

Internalization of Teacher Professional Ethics in Collaborative Islamic Religious Education Learning

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ABSTRACT

The integration of professional ethics into classroom practice is essential for enhancing the quality of teaching and fostering meaningful student engagement. The purpose of this study is to further explore the internalization of teachers' professional ethics values through collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (Islamic Education) at SMPN 7 Pamekasan. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to explore how professional ethics are realized in the learning process. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers and students, and documentation analysis. The research findings indicate that the implementation of collaborative learning provides a conducive environment for the internalization of professional ethical values, such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, fairness, effective communication, and role modeling. These values are evident in teacher-student interactions, classroom management practices, and the facilitation of group-based learning activities. Furthermore, collaborative learning fosters classroom engagement, mutual respect, teamwork, and shared responsibility among students, thereby improving academic learning outcomes. The study concludes that the successful internalization of teacher professional ethics significantly contributes to the effectiveness of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education. Therefore, strengthening teachers' ethical competencies is crucial for creating an engaging, inclusive, and value-oriented learning environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental process that plays a significant role in developing knowledge, attitudes, skills, and character. In the context of contemporary education, teachers are not merely responsible for teaching, but also for fostering moral values and contributing to character formation in the classroom (Mukhlisin et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers must demonstrate professional behavior both inside and outside the classroom to serve as role models for students. For Islamic Religious Education teachers, this responsibility is crucial, extending beyond academic instruction to include instilling moral character and Islamic values in students (Octavia, 2020). Teacher ethics is a set of norms, moral principles, and standards that guide teachers in upholding professionalism (M. P. Mukhlisin, 2024). According to the Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI), the teacher code of ethics serves as a moral guideline that regulates the behavior, attitudes, and professional relationships of teachers with students and the community at large. Furthermore, Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers emphasizes that teachers are professional educators who must uphold ethical standards, maintain professionalism, and continuously improve their competencies (Republik Indonesia, 2003). Professional ethical values such as responsibility, honesty, discipline, fairness, exemplary conduct, and respect for students are essential elements that contribute to the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (Ilham, 2022b; M. Mukhlisin et al., 2024b; Octavia, 2020). Educational paradigms have shifted toward student-centered learning approaches that encourage active participation, collaboration, communication,

and critical thinking. One instructional strategy that aligns with these objectives is collaborative learning. Collaborative learning refers to a learning approach in which students work together in groups to achieve shared learning goals, exchange ideas, solve problems, and construct knowledge collectively (Amiruddin, 2020). This approach emphasizes reciprocal interaction, shared responsibility, and active participation by all parties, thereby promoting academic achievement and social competence (Aswan, 2016).

Collaborative learning provides opportunities for students to actively participate in the learning process while developing communication and teamwork skills (Citradharma, 2020). Dwi (2023) argues that collaborative learning enhances the understanding and critical thinking skills of students who interact and engage in collective problem-solving activities. Furthermore, Mahmudi Ali (2026) argues that collaborative learning encourages students to become active contributors rather than passive recipients of information. Furthermore, Nugroho (2020) highlights that collaborative learning can strengthen cooperation, responsibility, and mutual respect, making it highly relevant to life in the learning environment. Collaborative learning is highly relevant in Islamic Religious Education subjects. This is because Islamic teachings emphasize values such as cooperation (*ta'awun*), brotherhood (*ukhuwah*), deliberation (*musyawarah*), and mutual respect. Through collaborative learning activities, students not only learn religious knowledge but also are able to implement Islamic values in social life. Ernita (2020) argues that collaborative learning methods in Islamic education encourage active participation, enhance social interaction, and facilitate a deeper understanding of religious concepts. Collaborative learning is an effective pedagogical approach for integrating the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of learning in Islamic Religious Education. Collaborative learning is considered successful if teachers demonstrate and internalize professional ethical values during the classroom learning process. Teachers who can create a positive learning environment that encourages student participation and cooperation are those who consistently demonstrate honesty, fairness, responsibility, discipline, and effective communication (Ilham, 2022b). Ethical teachers also foster trust, respect, and mutual understanding among students, which can lead to successful collaborative learning. Conversely, a lack of professional ethics can hinder group interaction, reduce student motivation, and negatively impact learning outcomes. The results of previous research on teacher professional ethics and collaborative learning as separate educational constructs, Octavia focused on the urgency of teacher professional ethics in maintaining professionalism and improving the quality of education, while Amiruddin, Dwi, and Ernita mainly investigated the effectiveness of collaborative learning in increasing student participation, engagement, and academic achievement (Amiruddin, 2020; Dwi, 2023; Ernita, 2020; Octavia, 2020). Although these studies provide valuable insights, they pay limited attention to how professional ethical values are internalized and practiced through collaborative learning interactions in classroom settings.

This gap is particularly important because collaborative learning provides a social environment in which ethical values can be practiced directly rather than merely taught theoretically. Values such as responsibility, honesty, fairness, respect, and effective communication become visible through group discussions, shared decision-making, task distribution, and peer interaction. In this context, collaborative learning functions not only as an instructional strategy but also as a vehicle for ethical internalization. Through repeated participation in collaborative activities, students are able to observe, experience, and apply ethical values in authentic social situations. Therefore, investigating the relationship between teacher professional ethics and collaborative learning offers a more comprehensive understanding of character formation than examining either concept independently. Consequently, the internalization of ethical values cannot rely solely on institutional religious culture but requires deliberate pedagogical strategies implemented by teachers during classroom learning. This context makes SMPN 7 Pamekasan an important setting for examining how professional ethics are manifested and internalized through collaborative learning in a more heterogeneous educational environment. The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of teacher professional ethics as an integral component of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education. Unlike previous studies that treated professional ethics and collaborative learning as separate variables, this research investigates how ethical values are embedded in collaborative learning

practices and how they contribute to students' moral, social, and academic development within the context of a public junior secondary school.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method, namely, to explore the internalization of teachers' professional ethical values with collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (Islamic Education) subjects at SMPN 7 Pamekasan. Using a qualitative descriptive approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of behavior, social phenomena, interactions, and educational processes that naturally occur in the classroom environment. This approach is very appropriate for examining how teachers integrate professional ethical values into teaching practices and how these values influence collaborative learning activities (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The location of this research was SMPN 7 Pamekasan, East Java, Indonesia. The participants included Islamic Religious Education (Islamic Education) teachers and seventh-grade students actively involved in collaborative learning activities. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, considering their direct involvement in the implementation of collaborative learning and its relevance to the research objectives. The teachers served as primary informants, while the students served as supporting informants to provide a comprehensive understanding of the learning process (Nazir, 2011). Data were collected through three techniques: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations were conducted to observe teachers' teaching practices and identify how professional ethical values, such as responsibility, discipline, fairness, honesty, role modeling, and effective communication, were demonstrated during collaborative learning activities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Islamic Education teachers and selected students to gain more insight into their experiences, perceptions, and understanding of the implementation of professional ethics in the learning process. Documentation was conducted to support and validate the findings obtained from the observations and interviews. Documents analyzed included lesson plans, teaching materials, student assignments, attendance records, photographs of learning activities, and other relevant educational documents (Miles et al., 2014). The interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña consists of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction stage, relevant information is selected, organized, and categorized according to the research focus. Afterward, the data is presented systematically in narrative form to facilitate interpretation and understanding. Finally, conclusions are drawn and continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure the credibility and consistency of the findings. To ensure data reliability, this study employed source and technical triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from teachers and students, while technical triangulation involved cross-checking data accumulated from observations, interviews, and documentation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Teacher Professional Ethics Values Identified in Collaborative Learning

The results of classroom observations, interviews, and documentation revealed that the implementation of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SMPN 7 Pamekasan was strongly supported by the internalization of teacher professional ethics values. Six major ethical values were consistently observed throughout the teaching and learning process: responsibility, honesty, discipline, exemplary conduct, fairness, and effective communication.

Table 1. Teacher Professional Ethics Values Observed in Collaborative Learning

Ethical Value	Observation Findings	Impact on Students
Responsibility	Teacher prepared lesson plans, learning materials,	Students participated actively and learning

	and group activities systematically	activities ran effectively
Honesty	Transparent assessment and objective feedback	Increased student trust toward the teacher
Discipline	Teacher arrived on time and followed lesson schedules consistently	Students became more punctual and responsible
Exemplary Conduct	Teacher demonstrated respectful language and positive behavior	Students imitated positive attitudes and behaviors
Fairness	Equal opportunities were given to all students regardless of academic ability	Students felt respected and motivated to participate
Communication	Teacher facilitated discussions and encouraged student expression	Improved interaction and collaboration among students

The findings indicate that professional ethics were not merely theoretical principles but were actively demonstrated in classroom practices. These ethical values created a positive learning atmosphere that encouraged student engagement and collaboration.

3.2 Implementation of Collaborative Learning in Islamic Religious Education

Collaborative learning was implemented through group discussions, problem-solving activities, presentations, and peer-learning sessions. Students were divided into heterogeneous groups consisting of different academic abilities and backgrounds.

Table 2. Forms of Collaborative Learning Activities

Learning Activity	Teacher's Role	Student Participation
Group Discussion	Facilitator and guide	Sharing ideas and exchanging opinions
Problem Solving	Providing learning scenarios	Solving problems collaboratively
Group Presentation	Evaluator and motivator	Presenting discussion results
Peer Learning	Encouraging interaction	Helping peers understand concepts

Observation data showed that students were more actively involved in learning activities when collaborative strategies were applied. All students demonstrated increased levels of participation, cooperation, communication, and confidence in expressing their opinions. Interviews also revealed that students found conventional, teacher-centered instruction boring compared to collaborative learning, which they found more enjoyable. They felt more comfortable discussing religious concepts with their peers and appreciated the opportunity to share ideas during class activities.

3.3 The Role of Teacher Professional Ethics in Supporting Collaborative Learning

The findings demonstrate that teacher professional ethics significantly influenced the effectiveness of collaborative learning. Ethical behavior fostered a classroom environment characterized by trust, mutual respect, cooperation, and active participation.

Table 3. Contribution of Teacher Professional Ethics to Collaborative Learning

Ethical Value	Contribution to Collaborative Learning
Responsibility	Ensured structured and organized learning activities, materials, and group activities systematically

Honesty	Built trust between teachers and students
Discipline	Maintained classroom order and learning consistency
Exemplary Conduct	Encouraged positive student behavior
Fairness	Promoted equal participation among students
Communication	Facilitated effective interaction and teamwork

These findings indicate that collaborative learning cannot be separated from teachers' ethical competencies. Professional ethics function as the foundation that supports meaningful interaction and successful group learning activities.

3.4 Student Participation and Engagement in Collaborative Learning

The findings revealed that the internalization of teacher professional ethics values positively influenced student participation and engagement during collaborative learning activities. Classroom observations indicated that students became more active in expressing opinions, asking questions, contributing to group discussions, and completing collaborative assignments when teachers consistently demonstrated responsibility, fairness, and effective communication. Interview data further showed that students felt more comfortable participating in classroom discussions because they perceived the teacher as approachable, supportive, and respectful. The teacher's ethical behavior created a learning environment characterized by trust and mutual respect, which encouraged students to engage more confidently in collaborative activities.

Table 4. Student Participation Indicators during Collaborative Learning

Participation Indicator	Observation Results
Active involvement in group discussions	High
Willingness to express opinions	High
Responsibility for completing group tasks	High
Respect for different viewpoints	High
Cooperation among group members	High
Classroom interaction with the teacher	High

The observation results demonstrated that most students actively participated in collaborative activities and showed positive attitudes toward teamwork. Students exchange ideas and thoughts, provide feedback to their peers, and are able to solve learning problems collaboratively. This demonstrates that teachers' professional ethics impact not only classroom management but also the development of a collaborative learning culture. Furthermore, collaborative learning encourages positive interdependence among students, with each group member supporting one another in achieving shared learning goals. These findings align with the basic principles of collaborative learning, which emphasize interaction, shared responsibility, and mutual support among learners.

DISCUSSION

The Manifestation of Teacher Professional Ethics in IRE Classrooms

The findings demonstrate that professional ethics are manifested through teachers' responsibility, honesty, discipline, role modeling, fairness, and effective communication during collaborative Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning. These ethical values were not only reflected in teachers' adherence to professional duties but also observed in daily classroom interactions. For example, teachers consistently prepared learning materials, facilitated group discussions, provided objective assessments, and ensured that all students had equal opportunities to participate in classroom activities. Among these ethical values,

fairness emerged as one of the most influential factors in creating an inclusive collaborative learning environment. During classroom observations, teachers deliberately formed heterogeneous groups consisting of students with different academic abilities and encouraged each member to contribute ideas during discussions. This practice prevented the domination of high-achieving students and promoted equal participation among learners. Such findings support modern teacher ethics literature, which emphasizes that fairness involves providing equitable learning opportunities while respecting students' diverse backgrounds and abilities (Ilham, 2022a). From the perspective of Social Learning Theory proposed by Bandura, students learn appropriate behaviors through observation and imitation of significant role models. When teachers consistently demonstrate fairness, respect, and responsibility, students are more likely to internalize these values and reproduce them during peer interactions. Therefore, professional ethics function not only as a professional standard but also as a mechanism through which moral values are transmitted and reinforced in classroom settings.

Collaborative Learning Strategies as a Vehicle for Ethical Internalization

The study further reveals that collaborative learning serves as an effective medium for internalizing professional and moral values. Through group discussions, problem-solving activities, and shared responsibilities, students were provided with opportunities to practice cooperation, mutual respect, and accountability in authentic learning situations. These findings suggest that collaborative learning extends beyond academic objectives and contributes to character formation. The implementation of collaborative learning observed in this study reflects the characteristics described by Aswan, including active participation, shared responsibility, social interaction, and collective problem-solving (Aswan, 2016). Students were encouraged to exchange ideas, negotiate meanings, and complete tasks collectively. Such activities align with Vygotsky's social constructivist perspective, which argues that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and collaboration. Learning therefore becomes a process of both cognitive and social development. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, collaborative learning also provides opportunities for students to practice Islamic values such as *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), and *musyawarah* (consultation). The teacher's ethical conduct strengthens this process by creating a learning atmosphere characterized by trust, openness, and mutual respect. Consequently, ethical internalization occurs not only through direct instruction but also through repeated participation in collaborative experiences guided by ethical role models.

Impact on Student Academic and Social Outcomes

The findings indicate that the integration of professional ethics and collaborative learning positively influences students' academic and social development. Students demonstrated greater confidence in expressing opinions, improved participation during discussions, stronger cooperation skills, and increased responsibility for completing group assignments. These outcomes suggest that ethical teaching practices contribute to both learning effectiveness and character development. From an academic perspective, collaborative learning enabled students to achieve a deeper understanding of learning materials through peer interaction and shared problem-solving. This finding supports Dwi, who found that collaborative learning enhances student engagement, comprehension, and participation (Dwi, 2023; M. Mukhlisin et al., 2024a). The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that teacher ethics strengthen the effectiveness of collaborative learning through the creation of a supportive and inclusive classroom climate. From a social perspective, students developed greater respect for others, improved communication skills, and stronger teamwork abilities.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalization of teacher professional ethics values plays a significant role in supporting the effectiveness of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SMPN 7 Pamekasan. The findings reveal that professional ethical values, including responsibility, honesty, discipline, exemplary conduct, fairness, and effective communication, are consistently

demonstrated by teachers throughout the learning process and contribute positively to the creation of a conducive, inclusive, and student-centered learning environment. The implementation of collaborative learning enables students to actively participate in discussions, exchange ideas, solve problems collectively, and develop social skills such as cooperation, respect, and mutual responsibility. The study further indicates that the success of collaborative learning is closely associated with teachers' ability to apply professional ethical principles in their daily instructional practices. Ethical teachers are more capable of fostering trust, encouraging student engagement, and creating meaningful learning experiences that support both academic achievement and character development. This study contributes to the literature on teacher professionalism and collaborative learning by demonstrating that professional ethics serve as a foundational element for effective collaborative learning implementation in Islamic Religious Education. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening teachers' ethical competencies through continuous professional development programs, reflective practice, and ethics-based educational training. This study is limited to a single educational institution and focuses primarily on the perspectives of Islamic Religious Education teachers and students. Future research may involve multiple schools, employ mixed-methods approaches, or examine the relationship between teacher professional ethics and students' academic performance, character formation, and learning outcomes in broader educational contexts. Ultimately, strengthening teacher professional ethics remains essential for achieving educational goals, particularly in fostering students' moral character, religious values, and holistic development.

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