



The Digital Professional Adab Paradigm: Reconstructing Classical Islamic Educator Ethics for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The digitalization of education has placed Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers within ethical dilemmas accommodated neither by conventional professional codes nor by legal-formalistic data protection regulations, particularly because primary-age learners cannot yet negotiate their own digital footprints. This study aims to reconstruct the values of educator adab in the classical Islamic tradition into an operational ethical framework for the digital context. Employing a qualitative approach with the library research method, it combines content analysis of globally indexed scholarly literature with a hermeneutic reading of two primary texts, Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* and al-Ghazālī's *Kitāb al-ʿIlm in Ihya' ʿUlūm al-Dīn*. Analysis proceeded through thematic reduction and cross-testing between contemporary empirical findings and classical normative categories to avoid anachronistic readings. The findings identify three multiplicatively interacting zones of ethical tension, namely boundaryless synchronous communication, the visual representation of learners, and public-persona management, with the dilemma burden distributed asymmetrically between teachers and learners. The study further finds that the normative structure of classical adab is relational rather than situational, and can therefore be transposed to the digital locus without losing its normative force. Four adab categories, *ikhhlās*, *amānah*, *ḥifẓ al-lisān*, and *murū'ah*, prove analytically sharper than secular professionalism on certain aspects. On this basis, the study formulates a Digital Professional Adab Paradigm bridging legal-formalistic and turats-revitalization approaches. Field-based case studies are recommended to test the applicability of its four pillars.

Keywords: Educator adab; digital ethics; madrasah ibtidaiyah teachers; institutional sharenting; Ibn Jamā'ah and al-Ghazālī.

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1. Introduction

The transformation of education in the digital era, particularly amid the transition toward Society 5.0, has radically restructured the architecture of interaction among educators, learners, and parent communities. This shift requires education to focus not only on the transfer of knowledge within the physical classroom but also on the formation of learning ecosystems holistically integrated with cyber-technological infrastructure. Within this context, the existence of the teacher has expanded in dimension from that of a mere cognitive facilitator into that of a public figure in digital space (Selwyn, 2019; Williamson et al., 2020). The integration of smart technology and social media into educational instruments touches not only pedagogical aspects or the attainment of academic curricula, but also massively extends the domain of interpersonal communication into a virtual space almost devoid of spatial and temporal limits (Bozkurt et al., 2020). The logical consequence of

this expansion is the emergence of a new reality in which the activities, utterances, and conduct of teachers are constantly exposed to public view, demanding standards of professionalism that exceed conventional boundaries.

The sociological dynamics at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level possess a particularity and complexity that set them apart from secondary and higher education. In primary education, the emotional and psychological involvement of parents is highly prescriptive and intensive, making the parent community one of the principal pillars shaping the academic climate of the school. Communication that in previous decades was highly formal, hierarchical, and incidental within the school administration office has now been compressed into fluid, boundaryless real-time interaction through instant messaging platforms, with WhatsApp groups as its main epicentre (Sari, 2021). On the one hand, this transformation of the communicative medium has indeed accelerated the flow of information and academic transparency; on the other, it has gradually blurred the line of demarcation between the teacher's professional private space and the public space of the school. Empirically, this blurred boundary creates new ethical vulnerabilities and psychological pressure for educators who are expected to remain responsive twenty-four hours a day, a problem not yet fully anticipated by the formal regulatory instruments of educational institutions (Kimmons & Veletsianos, 2021; Willemse et al., 2019).

This ethical vulnerability escalates into a crisis when MI teachers face professional dilemmas concerning the management of digital footprints and the commodification of learners' privacy. One of the most conspicuous phenomena, and one that frequently escapes academic critique, is the practice of teachers actively uploading classroom activities, photographs of young children's faces, or students' work to personal or institutional social media accounts. Often carried out under the pretext of personal branding or of mere documentation, such practices in fact frequently exploit children in the absence of adequate and rigorous informed consent from parents (Autenrieth, 2020; Manca, 2020). At the same time, the power relations between teachers and parents within WhatsApp group conversations frequently trigger value conflicts concerning the ethics of online speech, emotional control in responding to parental complaints, and the preservation of professional dignity and *murū'ah* in a cyber-public sphere that leaves a permanent digital trace (Curcher, 2019). This is not merely a technical matter of communication but a substantive ethical crisis threatening the integrity of Islamic primary education.

In response to these increasingly escalating problems of digital ethics, global and national academic discourse, exhibits a fairly sharp conceptual polarization. The first group of researchers tends to propose resolution frameworks resting firmly on legal-formalistic approaches and on digital literacy within a secular paradigm. Studies in this camp argue assertively that ethical violations and dilemmas in cyberspace can be mitigated only through the ratification of rigid school regulations, the standardization of professional codes of ethics based on technical competence, and the enforcement of state law concerning electronic transactions (Fauzi, 2020; Pratama & Mutalib, 2021). The fundamental weakness of this formalistic approach, and the sharpest criticism directed at it, is that it is excessively mechanical, highly administrative, and impoverished in moral-spiritual grounding, so that it often fails to touch the ontological dimension of ethics itself and proves unable to internalize substantive ethical awareness within the personal consciousness of educators (Fauzi, 2020).

Opposing this view, a second group of researchers has worked to return the discourse of professional ethics to the womb of the Islamic educational tradition by revitalizing the concepts of *akhlāq* and *adab*. Recent studies along this line have extensively re-explored the thought of classical intellectual giants such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Jamā'ah as an absolute foundation for educator morality (Huda et al., 2020; Zarkasyi, 2020). Despite carrying a profoundly spiritual breath, the literature in this group generally remains trapped in a stagnant textual puritanism. Educator *adab* is often reproduced, translated, and taught in a purely normative manner, with its operational elaboration still confined to the context of physical teacher-student interaction in the traditional classroom (Rahman et al., 2022). The empirical consequence is that the noble values of the *turāth*, the Islamic intellectual heritage, appear estranged, rigid, and inarticulate when brought into dialogue

with the complex realities of social media algorithms, the culture of sharenting, and the velocity of digital information flows (Azra, 2019; Lubis, 2021).

It is precisely this discursive tension, between a secular legal-formalistic approach and a classical Islamic literature that tends toward ahistoricism, that leaves a wide-open research gap. A search of academic databases indicates that, to date, virtually no systematic study has specifically reconceptualized the values of adab in Ibn Jamā'ah's *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* or al-Ghazālī's *Kitāb al-'Ilm* as an analytical scalpel for resolving the concrete ethical dilemmas of MI teachers within the digital ecosystem. Yet classical Islamic educational epistemology contains fundamental doctrines such as the concept of *ḥifẓ al-lisān*, which is equivalent to digital representational literacy; the protection of *amānah*, which is relevant to children's privacy rights; and the preservation of *murū'ah*, which corresponds directly to the management of dignity within the digital footprint, all of which have proved highly cohesive in responding to the challenges of modernity (Nashir & Mutalib, 2021). The integration of these values constitutes an urgent necessity if madrasah teachers are to avoid moral disorientation while operating in cyberspace.

This study is therefore systematically designed to fill that gap in the literature while offering novelty in the form of a progressive framework of professional ethics. It explicitly integrates the wisdom of classical epistemology into the heart of the dilemmas generated by twenty-first-century communication instruments. The basic assumption developed in this article is that the professional ethics of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah educators in the digital era can never be settled through administrative regulation alone, nor by merely replicating classical texts without contextualization; rather, they must be animated by an awareness of adab that is spiritually transcendent yet highly operational in addressing the problems of virtual space. Proceeding from this empirical, logical, and systematic argumentation, the research problem is constructed around three fundamental questions. First, how are the specific ethical dilemmas faced by Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers constructed in online interaction with parent communities and in the management of digital footprints on social media? Second, how can the values of educator adab contained in the classical texts *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* and *Kitāb al-'Ilm* be reconceptualized to dissect the ethical dilemmas of learners' privacy and digital representation? Third, how can a new paradigm of professional ethics be formulated for MI teachers that synergistically weds the grandeur of classical adab with the complex demands of cyber society in the Society 5.0 era?

2. Methods

Methodologically, this study is constructed as qualitative research of the pure library research type, systematically designed to dissect and reconceptualize normative texts within modern sociological reality (Zed, 2014). To address the complexity of the research questions, the study employs a conceptual approach combined with a philosophical-hermeneutic approach, enabling the researchers not merely to describe the literature but to draw a logical thread between the epistemology of Islamic ethics and the dynamics of cyberspace in the Society 5.0 era (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The primary data sources rest on two main axes: first, authoritative classical literature representing the construction of educator adab, namely *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* wa *al-Mutakallim fī Adab al-'Ālim wa al-Muta'allim* by Ibn Jamā'ah and *Kitāb al-'Ilm* by al-Ghazālī; and second, recent globally indexed scholarly journal articles, that capture the empirical reality of the digital ethical dilemmas of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers. Secondary data were obtained from various pedagogical textbooks, educational policy documents, and works in digital sociology, which serve to strengthen the argumentation and support the contextualization of the study (Snyder, 2019).

To ensure academic rigour and to account for the trustworthiness of the data, this study applies source triangulation and prolonged, in-depth engagement with the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation was executed by continuously cross-confirming the ethical propositions contained in the classical primary texts against empirical findings from international and national journals concerning teachers' communicative practices in virtual space. The search for and selection of contemporary literature were conducted rigorously through credible academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, with specific inclusion criteria relating to the cyber-ethics of primary-level educators. This validity

procedure was assertively designed to avoid single-interpretation bias, to ensure that the data employed are free from ahistorical bias, and to guarantee that the reconstructed argument possesses strong epistemological validity in responding to the crisis of morality within the school's digital community (Machi & McEvoy, 2022).

The stages of data analysis were comprehensively executed using qualitative content analysis, operating at the level of a critical reading of the latent meaning of the reduced literature (Krippendorff, 2018). The analytical process adopts an interactive flow comprising three simultaneous stages: data condensation, thematic data display, and the drawing of conceptual conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). In practice, empirical data concerning ethical violations or dilemmas of MI teachers on social media and in WhatsApp groups were first classified into thematic clusters, such as the privacy boundaries of primary-age children and the management of teachers' digital footprints. These thematic findings were then critically dissected using the *adab* framework of Ibn Jamā'ah and al-Ghazālī through deductive-inductive syllogism. Through this systematic analytical procedure, the classical texts are not left frozen as obsolete historical dogma but are logically revitalized into a sharp analytical instrument for formulating a new paradigm of professional ethics for Islamic primary education teachers amid the thicket of cyber interaction (Neuendorf, 2017).

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings generated from the condensation and display of data across the two corpora analysed, namely globally indexed contemporary scholarly literature and the classical primary texts *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* by Ibn Jamā'ah and *Kitāb al-ʿIlm in Ihya* ' *ʿUlūm al-Dīn* by al-Ghazālī. The presentation follows the sequence of the research questions: the mapping of ethical dilemmas at the empirical level, a closer examination of the two most dominant digital channels, and a reading of the normative structure of the classical texts. Theoretical interpretation of these findings is presented separately in the Discussion section.

3.1 Typology of the Ethical Dilemmas of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Digital Space

Thematic classification of the contemporary literature corpus indicates that the ethical dilemmas faced by Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in digital space do not arise as isolated, sporadic incidents but are structured into three zones of tension that recur across contexts. The first zone concerns boundaryless synchronous communication between teachers and the parent community. The second concerns the visual representation of learners on social media channels. The third relates to the management of the teacher's public persona, which leaves a permanent digital footprint. These three zones are consistently documented both in boundary management research on education professionals in Scandinavia and in phenomenological studies of teachers' experiences on social platforms (Andersson & Hedström, 2024; Willis, 2023).

The second finding shows that the distribution of the dilemma burden across these three zones is asymmetrical. In the first zone, the party most disadvantaged is the teacher, particularly along the psychological dimension and in terms of affective workload. In the second zone, the most vulnerable party is in fact the learner, since children possess no instrument with which to refuse or negotiate the circulation of their image. In the third zone, the harm is simultaneously institutional and personal, affecting both the teacher's dignity and the reputation of the madrasah. This asymmetry is confirmed through a cross-reading of the literature on children's privacy rights and on educator well-being (Ferrara et al., 2023; Milkaite et al., 2021). Table 1 summarizes this typology together with its concrete manifestations in the field.

Table 1. Typology of the Ethical Dilemmas of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Digital Space

Zone of Tension	Concrete Manifestation	Principal Affected Actor	Conceptual Reference
Boundaryless synchronous communication	Demands for 24-hour responsiveness, escalation of complaints in open forums, blurring of working hours	Teachers (affective burden)	Andersson & Hedström (2024); Zhai & Guo (2025)
Visual representation of learners	Uploading of facial photographs, student work, and classroom activities without informed consent	Learners (privacy)	Ferrara et al. (2023); Peng (2023)
Management of the public persona	Personal branding, curation of the professional image, permanent digital footprint	Teachers and institution (<i>murū'ah</i>)	Willis (2023); Williamson et al. (2020)

The third finding, and perhaps the most important at the descriptive level, is that these three zones operate not additively but multiplicatively. The data reveal a recurring pattern in which teachers facing

escalating complaints in parent groups tend to respond to that pressure by intensifying the documentation of classroom activities as a form of performance evidence. This defensive response inadvertently increases the volume of learners' images circulating in public space. Efforts to resolve the dilemma of the first zone thus deepen the dilemma of the second. The boundary management literature records a similar symptom, namely that tactics which appear successful along one dimension frequently generate hidden costs along another (Andersson & Hedström, 2024; Willis, 2023).

3.2 Findings on the Synchronous Communication Channel: Boundary Compression and Affective Burden

A closer examination of the first zone identifies one systematically operating mechanism, namely the compression of the boundary between private and professional space. Research on fifty-seven education professionals found that segmentation tactics, that is, efforts to keep the two domains separate, were attempted twice as often as integration tactics, yet it is precisely segmentation that proves hardest to sustain (Andersson & Hedström, 2024). These data indicate that failure to maintain boundaries is rooted not in weak personal discipline but in the architecture of social technologies, which by design encourages integration.

The next finding concerns the affective consequences of that compression. In the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah context, parent WhatsApp groups combine three affordances at once: permanent availability, a semi-public character, and an informal conversational format. A study of kindergarten teachers working under high-pressure conditions documented that the demand for constant availability imposed by such platforms correlates with increased emotional exhaustion and declining psychological well-being (Zhai & Guo, 2025). Parallel findings emerge in phenomenological research showing that social media simultaneously expands teachers' professional agency and erodes their well-being (Willis, 2023).

The third finding in this zone concerns a shift in power relations. The analysis shows that in the school administration office, interaction between teachers and parents unfolds within spatial and temporal frames that affirm the teacher's professional authority, whereas in WhatsApp groups those frames collapse. Complaints are voiced before dozens of other parents, their traces are permanently archived, and every response by the teacher can be requoted outside its original context. Studies of multiparty privacy affirm that information circulating in digital space is never owned by a single party but is negotiated among many actors with differing interests (Peng, 2023).

The final finding in this section concerns the durability of regulatory instruments. Madrasahs generally pursue the route of establishing group rules, appointing administrators, and restricting messaging hours. Analysis of the literature shows that such instruments have limited effectiveness for three documented reasons: rules govern the form of messages but do not touch the cultural expectation that a good teacher is one who is always available; enforcement is placed upon teachers themselves, so that educators must refuse parents who are simultaneously the madrasah's principal stakeholders; and formal rules do not reach grey zones such as private messages sent outside the group. Pressure in fact concentrates precisely within those grey zones beyond the reach of regulation (Willis, 2023).

3.3 Findings on the Visual Representation Channel: Institutional Sharenting and the Consent Deficit

A closer examination of the second zone yields a finding in the form of a category of practice not yet accommodated in the existing sharenting literature. That literature has thus far focused on the practice of parents sharing information about their children on social media, with the consistent finding that such practice is driven by motives of social affirmation and by conformity pressure from peer circles (Ranzini et al., 2020). The present analysis identifies a distinct category, designated here as institutional sharenting, namely the practice whereby teachers and educational institutions share learners' images, work, and activities on digital channels for purposes of documentation, institutional promotion, or the construction of a professional image.

The structural difference between the two categories lies in the basis of authority. Teachers hold no guardianship rights over the child, yet they enjoy far more intensive daily access to the child's image than any party outside the nuclear family. This finding gives rise to a layered consent deficit. At the first layer, children aged six to twelve are cognitively unable to grasp the long-term implications of the circulation of their image. At the second layer, the parental consent invoked as legitimation is generally general in nature, granted once at the beginning of the academic year, and not specific to particular content. This pattern parallels the phenomenon known in the literature as the privacy paradox by proxy, in which adults who profess concern for children's privacy nonetheless share information about their children routinely (Ní Bhroin et al., 2022).

Findings on the risk profile demonstrate that these concerns are not speculative. Paediatric research documents that uploading sensitive information about children to social media may become a gateway to exploitation, identity misuse, and untraceable third-party data collection (Ferrara et al., 2023). Other research links the intensity of sharenting practices to children's psychosocial vulnerability, particularly once children

become aware that their image has circulated beyond their control (Ocakoglu et al., 2023). From the perspective of the digital economy, an uploaded child's image enters circuits of commodification that transform the subject of education into an object of economic value (Ong et al., 2022).

The temporal dimension adds further weight to this finding. An image uploaded when a learner is seven years old remains accessible when that person is twenty-seven, at which point their assessment of the image may well differ radically. Studies of the datafication of childhood show that the accumulation of children's digital traces begins long before children possess the capacity to negotiate them, and that educational institutions are among the largest contributors to that accumulation (Bradbury, 2019; Jarke & Breiter, 2019). The problem is compounded because institutional uploads are typically accompanied by complete identity markers in the form of name, class, and the name of the madrasah, rendering them more traceable than parental uploads, which usually circulate within limited circles.

Nevertheless, the analysis also identifies mitigation practices already consciously undertaken by some actors. The concept of mindful sharenting documents strategies such as blurring faces, restricting audiences, avoiding location markers, and seeking the child's assent commensurate with their capacity (Walrave et al., 2023). Yet findings from research on celebrity practice show that technical mitigation strategies of this kind dissolve easily when confronted with strong incentives for visibility (Porfírio & Jorge, 2022).

3.4 Findings from the Reading of the Classical Texts: The Relational Structure of Educator Adab

The hermeneutic reading of *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi* and *Kitāb al-ʿIlm* yielded a finding that was not anticipated at the outset of the research. The normative structure of educator adab in both texts turns out to be built upon categories that are relational rather than situational. That is, the rules of adab are bound not to the classroom as a physical locus but to the quality of the relationship among the educator, knowledge, and the learner. This finding carries significant methodological implications, since relational categories can logically be transposed to a new locus without losing their normative force.

Of all the precepts contained in the two texts, four categories were identified as the most productive when brought into dialogue with the digital dilemmas mapped above. First, *ḥifẓ al-lisān*, or guarding the tongue, formulated as the educator's obligation to restrain speech that demeans, is hasty, or exceeds necessity. Second, *amānah* as the principle of safeguarding what has been entrusted, which in Ibn Jamā'ah's framework includes protecting the learner's honour from unnecessary disclosure. Third, *murū'ah*, or the preservation of self-respect, understood as propriety of conduct that upholds the educator's scholarly dignity. Fourth, *ikhhlās* as purity of intention, diametrically opposed to *riyā'*, a danger to which al-Ghazālī devotes particular attention among the learned.

A further finding shows that these four categories do not stand in isolation but form an interlocking, layered sequence. *Ikhhlās* operates at the level of intention, *amānah* and *ḥifẓ al-lisān* operate at the level of action, while *murū'ah* functions at the level of trace evaluation. This layered structure is what distinguishes the classical construction of adab from modern professional codes of ethics, since the latter generally operate only at the level of action and presuppose intention to be a private domain lying beyond the reach of regulation.

The final finding in this section concerns the relative weight the two texts assign to these four categories. Distribution analysis shows that Ibn Jamā'ah treats *amānah* and *murū'ah* as the most extensively elaborated precepts when discussing the educator's adab toward learners, with emphasis on the obligation to conceal their faults and to protect their honour before others. Al-Ghazālī, by contrast, devotes the greatest elaboration to *ikhhlās* and the danger of *riyā'*, particularly in his discussion of scholars who make knowledge a means of obtaining social recognition. This difference of emphasis is complementary rather than contradictory: Ibn Jamā'ah strengthens the outward-facing relational dimension directed toward the learner, while al-Ghazālī strengthens the inward-facing introspective dimension directed at the educator's self. Their combination produces a more complete normative coverage than either text would provide alone. Table 2 presents the mapping of these four categories onto the digital dilemmas identified in sections 3.1 to 3.3.

Table 2. Mapping of Classical Adab Categories onto the Digital Ethical Dilemmas of MI Teachers

Category of Adab	Formulation in the Classical Texts	Equivalent in the Digital Domain	Dilemma Addressed
<i>Ikhhlās</i> vs <i>riyā'</i>	Purity of intention and refusal of ostentatious display of good deeds	Audit of the motivation behind acts of publication	Classroom documentation motivated by image-building
<i>Amānah</i>	Safeguarding what is entrusted and the honour of learners	Protection of children's data and images	Institutional sharenting without consent
<i>Ḥifẓ al-lisān</i>	Restraining demeaning and excessive speech	Discipline of speech in archived spaces	Escalation of conflict in parent groups

Category of Adab	Formulation in the Classical Texts	Equivalent in the Digital Domain	Dilemma Addressed
<i>Murū'ah</i>	Preserving propriety and scholarly dignity	Management of the digital footprint	Curation of the public persona and performativity

This section interprets the findings presented above, brings them into dialogue with contemporary discourse on educational ethics, and formulates the conceptual framework that constitutes the novelty of the study. The discussion is organized into four argumentative stages: an explanation of the structural character of the dilemmas, an examination of the comparative advantage of the adab framework, the formulation of an integrative paradigm, and an account of implications and limitations.

3.5 The Structural Character of the Ethical Dilemma and the Limitations of the Legal-Formalistic Approach

The finding that the three zones of tension remain consistent across geographic and cultural contexts leads to an important interpretive conclusion: the problem of educators' digital ethics is a structural symptom inherent in the design of the technology rather than a failure of individual morality. This interpretation carries serious consequences for the way madrasahs formulate their response. So long as the problem is read as personal negligence, the solutions that emerge will take the form of reprimands, short training sessions, or additional clauses in the code of ethics. Yet the findings in section 3.2 show that teachers who seek to maintain professional distance are essentially struggling against the built-in affordances of the platforms they use (Andersson & Hedström, 2024).

This structural character becomes even sharper at the primary level for a reason rarely taken into account in policy formulation. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah learners fall within an age range in which the capacity to give conscious and autonomous consent has not yet adequately formed, and yet they are capable of articulate reflection on their own personal data (Milkaite et al., 2021). It is this gap between awareness and power that places MI teachers in a paradoxical dual position: as the party who ought to protect the child, and simultaneously as the actor actively producing that child's digital footprint. When this occurs within Islamic educational institutions that normatively regard the protection of children as a religious trust, the gap between teaching and practice becomes strikingly conspicuous.

The finding in section 3.2 regarding the weak durability of regulatory instruments reinforces the critique of the legal-formalistic approach that has thus far been dominant. The failure of such formal instruments does not mean that regulation is unnecessary; rather, it indicates that regulation requires a normative support that operates from within the educator's consciousness. The digital citizenship literature affirms that procedural compliance without the internalization of values produces only performative compliance, which proves fragile once supervision relaxes (Japar et al., 2024). Critiques of educational data governance reveal the same symptom at the institutional scale, namely that regulatory frameworks tend to stop at procedural compliance and fail to reach the motivations of actors (Williamson et al., 2020).

The dimension most frequently overlooked in legal-formalistic readings is the pedagogical impact of the erosion of teacher authority. At the primary level, the effectiveness of learning depends heavily on learners' perception of the teacher as a figure worthy of emulation. When disputes between teachers and parents unfold openly and are archived, learners may access fragments of that conflict and experience dissonance toward the authoritative figure in their classroom. Exemplarity in virtual space operates through observational mechanisms just as powerful as those in physical space, and with a far wider reach (Ma'arif et al., 2023). Empirical findings at the primary-school level reinforce this argument by showing that teachers' ethical professionalism reflected in honesty, fairness, and consistency between word and deed is the very mechanism that enables the internalization of learners' character values through everyday classroom interaction (Khairat et al., 2025). This consistency between word and deed is precisely what is most vulnerable to disruption when fragments of a teacher's conflict circulate in an archived digital space. The management of communicative boundaries is therefore not merely a matter of teachers' occupational comfort but a precondition for the continuity of the pedagogical function itself..

3.6 The Comparative Advantage of the Adab Framework as an Analytical Instrument

The finding concerning the relational structure of adab in section 3.4 opens a possibility that neither of the two discursive camps mapped in the introduction has thus far pursued. Reconceptualization of this kind demands methodological caution so as not to fall into anachronistic readings that impose modern meanings upon classical texts. This study adopts two safeguards. First, the transposition of categories is carried out at

the level of principle rather than of technical prescription, so that what is transferred is the normative logic. Second, every transposition is cross-tested against contemporary empirical findings to ensure that the classical category genuinely possesses explanatory power rather than a merely superficial terminological resemblance. This procedure accords with contemporary readings of al-Ghazālī's epistemology, which emphasize that the integration of knowledge and ethics within his framework is structural and therefore open to contextualization (Poya & Rizapoor, 2023).

The results of this cross-testing yield three arguments concerning the comparative advantage of the adab framework. The first argument concerns the category of *ikhhlās*. When this category is applied to the practice of uploading classroom activities, the question posed is no longer whether the upload violates a rule but for whom the upload is in fact made. Shifting the entry point of analysis from compliance to motivation constitutes an epistemological contribution that no legal-formalistic approach can generate, since regulation fundamentally possesses no instrument capable of reaching intention.

The second argument concerns the category of *murū'ah*. This category proves to have greater explanatory power with respect to the phenomenon of digital performativity than secular frameworks of professionalism, because *murū'ah* evaluates action on the basis of the propriety inherent in the educator's standing rather than on the basis of audience reception, which is inherently volatile. The concept of personal branding commonly employed in the discourse of digital professionalism, by contrast, makes audience response the measure of success and thus structurally intensifies the very performative pressure that constitutes the source of the problem (Williamson et al., 2020; Willis, 2023). In this respect the classical framework is not merely on a par with the modern one but sharper.

The third argument concerns the category of *amānah*, which provides a theological foundation for the protection of children's privacy that has hitherto rested solely on legal instruments. This difference is not cosmetic. Legal instruments operate through the threat of sanctions and are therefore effective only within the reach of enforcement, whereas *amānah* operates through an awareness of transcendental accountability that recognizes no jurisdictional boundary. For madrasah educators who place religious conviction at the axis of their professional identity, this second foundation is empirically more likely to yield consistent compliance (Ferrara et al., 2023; Milkaite et al., 2021).

3.7 Formulating the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm

The synthesis of all these arguments produces the framework this study terms the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm. The framework rests on the premise that the professional ethics of madrasah educators can neither be reduced to administrative compliance nor be left floating as moral exhortation without operationalization. The paradigm comprises four pillars arranged hierarchically from the innermost to the most measurable level, namely the audit of intention, the safeguarding of trust, the discipline of representation, and the evaluation of traces. This arrangement deliberately inverts the logic of conventional codes of ethics, which move from rules toward compliance, because the findings in section 3.2 show that rules not rooted in consciousness collapse once supervision weakens.

The first pillar, the audit of intention, operates as a mechanism of pre-publication reflection in the form of a testing of motive through the diagnostic question of who benefits most from a given post. The second pillar, the safeguarding of trust, translates the principle of *amānah* into a layered consent protocol that is specific and revocable rather than a single blanket authorization, in line with recommendations from studies of children's data protection that emphasize child-centred consent formats (Ferrara et al., 2023; Walrave et al., 2023). The third pillar, the discipline of representation, governs modes of speech and image display, encompassing the restriction of identity markers, the avoidance of facial exposure in open content, and the redirection of conflict escalation to private channels. The fourth pillar, the evaluation of traces, positions the periodic review of digital archives as part of continuing professional development.

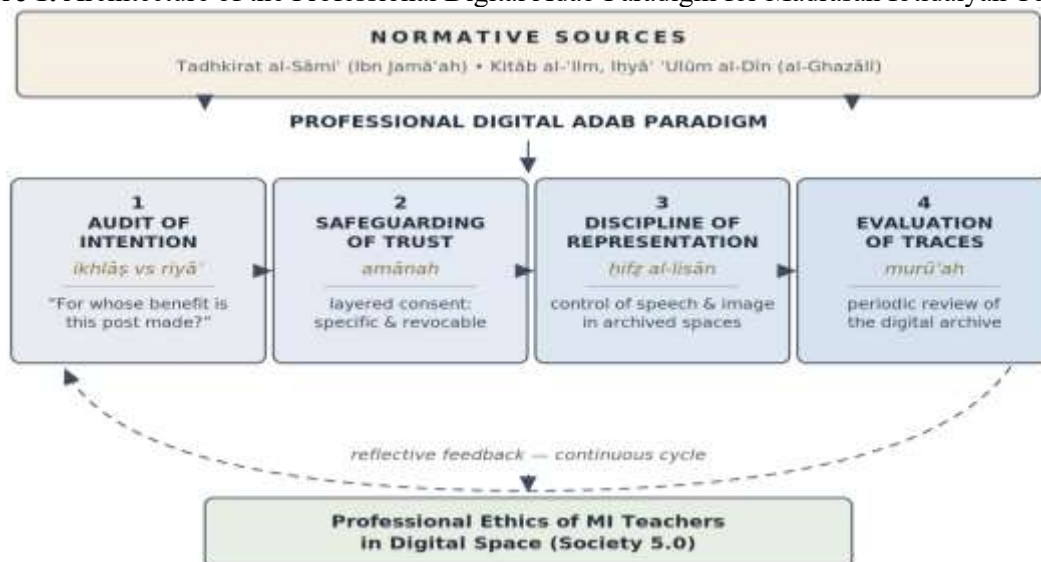
The relations among the pillars are at once sequential and circular. They are sequential because the audit of intention precedes action, the safeguarding of trust determines the permissibility of the action, and the discipline of representation governs the form of its execution. They are circular because the evaluation of traces generates feedback that enriches the audit of intention in the subsequent cycle, so that the framework operates as an ongoing reflective practice rather than as a single-use checklist. Figure 1 visualizes the architecture of this framework together with the direction of the relations among its pillars.

The figure 1 illustrates the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm, which translates classical Islamic ethical teachings from *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi'* and *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* into a practical framework for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) teachers in the digital era. The paradigm consists of four interconnected principles: auditing intention (*ikhhlās* vs. *riyā'*), safeguarding trust (*amānah*), disciplining representation through control of speech and images (*ḥifẓ al-lisān*), and evaluating digital traces (*murāja'ah*). These principles form a continuous

reflective cycle in which teachers regularly review their digital practices, ultimately strengthening professional ethics for MI teachers in digital spaces within Society 5.0.

The framework emphasizes that professional ethics in digital education is not a one-time set of rules but a continuous process of ethical reflection and self-correction. Each stage is connected sequentially, beginning with the teacher's intention and extending to the responsible management of personal and professional digital traces. Through this cycle, teachers are encouraged to ensure that their online communication, shared content, and use of digital information consistently reflect sincerity, trustworthiness, self-restraint, and accountability, thereby aligning classical Islamic concepts of *adab* with the ethical demands of contemporary digital education.

Figure 1. Architecture of the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers



Compared with existing frameworks of digital ethics, the position of this paradigm can be located with reasonable precision. Digital citizenship frameworks developed in general education excel at formulating technical competencies and rights awareness, yet they rest on the assumption of an autonomous individual that does not fully hold for primary-age learners (Japar et al., 2024). Educational data governance frameworks excel at mapping actors and institutional responsibilities, yet they operate at a macro level that is difficult to translate into the daily decisions of a classroom teacher (Williamson et al., 2020). The Professional Digital Adab Paradigm fills the space between the two by providing a micro-framework grounded in personal decision-making that nonetheless retains a firm normative foundation. Such a combination accords with the direction of postdigital scholarship, which rejects the dichotomy between local epistemologies and contemporary educational design and instead positions tradition as a productive source of critique of technology (Meston, 2024).

3.8 Implications and Limitations

One reasonable objection to this framework is that the pillar of intention auditing is difficult to verify externally and may therefore be deemed inoperable within madrasah quality management systems. This objection warrants a direct response. The audit of intention is indeed not designed as an object of third-party supervision but as a self-regulatory mechanism whose effectiveness derives precisely from its unsupervised character. Its outcomes, however, remain indirectly observable through behavioural indicators, for example a decline in the volume of uploads clearly displaying learners' faces, or a shift in documentation patterns from foregrounding individual children toward foregrounding the learning process. An indicator-based approach of this kind accords with digital citizenship evaluation practices that measure attitudes not directly but through their behavioural manifestations (Japar et al., 2024).

The implications of this framework operate at three institutional levels. At the individual level, the paradigm calls for the integration of digital adab material into professional development programmes for madrasah teachers, not as a supplementary module but as a frame of reference encompassing all digital practice. It should be noted that this framework does not position digital technology merely as a source of ethical threat, but also recognizes its potential as a means of character formation when used in a directed manner, as demonstrated by a study developing social-platform-based digital media that succeeded in

enhancing learners' internalization of honesty, responsibility, and care (Harnar et al., 2025). The difference lies in intention and governance: the same technology can either deepen the ethical dilemma or strengthen character formation, depending on the framework of consciousness that guides its use. At the school level, the framework encourages the formulation of explicit documentation and communication protocols, including the establishment of service hours that protect teachers from demands of permanent availability, as documented in the literature on educators' affective burden (Andersson & Hedström, 2024). At the policy level, these findings suggest that educational data protection regulation should take into account the particular position of religious educational institutions, which possess internal normative resources that can be mobilized as instruments of compliance.

It must be emphasized that this framework does not claim to resolve every dilemma mapped here. A number of tensions are structural and lie beyond the reach of teacher agency, particularly those connected to the architecture of commercial platforms and to cross-jurisdictional data governance (Williamson et al., 2020). Studies of religious moderation in cyberspace likewise caution that the internalization of values requires a consistent supporting ecosystem rather than episodic training interventions (Ma'arif et al., 2023). Methodological limitations must also be acknowledged: as a library-based study, these findings have not been tested against field data in the Indonesian madrasah context, so that further research employing case studies or quasi-experiments is required to test the applicability of the four pillars.

Even so, by shifting the entry point of analysis from compliance toward consciousness, and from rules toward intention, this paradigm offers madrasah educators a firmer footing for navigating digital space without moral disorientation. It is precisely at this point that the intellectual legacy of Ibn Jamā'ah and al-Ghazālī demonstrates its relevance: not as a preserved historical artefact, but as a framework of thought still capable of posing the right questions to entirely new problems.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the ethical dilemmas of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in digital space constitute a structural problem that cannot be adequately resolved by legal-formalistic instruments alone, and that the heritage of educator adab in the thought of Ibn Jamā'ah and al-Ghazālī provides a normative resource that remains relevant for navigating it. By reconstructing four categories of adab into the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm, composed of the pillars of intention auditing, the safeguarding of trust, the discipline of representation, and the evaluation of traces, this study demonstrates that the professional ethics of madrasah educators become more robust when rooted in the internalization of consciousness rather than in mere compliance with rules.

The novelty of this research lies in three respects that distinguish it from previous studies. First, it introduces the concept of institutional sharenting as a new analytical category differentiating the publication of children's images by educational institutions from similar practice by parents, a distinction not yet available in the literature. Second, it positions classical adab categories not as a heritage to be preserved but as analytical instruments that in certain respects are sharper than secular frameworks of professionalism, particularly through the categories of *murū'ah* and *ikhhlās*, which reach the domain of intention that regulation cannot touch. Third, it produces a micro-framework grounded in personal decision-making that fills the gap between digital citizenship frameworks that are excessively individualistic and data governance frameworks that are excessively macro. The principal limitation of this study lies in its character as conceptual library research: the Professional Digital Adab Paradigm has been formulated and validated only against the literature and the classical texts, and has not yet been empirically tested with teachers, learners, or parents in actual Madrasah Ibtidaiyah settings, so that its practical effectiveness and cultural acceptability remain open questions. To address this limitation, future researchers should operationalize the four pillars into measurable indicators and test them through field-based case studies, design-based research, or quasi-experiments across diverse madrasah contexts, while also examining how the framework can be transferred to other levels of basic education by adjusting for learners' differing capacities for informed consent. Further research testing the applicability of these four pillars through case studies or quasi-experiments in Indonesian madrasahs is strongly recommended in order to strengthen the empirical validity of this framework.

5. References

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