

Constructing a Generative AI-Based Islamic Religious Education Learning Model in Public Universities

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Abstract: This study seeks to construct a generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Islamic Religious Education learning model in public universities. The rapid emergence of generative AI has reshaped students' ways of accessing information, completing academic tasks, and engaging with learning processes. In Islamic Religious Education, this transformation raises pedagogical, epistemological, and ethical concerns related to authentic understanding, academic integrity, reflective learning, and Islamic values. This article draws on the initial phase of a qualitative case study conducted at Universitas Siliwangi, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two Islamic Religious Education lecturers and two undergraduate students from the Accounting Study Program. The data were analyzed through thematic interpretation and conceptual synthesis. The findings reveal that generative AI has become a normalized academic companion for students. However, its use has a dual orientation: it can support dialogic learning when used to explore ideas, compare explanations, and clarify understanding, but it can also become a shortcut for completing assignments without sufficient reflection. The findings also show a gap between AI-assisted academic products and students' authentic understanding, as well as the need to ground AI use in Islamic ethical values such as honesty, amanah, adab, responsibility, and tabayyun. Based on these findings, this study proposes an initial conceptual construction of a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model consisting of seven components: ethical orientation, AI literacy guidance, guided AI exploration, source verification, dialogic reflection, authentic academic production, and integrity-based assessment. The study contributes to contemporary discussions on Islamic Religious Education by positioning generative AI as a pedagogical partner whose use must be guided by academic integrity, epistemic responsibility, and Islamic ethical values.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence; Islamic Religious Education; Learning Model; Academic Integrity; Higher Education.

Introduction

The emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has introduced a significant transformation in higher education. Generative AI applications such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, DeepSeek, Claude, and other similar platforms enable users to generate explanations, summaries, arguments, learning materials, and academic texts through natural language prompts. Unlike earlier digital technologies that mainly functioned as tools for accessing, storing, and organizing information, generative AI is capable of producing structured responses that resemble human academic writing. This capability has reshaped the way students search for information, formulate ideas, complete assignments, and engage with academic learning.

The growing presence of generative AI in education has created both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, generative AI can help students understand difficult concepts, obtain alternative explanations, improve academic writing, and support independent learning. For lecturers, it may assist in preparing teaching materials, designing discussion questions, formulating assessment ideas, and creating contextual learning resources. (Kasneci et al., 2023) argue that large language models provide potential benefits for students and teachers, although their educational use also presents important challenges. Similarly, (Farrokhnia et al., 2024) show that ChatGPT has educational strengths and opportunities, but also weaknesses and threats that need to be critically addressed. (Lo, 2023) also indicates that ChatGPT has wide-ranging implications for learning, teaching, assessment, and academic practice.

However, the use of generative AI in higher education cannot be understood merely as a matter of efficiency. Its presence raises serious pedagogical, epistemological, and ethical concerns. Pedagogically, conventional assignments such as essays, summaries, and short papers may no longer fully represent students' authentic understanding when such tasks can be generated instantly by AI. Epistemologically, students may treat AI-generated responses as ready-made knowledge without adequate verification, critical questioning, or reflective engagement. Ethically, generative AI may blur the boundary between legitimate academic assistance and academic dishonesty. (Cotton et al., 2024) emphasize that ChatGPT and similar tools create significant challenges for academic integrity in higher education, particularly in relation to honesty, plagiarism, authorship, and assessment practices.

Student perspectives are also important in understanding this phenomenon. The integration of generative AI in higher education is shaped not only by institutional policies or lecturers' concerns, but also by students'

familiarity, perceived usefulness, learning habits, and ethical awareness. (Ka et al., 2023) show that students recognize the benefits of generative AI for learning support, while also expressing concerns related to accuracy, overreliance, and academic integrity. This suggests that students are not merely passive users of AI; they actively interpret, negotiate, and adapt AI use according to their learning needs. Therefore, any pedagogical response to generative AI should consider both lecturers' expectations and students' lived experiences.

These issues are particularly relevant to Islamic Religious Education in public universities. Islamic Religious Education is not merely a course that transmits religious knowledge. It is also a learning space for shaping moral awareness, ethical responsibility, religious understanding, and academic integrity. In this sense, Islamic Religious Education integrates cognitive, affective, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of learning. In Islamic education, character formation remains central because education is expected to cultivate responsibility, discipline, trustworthiness, and moral conduct (Pendidikan et al., 2019). Therefore, the use of generative AI in Islamic Religious Education cannot be approached only as a technological adaptation. It must also be examined in relation to how students construct knowledge, reflect on values, maintain honesty, and take responsibility for their academic work.

The Indonesian Islamic education context has also shown growing attention to digital transformation in learning. Previous studies have discussed the use of digital technology in Islamic Religious Education, including Web 2.0-based learning in higher education and technology-supported PAI learning through flipped classroom approaches (Suhartini et al., 2021). These studies indicate that digital technology can enrich Islamic Religious Education when it is integrated with appropriate pedagogical strategies. However, generative AI introduces a different level of complexity because it does not merely provide access to information; it can also generate arguments, religious explanations, academic texts, presentation materials, and learning products that may be submitted by students as part of their academic work.

The integration of generative AI into Islamic Religious Education therefore requires a careful relationship between technology, pedagogy, and religious content. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge framework emphasizes that meaningful technology integration depends on the interaction between technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge (Koehler, 2006). In the context of Islamic Religious Education, this interaction should also be informed by ethical and spiritual considerations. A learning model for AI-based Islamic Religious Education should not only ask whether students are able to use AI, but also whether they are able to use it critically, honestly, reflectively, and responsibly.

In this context, Islamic ethical values provide an important foundation for guiding students' use of generative AI. Values such as *sidq*, *amanah*, *adab*, responsibility, and *tabayyun* are highly relevant to academic life in the era of AI. *Sidq* requires honesty in academic work. *Amanah* emphasizes responsibility in completing learning tasks and acknowledging assistance. *Adab* reminds students to respect knowledge, lecturers, sources, and academic procedures. *Tabayyun* requires verification before accepting and using information. These values are crucial because AI-generated responses may appear convincing, yet they still require critical examination, contextual understanding, and ethical judgment. The emphasis on honesty, responsibility, independence, and critical reasoning is also consistent with broader educational concerns regarding character formation and students' competencies in facing contemporary challenges (Irawati et al., 2022).

At the policy level, UNESCO emphasizes the importance of a human-centered approach to generative AI in education and research, including the need to protect human agency, ensure ethical use, and formulate appropriate educational policies (*Guidance for generative AI in education and research*, o. J.). In the Indonesian higher education context, the Directorate of Learning and Student Affairs has issued a guide for the use of Generative AI in higher education, which emphasizes ethical, responsible, and transparent use by lecturers and students (Pembelajaran et al., 2024). Nevertheless, general policy guidance still needs to be translated into specific pedagogical formulations that are relevant to particular courses, including Islamic Religious Education.

The issue becomes more complex in public universities because Islamic Religious Education is taught to students from diverse academic backgrounds. Students from different disciplines may use generative AI in different ways, depending on their academic needs, digital literacy, disciplinary orientation, and future professional identities. For example, students in accounting may relate Islamic Religious Education to honesty, transparency, and trustworthiness in financial responsibility, while students from other disciplines may connect Islamic values with different ethical and professional concerns. This disciplinary diversity requires an Islamic Religious Education learning model that is flexible, contextual, and grounded in the realities of learning in public universities.

Existing studies on generative AI in higher education have largely focused on opportunities, risks, academic integrity, assessment, student perceptions, and educational policy. Meanwhile, studies on digital technology in Islamic Religious Education have discussed technology-supported learning, digital literacy, and pedagogical innovation. However, studies that specifically formulate a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model in public universities remain limited. The gap is not only technological, but also pedagogical, epistemological, and ethical. A learning model is needed to clarify how AI should be positioned in Islamic Religious Education, how lecturers guide its use, how students verify AI-generated information, how Islamic

values are internalized, and how assessment practices can maintain academic integrity.

Against this background, this study seeks to construct a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model grounded in the realities of teaching and learning practices in a public university. Rather than treating generative AI merely as a technological innovation, this study conceptualizes it as a pedagogical partner whose integration should be informed by empirical learning realities, pedagogical reasoning, epistemic responsibility, academic integrity, and Islamic ethical values. By synthesizing these dimensions, the study proposes a contextually grounded learning model that contributes to contemporary discussions on Islamic Religious Education in the era of generative AI.

Method

This study employed a qualitative case study approach within a constructivist paradigm. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study seeks to understand the meanings, experiences, and reflections of lecturers and students regarding the use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Islamic Religious Education learning. Rather than measuring the effectiveness of a learning product or testing predetermined variables, this study aims to interpret learning realities and formulate a conceptual construction of a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model. Qualitative inquiry allows researchers to explore participants' experiences in depth and to understand how meaning is constructed within a particular social and educational context (JOHN CRESWELL, 20n. Chr.).

The case study design was used because the research focuses on a bounded case, namely Islamic Religious Education learning at Universitas Siliwangi, Indonesia. A case study is suitable for examining a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are closely connected (Edition, o. J.). In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is the use of generative AI in Islamic Religious Education learning, while the context is a public university where Islamic Religious Education is taught to students from different academic backgrounds. The case is bounded by the institution, the course, the participants, and the learning practices being examined.

The participants consisted of two Islamic Religious Education lecturers and two undergraduate students. The lecturer participants were selected because they teach Islamic Religious Education at Universitas Siliwangi and have direct experience observing students' learning practices in the era of generative AI. Their perspectives are important for understanding how AI is encountered in teaching, assignments, classroom discussion, assessment, academic integrity, and the changing role of lecturers. The student participants were from the Accounting Study Program and had completed Islamic Religious Education learning with one of the lecturer participants. Although the student participants were limited to one study program, their experiences provide important initial insights into how students use, interpret, and negotiate generative AI in their academic learning.

Participants were selected purposively. This technique was used because the study required participants who were directly related to the research focus and able to provide rich information about generative AI use in Islamic Religious Education learning. Purposive selection is commonly used in qualitative research to identify participants who have relevant experiences and can help illuminate the phenomenon being studied (JOHN CRESWELL, 20n. Chr.). In this article, the data are treated as preliminary findings from the initial phase of a broader qualitative study. Therefore, the findings are not intended to represent all Islamic Religious Education learning practices in public universities, but to identify emerging patterns that can inform the initial conceptual construction of the learning model.

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. This interview format was chosen because it allows the researcher to use guiding questions while still providing space for participants to express their experiences, perceptions, and reflections in their own words. The interviews with lecturers explored several issues, including the realities of students' generative AI use, pedagogical implications, epistemological implications, ethical concerns, academic integrity, Islamic values, assessment practices, and the need for a contextual learning model. The interviews with students explored their experiences in using generative AI, their reasons for using AI, their learning habits, their interpretation of AI-generated responses, their understanding of academic honesty, and their views on the relevance of Islamic Religious Education to their academic and professional identity.

The interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis and conceptual synthesis. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns of meaning across the interview data. (Braun & Clarke, 2008) explain that thematic analysis provides a flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes within qualitative data. In this study, the analysis began with repeated reading of the interview transcripts to become familiar with the data. Meaningful statements related to the research focus were then identified and coded. The initial codes were organized around several analytical categories, including realities of generative AI use, dialogic and shortcut-oriented AI use, authentic understanding, pedagogical strategies, academic integrity, Islamic ethical values, learning needs, and possible components of the learning model.

After the thematic analysis, conceptual synthesis was conducted to formulate the initial construction of a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model. The synthesis did not follow a formal Research

and Development procedure, nor did it involve experimental testing or product validation. Instead, the model was formulated through qualitative interpretation of the emerging themes and reflective integration of pedagogical, epistemological, ethical, and Islamic value-based considerations. This means that the proposed model is conceptual and grounded in the initial empirical realities found in the interviews.

To enhance trustworthiness, this study applied several strategies. First, source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from lecturers and students. Second, reflective notes were used to record the researcher's assumptions, emerging interpretations, and analytical decisions during the research process. Third, participant identities were protected by using codes: L1 and L2 for lecturers, and S1 and S2 for students. This coding was used to maintain confidentiality while allowing the findings to be presented clearly. The interviews were conducted with participants' consent, and the data were used only for academic purposes.

Results and Discussion

1. Generative AI as a Normalized Academic Companion in Islamic Religious Education

The findings indicate that generative AI has become a normalized part of students' academic lives. Both lecturer and student participants recognized that AI is frequently used to search for information, prepare presentations, compose assignments, develop ideas, and answer questions during classroom discussions. For students, generative AI is no longer perceived as an unfamiliar or exceptional technology; rather, it has become part of their ordinary learning culture.

L1 observed that students often use generative AI during presentations and classroom discussions, especially when responding to questions quickly. According to him, students' answers sometimes appear highly structured, academically polished, and produced within a very short time. This led him to suspect that the answers were generated or assisted by AI. He described the ambivalent nature of AI by stating:

"Generative AI has both positive and negative sides. It is like a knife; when used by a chef, it is useful, but when misused, it can be dangerous" (L1)

This metaphor shows that the problem is not the existence of AI itself, but the way it is used. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, AI may become a useful learning assistant when used responsibly, but it may also create ethical and pedagogical problems when used to replace students' own thinking.

L2 expressed a similar view. He stated that generative AI is now almost inseparable from students' academic activities, particularly for assignments completed outside the classroom. He described generative AI as providing a "shortcut" that gives students rapid access to information and academic expressions. In his words, students now commonly use AI to search for references, make summaries, prepare papers, develop presentation materials, and answer tasks.

The student participants confirmed this pattern from their own perspective. S1 and S2 explained that AI is commonly used among students and has become a familiar academic companion. They mentioned several AI platforms, including Gemini, Claude, and GPT-based applications. Their use of AI is not limited to formal academic assignments. They also use it to ask questions, seek explanations, practice language, solve daily problems, and discuss personal difficulties. One student described this experience in a simple but meaningful way:

"Among us, AI has become something ordinary. AI is already like a friend because it helps us when we face difficulties or confusion" (S1)

This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that generative AI has created new opportunities for learning support, information access, and student engagement (Kasneci et al., 2023); (Farrokhnia et al., 2024). It also supports (Ka et al., 2023) finding that students perceive generative AI as useful for learning assistance, although they remain aware of its limitations and risks. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, however, the normalization of AI use creates a distinctive challenge. If AI has become part of students' everyday learning practices, the central question is no longer whether students use AI, but how they use it, how lecturers guide its use, and how Islamic values can shape responsible academic behavior.

This point is important because Islamic Religious Education cannot respond to AI only by prohibition. A purely prohibitive approach may be unrealistic when students already use AI in various academic and non-academic contexts. At the same time, unconditional acceptance of AI is also problematic because it may weaken reading habits, reflective engagement, and academic honesty. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education needs a pedagogical response that acknowledges students lived realities while guiding them toward ethical, critical, and responsible AI use.

2. Between Dialogic Learning and Shortcut Completion

A central finding of this study is the dual orientation of students' AI use. On the one hand, students may use generative AI dialogically to understand learning materials, explore ideas, compare explanations, and clarify confusion. On the other hand, AI may also be used as a shortcut to complete assignments without sufficient reading, reflection, or understanding.

The student participants described AI as a space for discussion. S1 explained that students often ask AI a question, receive a response, and continue asking follow-up questions when the answer is still unclear. S2 added that using several AI applications allows her to compare different answers. Since different AI tools may produce different responses, she feels encouraged to be more selective and to question whether an answer is accurate or merely fabricated. She stated:

“Because answers from one AI application and another can be different, it makes me more selective and more critical in understanding whether an answer is correct or just made up” (S2)

This statement is important because it shows that AI use does not always weaken students’ thinking. When used dialogically, AI can stimulate comparison, questioning, and critical evaluation. In this orientation, students do not merely receive AI-generated answers, but use them as material for further thinking.

However, the students also acknowledged that not all students use AI in this reflective way. Some students use AI only when deadlines are approaching, directly asking for answers and taking them without adequate paraphrasing or understanding. This confirms the lecturers’ concern that AI may become a shortcut that weakens the learning process. L1 stated that many students tend to use AI more for completing assignments and answering discussion questions than for truly understanding the learning material. L2 similarly noted that AI gives students rapid access to information, but this speed may reduce their patience in processing, analyzing, and articulating knowledge independently.

This dual orientation shows that generative AI is pedagogically ambivalent. It can support learning when used as a tool for inquiry, comparison, and clarification. Yet it can weaken learning when it replaces reading, reasoning, and reflection. This finding supports the broader discussion that AI in education should not be treated as either entirely beneficial or entirely harmful (Farrokhnia et al., 2024); (Kasneci et al., 2023). Its educational value depends on how it is positioned, guided, and assessed within the learning process.

For Islamic Religious Education, this finding has particular significance. The purpose of learning PAI is not merely to produce correct answers, but to cultivate understanding, reflection, moral awareness, and responsible action. If students use AI only to obtain answers, the learning process may become shallow. If AI is used dialogically, however, it can become a tool that helps students ask better questions, compare perspectives, and deepen understanding. Therefore, the task of the lecturer is not simply to ban AI, but to transform AI use from shortcut completion into guided dialogic learning.

3. AI-Assisted Products and the Problem of Authentic Understanding

Another important finding is the gap between AI-assisted academic products and students’ authentic understanding. Lecturers observed that students’ written assignments or oral responses may appear polished, formal, and academically convincing, but this does not always reflect their actual comprehension. This creates what L2 described as an academic bias: lecturers may initially be impressed by students’ work, but later question whether the work truly represents students’ own thinking or AI assistance.

L2 explained:

“Sometimes there is an academic bias. We feel amazed because students’ assignments look very good, but then we question whether it really comes from their own thinking or from AI.” (L2)

L1 expressed a similar concern. He explained that AI-assisted answers often sound too academic and unnatural compared with students’ ordinary language. He also noted that when students are asked to explain their assignments orally, some are unable to account for the content they submitted. L2 likewise stated that there is sometimes a distance between students’ submitted work and their actual understanding. In his view, this gap occurs because students’ work is not always the result of their own analysis, but may be strongly shaped by AI-generated output.

This finding reveals an epistemological problem in AI-assisted learning. Generative AI can produce well-structured representations of knowledge, but students may not necessarily understand, own, or internalize the knowledge they submit. In other words, there may be a mismatch between academic output and epistemic ownership. Students may submit good assignments, but their reasoning, comprehension, and reflective engagement remain limited.

This problem has serious implications for assessment. Product-based assessment is no longer sufficient in the era of generative AI. If lecturers assess only the final product, they may fail to identify whether students actually understand the material. This is consistent with recent discussions on AI and assessment, which emphasize the need to make the permitted level of AI use explicit and align it with intended learning outcomes (Perkins et al., 2024). It is also consistent with recommendations that academic integrity should not rely solely on detection technologies, but should involve assessment redesign, clear guidance, and integrity-oriented learning processes (Lodge et al., 2024).

The lecturers in this study have begun to respond to this challenge in different ways. L1 emphasized the need for oral verification, reading literacy, and the use of credible references. He suggested that students should not rely entirely on AI, but should return to books, journals, and authoritative sources. L2 has also adjusted his teaching strategy by reducing conventional paper assignments and emphasizing reading tasks, direct discussion,

on-the-spot presentation, quizzes, and project-based learning. For L2, project-based learning connected to real-life problems can reduce students' dependence on AI because students must engage with actual social realities, conduct observations or interviews, and produce solutions based on lived experience.

This finding resonates with previous studies on technology-supported Islamic Religious Education, which suggest that digital technology should be integrated with appropriate pedagogical strategies such as project-based, problem-based, and cooperative learning (Suhartini et al., 2021); (Meliani et al., o. J.). In the context of generative AI, such strategies become even more important because they help ensure that learning does not stop at text production. Students need to demonstrate understanding through explanation, dialogue, reflection, and contextual engagement.

4. Islamic Ethical Values and Academic Integrity in AI Use

The findings show that responsible AI use in Islamic Religious Education must be grounded in Islamic ethical values. L1 emphasized that the most important ethical issue in students' AI use is character, particularly honesty. He related AI use to plagiarism, originality, responsibility, and academic integrity. According to him, students may know that directly copying AI-generated answers is not appropriate, but because the practice becomes common among peers, they may begin to consider it normal.

This normalization of questionable AI use is a serious ethical concern. It shows that academic dishonesty is not only a matter of individual intention, but also a matter of learning culture. When students see AI-generated answers as ordinary, the boundary between assistance and dishonesty becomes blurred. (Cotton et al., 2024) warn that ChatGPT and similar tools challenge academic integrity in relation to honesty, authorship, plagiarism, and assessment. In Islamic Religious Education, this challenge must be addressed not only through academic rules, but also through moral and spiritual formation.

L1 connected academic integrity with Islamic values such as honesty, amanah, responsibility, adab, and respect for knowledge. He emphasized that PAI is not only about religious content, but also about character formation. In his view, AI cannot replace the ethical and personal guidance provided by lecturers because character formation requires example, interaction, and moral guidance. He stated:

“The most important value is honesty in using AI. If students are honest, the other values will follow.” (L1)

This finding is consistent with Islamic education scholarship that emphasizes the centrality of character, responsibility, discipline, trustworthiness, and moral conduct in religious education (Pendidikan et al., 2019). In the context of AI use, honesty becomes the ethical foundation that determines whether AI functions as a learning assistant or as a tool for academic dishonesty.

The student participants also recognized the relevance of Islamic values in their academic and professional context. As Accounting students, S1 and S2 associated Islamic Religious Education with honesty, transparency, trustworthiness, and responsibility in managing financial matters. S1 stated that accounting is closely related to honesty and openness because the field requires accuracy and trust. S2 explained that accountants may be trusted with financial responsibilities, which makes amanah an essential value. One student explained:

“In accounting, we may be trusted to handle company finances. That is a great amanah, and learning Islamic Religious Education reminds us to be trustworthy.” (S2)

These responses show that students do not perceive PAI as detached from their disciplinary identity. Instead, they see Islamic values as relevant to their future professional life. This finding is important for constructing an AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model. Islamic ethical values can serve as a bridge between academic integrity, AI use, and disciplinary identity. In the case of accounting students, honesty and amanah are not merely religious values; they are also professional values. Therefore, AI literacy in Islamic Religious Education should not be limited to technical skills. It should also help students understand how AI use relates to honesty, responsibility, professional trust, and moral accountability.

The value of tabayyun is also highly relevant. Since AI-generated responses may be incomplete, biased, inaccurate, or different across platforms, students need to verify information before using it. S2's practice of comparing answers from different AI applications reflects an emerging form of critical verification. However, this practice needs to be strengthened through explicit pedagogical guidance so that verification is not merely technical, but also ethical and epistemological. In Islamic terms, tabayyun can become a value-based principle for source checking, critical reading, and responsible knowledge use.

5. The Changing Role of Lecturers: From Knowledge Provider to Ethical-Pedagogical Guide

The emergence of generative AI also changes the role of lecturers in Islamic Religious Education. The findings suggest that lecturers can no longer function only as providers of knowledge. Since students can obtain religious explanations, summaries, and arguments from AI, lecturers need to play a stronger role as pedagogical designers, ethical guides, source validators, and reflective facilitators.

L2 emphasized that the lecturer's role is not merely to restrict AI, but to design the learning scenario and determine the appropriate portion of AI use. This is a crucial pedagogical insight. It means that lecturers need to

decide when AI may be used, for what purpose, to what extent, and how students should account for its use. Such a role requires lecturers to understand AI not only as a technological tool, but also as an element that affects learning design, student agency, assessment, and academic integrity.

L1 emphasized the importance of guiding students “from heart to heart” so that AI use is connected with honesty, responsibility, and intellectual accountability. This phrase is significant because it reflects the humanistic character of Islamic Religious Education. AI may provide information, but it cannot provide moral presence, personal example, or spiritual guidance. The lecturer remains important as a living model of adab, responsibility, and ethical conduct.

This changing role is consistent with the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge framework, which argues that meaningful technology integration requires the interaction of technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge (Koehler, 2006). In Islamic Religious Education, this interaction should be expanded to include ethical and spiritual knowledge. Lecturers need not only to know how AI works, but also how it affects students’ learning habits, moral reasoning, religious understanding, and academic honesty.

The findings also indicate that lecturers need new competencies in the era of AI. These include AI literacy, digital literacy, the ability to design authentic assignments, the ability to conduct oral verification, the ability to evaluate AI-assisted work, and the ability to integrate Islamic values into AI-related learning activities. Previous studies on digital literacy in Islamic Religious Education also emphasize that religious educators need digital competence to strengthen pedagogical relevance and professional capacity (Fikri et al., 2025). In this study, that need becomes more specific: lecturers need AI literacy that is pedagogically informed and ethically grounded.

6. Constructing a Guided Ethical AI Learning Model for Islamic Religious Education

Based on the thematic findings, this study proposes an initial conceptual construction of a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model. The model is not intended as a technological product or experimental intervention. Rather, it is a conceptual formulation grounded in the initial realities of Islamic Religious Education learning at Universitas Siliwangi. The model positions generative AI as a pedagogical partner whose use must be guided by lecturers, verified through credible sources, reflected upon by students, and evaluated through integrity-based assessment.

The proposed model consists of seven interrelated components: ethical orientation, AI literacy guidance, guided AI exploration, source verification, dialogic reflection, authentic academic production, and integrity-based assessment.

First, ethical orientation should be introduced at the beginning of learning. Lecturers need to clarify the Islamic values that guide AI use, including *ṣidq*, *amanah*, *adab*, responsibility, and *tabayyun*. This orientation should help students understand that AI may assist learning, but students remain morally and academically responsible for their work. In practice, this orientation may be included in the course contract, classroom discussion, or introductory session on academic integrity.

Second, AI literacy guidance is needed to help students understand the benefits, limitations, and risks of generative AI. Students should learn that AI can support idea generation and explanation, but it may also produce inaccurate, incomplete, or unverified information. AI literacy should include awareness of hallucination, bias, authorship, plagiarism, citation, and the boundary between assistance and dishonesty. This is in line with UNESCO’s human-centered approach to generative AI, which emphasizes ethical use, human agency, and responsible educational policy (*Guidance for generative AI in education and research*, o. J.).

Third, guided AI exploration allows students to use AI for asking questions, exploring ideas, comparing explanations, and clarifying difficult concepts. However, this use must be guided by clear pedagogical instructions. Students should not be asked simply to “use AI,” but should be directed to document what they asked, what AI answered, how they evaluated the answer, and what they learned from the process. This turns AI use into a visible learning process rather than a hidden shortcut.

Fourth, source verification is necessary to ensure that AI-generated responses are checked against credible sources. In Islamic Religious Education, verification should involve academic references as well as authoritative Islamic sources, including books, scholarly articles, Qur’anic verses, hadith, and relevant interpretations from credible scholars. This component reflects the value of *tabayyun* and strengthens students’ epistemic responsibility. It also responds to lecturers’ concern that students may accept AI-generated religious explanations without knowing their sources.

Fifth, dialogic reflection should be integrated into classroom activities. Students need opportunities to explain, discuss, and reflect on what they obtain from AI. This may include oral verification, group discussion, reflective writing, and lecturer-student dialogue. Dialogic reflection is important because it helps ensure that students do not merely submit AI-assisted products, but can explain their reasoning and connect the material with Islamic values and real-life contexts.

Sixth, authentic academic production requires students to produce work that reflects their own understanding, reasoning, and contextual engagement. Lecturers may redesign assignments by reducing conventional paper-based tasks that are easily generated by AI and increasing tasks that require personal

reflection, field observation, case analysis, community-based projects, and oral presentation. This component is especially important because AI can generate text, but it cannot replace students' lived experience, moral reflection, and engagement with real social problems.

Seventh, integrity-based assessment should evaluate not only final products, but also the learning process. Assessment may include source verification, oral explanation, reflective notes, peer discussion, project process, and students' ability to connect Islamic values with academic and professional contexts. This component is aligned with recent assessment frameworks that recommend clarity about permitted AI use and alignment between AI use and learning outcomes (Perkins et al., 2024). It also supports institutional efforts to manage academic integrity through guidance and assessment redesign rather than relying solely on detection tools (Lodge, 2024).

The seven components of the proposed model can be summarized as follows:

Component	Pedagogical Function	Ethical-Epistemological Orientation
Ethical Orientation	Introducing values and boundaries of AI use	Şidq, amanah, adab, responsibility
AI Literacy Guidance	Explaining benefits, limitations, and risks of AI	Critical awareness and responsible use
Guided AI Exploration	Using AI for inquiry, clarification, and idea generation	AI as assistant, not replacement
Source Verification	Checking AI responses against credible references	Tabayyun and epistemic responsibility
Dialogic Reflection	Discussing and explaining AI-assisted learning	Understanding, reflection, and accountability
Authentic Academic Production	Producing work based on reasoning and context	Originality and meaningful engagement
Integrity-Based Assessment	Assessing process, honesty, verification, and explanation	Academic integrity and moral responsibility

This model is guided by the assumption that generative AI should not be treated as a neutral tool that can be freely used without ethical boundaries. At the same time, it should not be rejected outright, because students already use it and may benefit from it when properly guided. The model therefore seeks a middle position: AI is accepted as a learning assistant, but its use is framed by Islamic ethical values, pedagogical guidance, epistemic responsibility, and integrity-based assessment.

In this sense, the model contributes to contemporary discussions on Islamic Religious Education in the era of generative AI. It extends previous discussions on digital technology in PAI by addressing the specific challenges of AI-generated text, academic authorship, source verification, and authentic understanding. It also strengthens the idea that Islamic Religious Education in public universities should remain responsive to technological change while preserving its core mission: forming knowledgeable, reflective, honest, and responsible students.

Conclusion

This study examined the initial realities of generative AI use in Islamic Religious Education learning at a public university. The findings show that generative AI has become a normalized academic companion for students. It is used not only to search for information and complete assignments, but also to ask questions, compare explanations, prepare presentations, and support learning in everyday academic life. This indicates that generative AI is no longer an external issue in higher education; it has already become part of students' learning culture. The study also reveals that students' use of generative AI has a dual orientation. When used dialogically, AI can help students clarify concepts, explore ideas, compare answers, and become more selective in understanding information. However, when used merely as a shortcut, AI may weaken reading habits, reflective thinking, academic honesty, and students' ownership of knowledge. This dual orientation suggests that the main issue is not simply whether students use AI, but how AI is positioned, guided, and evaluated within the learning process.

Another important finding is the gap between AI-assisted academic products and students' authentic understanding. Lecturers observed that students' assignments and responses may appear polished, formal, and academically convincing, but this does not always reflect students' actual comprehension. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education learning in the era of generative AI requires a shift from product-centered assessment toward process-based and integrity-based assessment. Oral verification, source checking, reflective dialogue, project-based learning, and authentic tasks are needed to ensure that students do not merely submit AI-assisted outputs, but also understand, explain, and take responsibility for their work. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, responsible AI use must be grounded in Islamic ethical values. Honesty, amanah, adab, responsibility, and tabayyun are essential principles for guiding students in using AI critically and ethically. These values are not only relevant to academic integrity, but also to students' future professional identities. For Accounting students,

for example, honesty and amanah are closely related to transparency, trust, and financial responsibility. This shows that Islamic Religious Education can play an important role in connecting AI literacy with moral formation and professional ethics.

Based on the findings, this study proposes an initial conceptual construction of a generative AI-based Islamic Religious Education learning model consisting of seven interrelated components: ethical orientation, AI literacy guidance, guided AI exploration, source verification, dialogic reflection, authentic academic production, and integrity-based assessment. The model positions generative AI as a pedagogical partner, not as a replacement for lecturers, reading, reasoning, or moral responsibility. Its use must be guided by lecturers, verified through credible sources, reflected upon by students, and assessed through academic integrity. This study contributes to contemporary discussions on Islamic Religious Education in the era of generative AI by offering a contextually grounded model that integrates technological literacy, pedagogical guidance, epistemic responsibility, academic integrity, and Islamic ethical values. Since this article is based on the initial phase of data collection involving two lecturers and two students, future research should involve more participants from diverse faculties and study programs. Broader data will help refine the proposed model and strengthen its relevance for Islamic Religious Education learning in public universities.

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