing good examples and direct experience (Suhaeni, 2020).

Thus, instilling responsibility in students at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat can foster independent, disciplined, and professional character and personalities. Through familiarization with teaching and learning activities, practical assignments, and supervision from teachers and the school environment, students are taught to understand and carry out their responsibilities diligently. By developing a strong sense of responsibility, students are not only prepared to face the challenges of the working world but also able to contribute positively to society.

2. Discussion

The Contribution of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Preventing the Moral Decline of Students at State Vocational School 1 Stabat in the Digital Era

Based on the data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat is seen as strategic in shaping students' morality amidst the challenges posed by the digital era. The findings reveal six concrete contributions of PAI teachers:

First, encouraging students to pray before and after learning is not a mere formality but a spiritual practice that builds sincerity, gratitude, and internalized religious values. This habit nurtures students' awareness of their dependence on Allah SWT and reinforces

moral discipline. Second, PAI teachers continuously remind students to behave ethically in the digital sphere, including avoiding negative content and promoting respectful online communication. This aligns students' digital behavior with Islamic values such as honesty, self-control, and responsibility.

Third, the teachers play a vital role in enhancing students' digital literacy, especially in identifying hoaxes, misinformation, and harmful content. This critical engagement helps students adopt a selective and ethical approach in consuming and sharing digital information. Fourth, PAI teachers guide students to use technology as a tool for dakwah (preaching) and social care. By encouraging the dissemination of positive messages, participation in social initiatives, and concern for others, students are trained to carry out *amar ma'ruf* in modern formats. Fifth, in the context of student diversity, teachers instill values of tolerance, respect for differences, and peaceful coexistence. This is crucial in an era where online spaces are often rife with provocation and hate speech. Lastly, PAI teachers also shape students' sense of academic and social responsibility, both offline and online. This includes discipline in learning, ethical online behavior, and awareness of digital footprints.

These findings are consistent with (Hasan, 2024), who emphasizes the transformative role of PAI teachers in integrating religious education with character development in modern settings. Similarly, (Uzma et al, 2024) found that religious teachers act not only as knowledge transmitters but also as moral guides who help students navigate ethical dilemmas posed by digital technology. However, this research expands on those findings by providing more concrete and contextual examples from a vocational school setting, where students are more exposed to practical and digital tools in daily life. Unlike the more general context presented by Hasan, this study focuses on the specific strategies used in a technical-vocational environment, such as integrating digital literacy with Islamic ethics. In contrast to previous studies that primarily highlight the spiritual role of religious education (Farid et al, 2023), this research underlines the educational-technological integration performed by PAI teachers. The emphasis is not just on spirituality but also on critical digital competence, making it more relevant to contemporary educational challenges.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative framework: it does not only examine the religious or moral dimension in isolation but connects it directly with the challenges of the digital age in a concrete educational setting. This study contributes new insights into how PAI teachers can serve as moral anchors for students by:

Embedding Islamic values in digital literacy education, encouraging ethical content creation and sharing on social media; Promoting tolerance in increasingly polarized digital communities. In summary, while previous studies have affirmed the importance of religious education in moral development, this study highlights how that role is operationalized through concrete actions and educational strategies in a digitally saturated learning environment. Therefore, it offers a practical contribution to the discourse on

moral education in the 21st century and proposes a replicable model for other schools facing similar challenges.

E. Conclusion

Based on the empirical findings of this study, the contribution of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Stabat is not limited to delivering religious material, but also includes actively developing students' character, particularly in responding to moral challenges in the digital era. Concrete forms of this contribution include fostering the habit of praying before and after lessons, internalizing spiritual values such as honesty, responsibility, and courtesy in online activities, and guiding students toward critical and ethical digital literacy. PAI teachers also serve as role models in the wise use of technology and integrating religious material into the context of students' virtual lives. These findings demonstrate the importance of strengthening the PAI curriculum to adapt to technological developments and the need for teacher training in digital literacy based on Islamic values. The practical implications of this research can form the basis for developing digital-based PAI learning policies that are more responsive to contemporary moral challenges. Academically, these results also contribute to enriching the discourse on Islamic-based character education in the context of cyberspace. The uniqueness of this research lies in its focus on the functional relationship between everyday religious practices and the development of student self-control in the digital environment, an aspect rarely addressed in similar studies. Therefore, this study recommends the need to develop an integrated Islamic moral education model with digital media to comprehensively address the challenges of the times.

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