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Strengthening Academic Integrity among Generation Z in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: An Islamic Academic Ethics Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed higher education by providing Generation Z students with greater access to information, personalized learning, and enhanced academic productivity. However, the widespread adoption of generative AI has also introduced new ethical challenges, including plagiarism, excessive dependence on AI-generated content, diminished critical thinking, and declining academic responsibility. This study aims to examine the role of Islamic academic ethics in strengthening academic integrity among Generation Z in the era of Artificial Intelligence. Employing a qualitative approach through a narrative literature review, the study synthesizes contemporary literature on AI, academic integrity, and Islamic ethics published between 2023 and 2025. The findings indicate that existing approaches to AI governance primarily emphasize technical and regulatory principles, such as transparency, accountability, and fairness, while paying limited attention to the moral and spiritual dimensions of technology use. From an Islamic perspective, academic integrity extends beyond compliance with institutional regulations and is grounded in ethical values such as ṣidq (honesty), amānah (trustworthiness), 'adl (justice), mas'ūliyyah (responsibility), and maṣlaḥah (public welfare). These values provide a normative framework that guides the responsible use of AI without undermining intellectual originality or scholarly accountability. This study proposes a conceptual framework that integrates AI literacy, institutional governance, and Islamic academic ethics to promote responsible AI use in higher education. The study concludes that AI should function as a learning partner rather than a substitute for human reasoning, and that integrating Islamic academic ethics into higher education policies and practices can strengthen academic integrity while supporting ethical and sustainable digital transformation.

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought profound changes across various aspects of human life, including higher education. The emergence of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT and other large language model (LLM)-based applications, has transformed the way students search for

information, develop ideas, and complete academic assignments. On the one hand, AI enhances learning efficiency and expands access to knowledge. On the other hand, its widespread use without adequate ethical awareness has introduced new challenges to academic integrity. AI is no longer used merely as a learning aid but increasingly serves as a shortcut for completing academic tasks without engaging in critical thinking or scholarly reflection.

The growing adoption of AI among university students is supported by empirical evidence. The Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey 2024, involving 3,839 students from 16 countries, revealed that generative AI has become an integral part of students' daily academic activities. Most respondents reported using AI to search for information, summarize learning materials, brainstorm ideas, draft academic papers, and assist in completing coursework. At the same time, the survey indicated that students expect universities to establish clear ethical guidelines for AI use, recognizing its potential risks to originality, academic honesty, and learning quality. Similarly, UNESCO, through its *Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research*, emphasizes that the rapid adoption of generative AI has outpaced the development of appropriate policies and ethical frameworks in many countries. UNESCO advocates a human-centered approach to AI in education, highlighting the importance of academic integrity, transparency, accountability, and responsible AI use so that AI supports rather than replaces human intellectual capabilities (Digital Education Council, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

These developments suggest that the challenges facing higher education extend beyond technological innovation to a more fundamental issue: the erosion of ethical values. Sugiharto (Sugiharto, 2004) argues that contemporary challenges confronting ethics, science, and religion are no longer merely isolated cases but have questioned the very foundations of these disciplines. Ethical issues have shifted from theoretical and normative discussions toward pragmatic concerns. In practice, ethics is often treated as a subsidiary aspect of specific disciplines, particularly religion, rather than as a foundational principle guiding scientific inquiry and academic activities. Consequently, ethical considerations receive insufficient attention despite their essential role in knowledge production.

The limited integration of ethical principles within academic practices has contributed to what Kasali (Kasali, 2017) describes as academic disruption. Although the concept of disruption initially emerged in the fields of business and economics, it has increasingly been applied to education (Ohoitimur, 2018). In higher education, disruption is characterized by the rapid expansion of digital technologies that have transformed communication, learning processes, and knowledge production. Consistent with the concepts of *The Innovator's Dilemma* and *The Great Disruption*, the internet has transcended geographical boundaries and created a global village where information is readily accessible (Fukuyama, 2017). While these technological developments facilitate learning, they also create new opportunities for academic misconduct through the misuse of digital technologies (Ohoitimur, 2018).

One of the most significant manifestations of academic disruption today is the widespread use of Artificial Intelligence. AI is fundamentally an innovation that offers considerable benefits to education when used appropriately. However, in practice, AI is increasingly employed as a tool for academic manipulation rather than as an aid to learning. Instead of supporting students' intellectual development, AI is often used to replace the cognitive processes involved in completing assignments, writing academic papers, and generating written content automatically. This phenomenon indicates that the primary concern lies not in AI itself but in the lack of ethical awareness governing its use.

Moreover, AI-generated information does not always meet acceptable standards of scientific validity. AI systems frequently produce responses without reliable scholarly sources or even generate fabricated information, commonly referred to as AI hallucinations. Minasny, Fiantis, and Widatmanti (Minasny et al., 2023), writing in *The Conversation*, emphasize that AI-generated responses should always be critically verified because, despite appearing convincing, they may contain superficial,

inaccurate, or misleading information. Such conditions may weaken students' critical thinking abilities when AI-generated outputs are accepted uncritically without proper scholarly evaluation (Muhammad Hisyam Nashir et al., 2024).

These concerns become even more significant when viewed in relation to Generation Z, a cohort that has grown up surrounded by the internet and digital technologies and is therefore widely recognized as digital natives (Silitonga & Tampomuri, 2024). Generation Z currently constitutes the majority of university students, making AI an inseparable component of their academic activities. However, without a strong ethical foundation, the convenience offered by AI may foster a culture of instant gratification, increase technological dependency, and weaken students' commitment to academic honesty.

From an Islamic perspective, academic activities constitute part of *ṭalab al-'ilm* (the pursuit of knowledge), making every stage of acquiring, developing, and disseminating knowledge an act of worship. Consequently, academic practices should be grounded in Islamic ethical values, including *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility), and *itqān* (professional excellence). These values form the foundation of academic integrity by recognizing knowledge as a trust that must be acquired and communicated truthfully (Al-Ghazali, 2011). The Qur'an explicitly commands believers:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice (qawlan sadīdan)." (Qur'an 33:70)

Likewise, the principle of *amānah* is emphasized in the Qur'an:

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due..." (Qur'an 4:58)

Within academic contexts, *amānah* is reflected in producing original scholarly work, acknowledging intellectual contributions appropriately, and using sources responsibly. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated:

"Whoever deceives us is not one of us." (Muslim, 2007)

This prophetic tradition establishes a moral foundation that regards all forms of academic deception-including plagiarism and the misuse of AI to produce work falsely presented as one's own intellectual effort-as inconsistent with Islamic ethical principles. Therefore, AI is not prohibited in education; rather, it should be regarded as a *wasīlah* (instrument) that supports learning without replacing the intellectual responsibility of the learner.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between AI and academic integrity from three major perspectives. First, many studies focus on digital literacy and students' readiness to utilize AI for learning. Second, other studies emphasize institutional regulations and governance concerning AI use in higher education. Third, several scholars discuss AI ethics primarily from philosophical, technological, or educational policy perspectives. For example, Johnston (Gallant et al., 2026) investigated students' perceptions of generative AI to inform institutional policies on academic integrity.

In Indonesia, Novance (Silitonga & Tampomuri, 2024) reported that students often rely on AI because of time constraints, thereby increasing the likelihood of academic misconduct, including plagiarism. Similarly, Rifqi and Fatiya (Bafadal & Rosyid, 2024) highlighted AI as an effective learning medium suited to the characteristics of Generation Z because it enhances learning efficiency and interactivity. Nevertheless, these studies primarily address AI from pedagogical and general normative perspectives and do not sufficiently explain how moral values can guide students' behavior in using AI responsibly.

Based on this review, an important research gap remains. Existing studies rarely integrate Islamic academic ethics as a normative framework for strengthening academic integrity in the era of Artificial Intelligence, particularly among Generation Z. Yet, Islamic ethical principles such as *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), and *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility) provide a strong moral

foundation for promoting responsible AI use. Therefore, this study offers a distinct perspective by positioning Islamic academic ethics not merely as a moral foundation but as a conceptual framework for strengthening academic integrity among university students in responding to the challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence in higher education.

Method

This study employed a qualitative research design using a non-systematic literature review. This method involves the collection, identification, selection, analysis, and synthesis of relevant literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of a particular phenomenon or concept. In addition to summarizing previous research findings, a literature review aims to identify research gaps, develop conceptual perspectives, and provide critical evaluation and recommendations for existing studies (Ihksan et al., 2023).

The research was conducted through five stages. The first stage involved literature identification, in which relevant scholarly publications were collected from major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink (Abadi et al., 2024). Literature searches were performed using combinations of keywords such as *"Islamic academic ethics," "academic integrity," "artificial intelligence," "generative AI," "Generation Z," "Islamic ethics and AI,"* and *"academic dishonesty,"* along with their Indonesian equivalents, including *"etika akademik Islam," "integritas akademik," "kecerdasan buatan,"* and *"Generasi Z."*

The second stage consisted of literature selection based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The selected studies were peer-reviewed journal articles published within the last ten years that addressed the use of AI in education, academic integrity, academic ethics, or Islamic ethics, and were available in full-text format. Following the screening process, 30 articles met the inclusion criteria and were selected for further review.

The third stage involved literature evaluation and analysis. During this phase, each article was assessed based on its relevance to the research objectives, the quality of its discussion, and its contribution to the development of the concept of Islamic academic ethics in the context of AI use. The evaluation identified 7 core articles as the most relevant and suitable for in-depth analysis.

The fourth stage comprised data extraction and synthesis, in which the principal findings of each selected article were identified and organized into several thematic categories. These themes included the application of AI in education, challenges to academic integrity, the characteristics of Generation Z as digital natives, and the principles of Islamic academic ethics governing the ethical use of technology.

The fifth and final stage involved interpretation and discussion of the findings. At this stage, the synthesized literature was critically analyzed to explain how Islamic academic ethical values-namely *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), and *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility)-can serve as a normative framework for strengthening academic integrity in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

Through this literature review, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between AI utilization, academic integrity, and the values of Islamic academic ethics. The findings are expected to contribute conceptually by proposing an Islamic academic ethics framework that can serve as a normative foundation for the responsible use of AI in higher education, particularly among Generation Z.

Result and Discussion

1. The Use of Artificial Intelligence among Generation Z: Opportunities and Challenges to Academic Integrity

Based on the literature search, 30 articles relevant to the research topic were identified. Following a selection process based on thematic relevance, publication quality, and contribution to the research

objectives, 7 key articles were selected for in-depth analysis. The synthesis of these studies indicates that the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in educational settings has become an inseparable aspect of Generation Z's academic life. As a generation that has grown up within a digital ecosystem (digital natives), Generation Z demonstrates a high level of adaptability to technological innovations, including generative AI applications such as ChatGPT. This phenomenon has produced two simultaneous consequences: enhanced learning effectiveness and the emergence of new challenges to academic integrity.

Most of the studies reviewed suggest that AI contributes positively to students' learning processes. Nashir (Muhammad Hisyam Nashir et al., 2024) reported a very strong relationship between the use of ChatGPT and the fulfillment of students' academic needs, with a correlation coefficient of 0.834. Their findings indicate that AI assists students in obtaining information, developing ideas, organizing writing frameworks, and improving efficiency in completing academic assignments. Similarly, Zulfikasari (Zulfikasari et al., 2024) found that approximately 92% of Generation Z students use ChatGPT as a learning companion, particularly for answering complex questions, identifying preliminary references, and preparing presentations. These findings demonstrate that AI has evolved from being merely a search engine into a digital academic assistant that supports the learning process.

These findings are consistent with those of Bafadal and Rosyid, who argue that AI effectively accommodates the learning preferences of Generation Z, which favor interactive, personalized, technology-driven, and rapid learning experiences. AI enables students to receive immediate feedback, thereby creating a more flexible and adaptive learning environment compared with conventional instructional methods. Consequently, AI has considerable potential to improve the quality of education when employed as a tool to support students' thinking processes rather than as a substitute for their intellectual engagement (Bafadal & Rosyid, 2024).

Nevertheless, the literature also demonstrates that the increasing adoption of AI among Generation Z has been accompanied by a growing risk of violations of academic integrity. Silitonga and Tampomuri reported that students frequently rely on AI due to time constraints in completing assignments. As a result, AI is no longer used merely as a learning aid but increasingly serves as a shortcut for producing academic work instantly. This convenience has contributed to higher incidences of plagiarism, the use of AI-generated content without proper attribution, and other forms of academic dishonesty. These findings indicate that the primary issue lies not in AI technology itself but in its irresponsible use without adequate moral accountability (Silitonga & Tampomuri, 2024).

This concern is further supported by Chan and Lee, who identified generational differences in perceptions of AI. Generation Z students tend to view AI optimistically, considering it a tool that enhances productivity, efficiency, and learning quality. In contrast, educators from Generation X and the Millennial generation express greater concern about excessive dependence on AI, particularly when the technology begins to replace students' critical thinking processes. These differing perspectives suggest that the high level of AI acceptance among Generation Z should be accompanied by clear ethical guidelines to ensure that AI use remains within the boundaries of academic integrity (Chan & Lee, 2023).

A similar conclusion was reached by Zalisman, who examined the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence among Islamic Education students at three Islamic higher education institutions in Riau Province, Indonesia. The study found that although students demonstrated a relatively good understanding of academic ethics and Islamic values, they continued to exhibit weaknesses in awareness of plagiarism, compliance with academic regulations, and the responsible use of AI. These findings suggest that students' understanding of Islamic values has not yet been fully internalized into their academic behavior, particularly when interacting with AI technologies. Therefore, efforts to improve digital literacy should be integrated with the reinforcement of Islamic ethical values to ensure that AI use does not compromise academic integrity.

Beyond the misuse of AI, another major concern highlighted in the literature is the quality of AI-generated information. Generative AI operates on language probabilities and training data, meaning that it does not always produce accurate or scientifically reliable information. AI systems are also susceptible to generating hallucinations, namely responses that appear convincing but are not supported by valid evidence or credible sources. Consequently, students who rely on AI without verifying scholarly references risk obtaining inaccurate information or even citing non-existent sources. Therefore, AI should not be regarded as a substitute for critical thinking or scholarly literature review but rather as a complementary tool that supports the learning process.

A broader perspective is offered by Elmahjub, who argues that the development of AI raises not only technical concerns but also ethical challenges related to fairness, transparency, accountability, privacy, and human welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). According to Elmahjub, prevailing AI ethics frameworks, which are largely dominated by Western perspectives, have not fully accommodated the diversity of cultural and religious values present in global society. Consequently, he advocates a more pluralistic ethical approach that incorporates Islamic values as one of the normative frameworks for developing responsible AI governance (Elmahjub, 2023).

This perspective is reinforced by Ali (Ali et al., 2025), who proposed the concept of Trusteeship Ethics (I'timāni Ethics) as an Islamic ethical framework for AI. This approach positions human beings as trustees (*amānah*) who are accountable to Allah, fellow human beings, and all of creation in their use of technology. Accordingly, AI should not be evaluated solely on the basis of its practical benefits but also in terms of users' moral responsibility, honesty, and accountability. AI is therefore viewed as a means of promoting *maṣlaḥah* (the common good) rather than a tool that diminishes human intellectual responsibility.

Based on the synthesis of these studies, it can be concluded that AI is fundamentally an innovation that offers significant benefits for Generation Z's learning processes. However, the convenience provided by AI also poses substantial risks to academic integrity when its use is not guided by moral values. Therefore, the primary challenge facing higher education is not to restrict the use of AI but to establish an ethical framework capable of guiding its responsible utilization. Within this context, Islamic academic ethics provides a relevant normative foundation for ensuring that AI use remains aligned with the principles of *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility), and *'adl* (justice) in academic activities.

2. Academic Integrity in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: A Literature-Based Analysis

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has fundamentally transformed the paradigm of academic integrity in higher education. Before the emergence of generative AI, violations of academic integrity were generally limited to conventional plagiarism, data fabrication, data falsification, and collusion in completing academic assignments. However, the introduction of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT has made these forms of misconduct increasingly complex, as AI is now capable of generating coherent texts, arguments, and even scholarly papers that closely resemble human intellectual work. Consequently, the distinction between using AI as a learning aid and using it as a substitute for intellectual effort has become increasingly blurred.

Most of the studies reviewed suggest that the central issue surrounding AI use lies not in the technology itself but in the way users employ it. Silitonga and Tampomuri found that many students rely on AI as an instant solution for completing academic assignments due to time constraints, heavy academic workloads, and the desire to achieve quick results. As a result, AI is no longer used merely as a tool for exploring knowledge but increasingly functions as a means of producing academic work that is subsequently claimed as the students' own intellectual output. Such practices violate the principle of academic honesty because they eliminate the processes of critical thinking, analysis, and reflection that constitute the essence of meaningful learning (Silitonga & Tampomuri, 2024).

These findings are consistent with those reported by Zalisman, whose study of Generative Artificial Intelligence use among Islamic Education students at three Islamic higher education institutions in Riau Province revealed that, although students demonstrated a relatively good understanding of Islamic values and academic ethics, they still exhibited weaknesses in awareness of plagiarism, compliance with academic regulations, and the responsible use of AI. Specifically, the study found that 45% of respondents demonstrated a low level of understanding regarding plagiarism, 40% showed low compliance with academic regulations, and 35% reported low levels of responsible AI use. In contrast, students' understanding of academic ethics and Islamic values was comparatively stronger. These findings suggest that knowledge of ethical principles does not automatically translate into ethical academic behavior. Therefore, educational strategies should integrate digital literacy with the internalization of Islamic ethical values to promote the responsible use of AI (Zalisman, 2023).

These findings reveal a gap between moral knowing and moral action. Although students recognize that plagiarism is unethical, the convenience offered by AI often diminishes their commitment to maintaining academic honesty. This indicates that academic integrity cannot be established solely through knowledge of academic regulations but also requires character development that enables students to exercise self-control when confronted with the convenience of advanced technologies.

Another issue widely discussed in the literature is the decline in critical thinking resulting from excessive dependence on AI. Nashir et aland Zulfikasari et al demonstrated that AI enhances learning efficiency by providing rapid access to information and automatically generating writing outlines. However, when students accept AI-generated outputs without critical evaluation or scholarly verification, AI reduces their cognitive engagement in the learning process. In other words, while AI can increase academic productivity, it may simultaneously diminish the quality of students' reasoning if used excessively (Muhammad Hisyam Nashir et al., 2024; Zulfikasari et al., 2024).

This risk is further exacerbated by the inherent limitations of generative AI in producing scientifically valid information. AI operates by identifying statistical patterns within training data and may therefore generate information that appears plausible but is, in fact, inaccurate—a phenomenon commonly referred to as AI hallucination. In academic contexts, this may lead students to rely on invalid references, present inaccurate facts, or even cite sources that have never existed. Consequently, critical thinking and information literacy remain indispensable competencies that cannot be replaced by AI.

From a broader perspective, Murzaki argues that academic integrity should not be narrowly defined as the prevention of plagiarism. Rather, it represents a scholarly culture built upon honesty, transparency, accountability, social responsibility, and respect for the scientific process. According to Murzaki, fostering academic integrity requires ethics education that is integrated into curricula, academic supervision, institutional research culture, and faculty role modeling. Such an approach is considerably more effective than relying solely on plagiarism detection software because academic integrity is fundamentally a matter of character rather than mere compliance with institutional regulations (Murzaki, 2025).

This perspective suggests that the greatest challenge facing higher education in the AI era is not merely monitoring students' academic outputs but cultivating an academic culture in which honesty becomes an integral component of scholarly identity. Although plagiarism detection tools remain important mechanisms for academic oversight, they cannot resolve the underlying problem if students lack the moral awareness necessary to use AI responsibly. Therefore, efforts to strengthen academic integrity should prioritize the cultivation of ethical values and character rather than focusing exclusively on surveillance and regulatory enforcement.

From an international perspective, Elmahjub argues that ethical AI governance should be grounded in the principles of fairness, accountability, transparency, and human welfare. According to Elmahjub, the use of AI should not be evaluated solely in terms of technological efficiency but must also consider its

implications for human dignity and the common good (*maṣlaḥah*). Accordingly, AI should function as a tool that supports responsible human decision-making rather than replacing human moral responsibility (Elmahjub, 2023).

This view is reinforced by Ali et al, who propose the concept of Trusteeship Ethics (I'timāni Ethics), which positions human beings as trustees (*amānah*) in the use of technology. Within this framework, AI utilization should always reflect human responsibility toward Allah, knowledge, and society. Consequently, the success of AI should not be measured merely by its speed or efficiency in completing tasks but also by the extent to which it is employed honestly, responsibly, and in ways that promote the common good (*maṣlaḥah*) (Ali et al., 2025).

These findings demonstrate that the crisis of academic integrity in the era of AI is fundamentally a moral crisis rather than a technological one. AI is merely a tool that accelerates academic activities, whereas the decision to use it ethically or misuse it ultimately rests with human users. Therefore, strengthening academic integrity requires more than the development of AI governance policies or improvements in digital literacy; it also necessitates the internalization of moral values capable of guiding students' academic behavior.

Based on this analysis, academic integrity in the age of Artificial Intelligence should be understood as the integration of digital competence, critical thinking, and moral character. These three dimensions complement one another in shaping responsible academic conduct. Within the context of Islamic higher education, moral character derives not only from institutional codes of academic ethics but also from the principles of Islamic academic ethics, including *ṣidq* (honesty), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), and *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility). These values provide the conceptual foundation for promoting the ethical use of AI and safeguarding academic integrity among Generation Z.

3. Islamic Academic Ethics as a Normative Framework for the Use of Artificial Intelligence

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has encouraged the emergence of various ethical frameworks to regulate its development and application. Most contemporary AI ethics frameworks are dominated by Western perspectives that emphasize principles such as fairness, transparency, privacy, accountability, and non-maleficence. Although these principles make significant contributions to AI governance, they primarily focus on procedural and regulatory dimensions and do not fully address the spiritual and moral foundations that shape human behavior. Consequently, recent studies have increasingly advocated for a more pluralistic ethical approach that incorporates religious values as an integral component of global AI governance.

From an Islamic perspective, technology is fundamentally regarded as part of humanity's endeavor to utilize knowledge for the realization of public welfare. Islam therefore does not view AI as a technology to be rejected; rather, it is considered a means (*wasīlah*) whose use should be directed toward achieving the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*). Accordingly, AI should be evaluated not only on the basis of its technical benefits but also according to the extent to which it promotes public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) while preventing harm (*mafsadah*).

This perspective is comprehensively explained by Elmahjub, who developed the framework of Islamic Ethics for Artificial Intelligence. According to Elmahjub, Islamic AI ethics is grounded in the methodology of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, which integrates the normative sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah with rational reasoning to address contemporary challenges. A central concept within this framework is *maṣlaḥah*, the principle of public benefit aligned with the objectives of Islamic law. In the context of AI, *maṣlaḥah* serves as the primary criterion for assessing whether a technological innovation genuinely benefits humanity without compromising justice, human dignity, privacy, or moral responsibility. Consequently, AI should be developed and utilized to enhance human welfare while safeguarding universal ethical values (Elmahjub, 2023).

This framework demonstrates that AI is not merely a matter of technological efficiency but also a profound moral concern. An AI system may be technically effective yet ethically deficient if its use encourages academic manipulation, plagiarism, or scientific dishonesty. Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, the success of AI should not be measured solely by its ability to generate information rapidly but also by its contribution to promoting public welfare, justice, and social responsibility.

A more comprehensive ethical approach is proposed by Fatima Ali et al through the concept of Trusteeship Ethics (*I'timāni Ethics*). Unlike approaches that rely primarily on legal regulations, this framework positions *amānah* (trustworthiness) as the foundational principle of AI ethics. The authors argue that human beings are both *khalīfah* (vicegerents) and trustees who are accountable to Allah SWT for the responsible management of knowledge and technology. Accordingly, every use of AI is accountable not only to educational institutions or society but ultimately to Allah as the highest source of moral authority (Ali et al., 2025).

Fatima further explain that Trusteeship Ethics is founded upon three interconnected dimensions. The first is the Ontological Covenant, which recognizes humanity's relationship with Allah as the Creator and requires that all scholarly activities be oriented toward divine values. The second is the Epistemological Covenant, which emphasizes the moral responsibility to acquire, develop, and disseminate knowledge honestly and responsibly. The third is the Existential Covenant, which highlights humanity's responsibility toward fellow human beings and the environment by ensuring that technology is employed for the collective good. Together, these three dimensions demonstrate that AI use cannot be separated from the spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions that characterize Islamic ethics (Ali et al., 2025).

When contextualized within higher education, this framework suggests that students' use of AI should not be limited to complying with technical requirements, such as providing AI disclosure statements or avoiding plagiarism. More fundamentally, students should recognize that all academic activities constitute a scholarly trust (*amānah*) for which they will ultimately be held accountable. Consequently, every scholarly work should reflect an honest, original, and responsible intellectual process.

This perspective is reinforced by Murzaki, who argues that academic integrity from an Islamic perspective extends beyond the mere absence of plagiarism. Rather, it encompasses the entire process of knowledge production based on honesty, transparency, accountability, and social responsibility. According to Murzaki, a culture of academic integrity cannot be established solely through monitoring systems or disciplinary sanctions. Instead, it must be cultivated through ethics education, scholarly supervision, and the exemplary conduct of lecturers in everyday academic life. Academic integrity, therefore, represents the manifestation of moral character developed through continuous educational processes (Murzaki, 2025).

Similarly, Pramudita explains that AI has fundamentally transformed the learning experiences of Generation Z. AI has the potential to enhance learning motivation, accelerate access to information, and assist students in understanding complex academic materials. However, without adequate Islamic ethical education, AI may also contribute to declining academic morality, the normalization of instant learning practices, and excessive technological dependence. Therefore, strengthening Islamic ethics should become an inseparable component of digital education to ensure that technological advancement remains aligned with students' moral and character development (Pramudita, 2025).

A more practical perspective is introduced by Rizqia and Mustofa through the concept of Islamic Ethics-by-Design. This approach emphasizes that Islamic values should not only regulate the behavior of AI users but should also be embedded within the design and governance of AI systems themselves. The authors propose that AI development should be guided by the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, namely the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and

property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*). Within educational settings, these principles are reflected in responsible information management, respect for privacy, verification of information sources, prevention of misinformation, and the use of AI for the common good (Rizqia & Mustofa, 2025).

Based on these perspectives, it can be concluded that Islamic academic ethics encompasses a broader scope than conventional academic codes of conduct. Conventional academic ethics generally prescribe acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in scholarly activities, whereas Islamic academic ethics extends beyond outward conduct by cultivating an inner moral consciousness that regards scholarly work as both an act of worship (*ʿibādah*) and a sacred trust (*amānah*). Consequently, students avoid plagiarism not merely because they fear academic sanctions but because they believe that honesty is a religious obligation and an expression of accountability before Allah SWT.

Therefore, the use of AI in higher education should not be viewed solely as a threat to academic integrity. Instead, AI can serve as a valuable instrument for supporting learning when its use is guided by the Islamic values of *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *ʿadl* (justice), *masʾūliyyah* (responsibility), and *maṣlaḥah* (public welfare). Collectively, these values establish a normative framework that not only governs how AI should be used but also directs its purpose toward the advancement of knowledge with dignity, integrity, and ethical responsibility. In this regard, Islamic academic ethics provides a robust conceptual foundation for addressing the challenges of academic integrity in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

4. Implications of Islamic Academic Ethics for Strengthening Generation Z's Academic Integrity

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that the primary challenge posed by the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education lies not in the advancement of the technology itself but in the moral preparedness of its users. AI is fundamentally a value-neutral instrument whose positive or negative impacts depend largely on the ethical values that guide human behavior. Consequently, strengthening academic integrity cannot rely solely on restricting AI use or implementing plagiarism detection systems. Instead, it requires the cultivation of ethical values capable of shaping students' academic character in a sustainable manner.

The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic academic ethics provides a more comprehensive normative framework than conventional approaches to academic ethics. Conventional academic ethics generally emphasizes compliance with institutional regulations, including prohibitions against plagiarism, citation requirements, and sanctions for academic misconduct. In contrast, Islamic academic ethics extends beyond regulatory compliance by fostering the awareness that scholarly activities constitute a sacred trust (*amānah*) for which individuals are ultimately accountable before Allah SWT. Consequently, the motivation to uphold honesty in academic work is driven not merely by fear of institutional sanctions but by spiritual consciousness and moral responsibility.

Within the Islamic tradition, the pursuit of knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*) is regarded as an act of worship that requires honesty and accountability. This principle is emphasized in the Qur'an (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2019):

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice (qawlan sadīdan)." (Qur'an 33:70)

This verse implies that every form of communication, including scholarly writing, should be grounded in truthfulness and integrity. In the context of AI, the principle of *qawlan sadīdan* requires students not to present AI-generated outputs as their own intellectual work without independent analysis, verification, and critical development. Accordingly, the use of AI is ethically justifiable only when it preserves the authenticity of the author's intellectual process and personal responsibility.

This principle is further reinforced by the concept of *amānah*, which constitutes one of the fundamental pillars of Islamic academic ethics. Allah SWT states:

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due." (Qur'an 4:58)

Within academic settings, *amānah* extends beyond maintaining the trust of educational institutions. It encompasses the responsibility to acquire, develop, and disseminate knowledge truthfully and responsibly. Consistent with the concept of Trusteeship Ethics proposed by Fatima, every application of AI should be understood as part of humanity's trust as *khalīfah* (vicegerents) on earth. Technology should never replace human moral responsibility; rather, it should function as an instrument that enables individuals to fulfill that responsibility more effectively (Ali et al., 2025).

In addition to honesty and trustworthiness, the principle of *masʾūliyyah* (responsibility) plays a crucial role in the ethical use of AI. Students are accountable not only for the final scholarly product but also for every stage of the academic process. This responsibility includes verifying AI-generated information, critically evaluating the sources used, and ensuring that every argument is supported by reliable scholarly evidence. Consequently, AI should function as a tool that enhances critical thinking rather than replacing it.

Another equally important principle is *ʿadl* (justice). Within academic contexts, justice requires appropriate recognition of every individual's intellectual contribution. Using AI without proper disclosure or disregarding the contributions of other scholars constitutes a form of academic injustice because it violates intellectual property rights and undermines the recognition owed to others. Islamic academic ethics therefore requires transparency in AI use, proper acknowledgment of knowledge sources, and respect for the intellectual rights of others.

The findings of this study further indicate that the concept of *maṣlaḥah* possesses strong relevance in guiding AI utilization within higher education. According to Elmahjub, public welfare constitutes the primary objective of both AI development and implementation. A technology can be considered ethically acceptable when its benefits outweigh its potential harms and when its application remains consistent with the objectives of Islamic law. Within higher education, AI fulfills the principle of *maṣlaḥah* when it enhances learning quality, broadens access to knowledge, assists students in understanding complex concepts, and supports research innovation without undermining critical thinking or academic integrity (Elmahjub, 2023).

One important practical implication of these findings is the need for a transformation of academic policies in higher education institutions in response to the AI era. Policies centered primarily on restricting AI use are increasingly inadequate because AI has become an integral component of modern educational ecosystems. Instead, universities should adopt policies that position AI as a learning partner while maintaining the principles of Islamic academic ethics. Such an approach may be implemented through the development of institutional guidelines for responsible AI use, the integration of AI literacy and digital ethics into university curricula, professional development programs for lecturers and students regarding responsible AI utilization, and the cultivation of an academic culture founded upon honesty, transparency, and accountability.

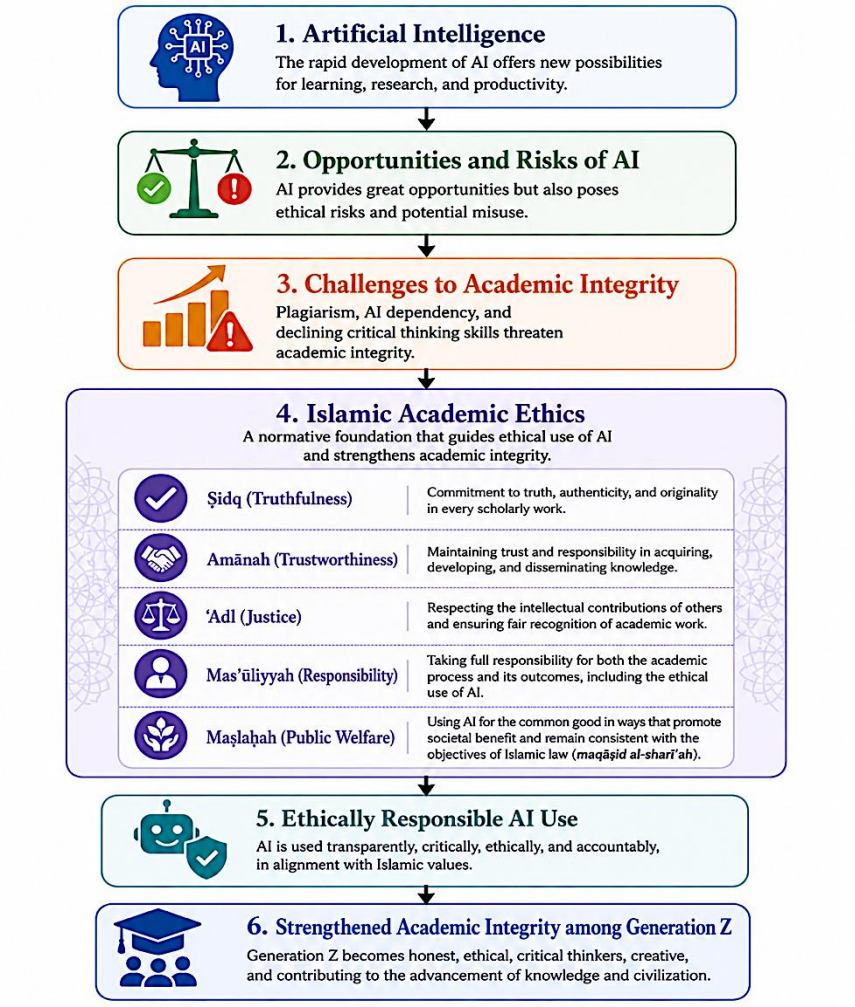
The findings reported by Murzaki support this perspective by emphasizing that academic integrity cannot be established solely through surveillance mechanisms or disciplinary sanctions. Rather, it must be cultivated through ethics education integrated into the curriculum, effective academic supervision, and the development of a scholarly culture that consistently models ethical behavior. Accordingly, Islamic academic ethics should become an integral component of the educational process rather than merely an additional topic within specific courses (Murzaki, 2025).

Furthermore, the concept of Islamic Ethics-by-Design proposed by Rizqia and Mustofa provides a forward-looking direction for AI governance within educational institutions. This framework argues that Islamic ethical values should be embedded from the earliest stages of AI system design through the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*: the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-ʿaql*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), and property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*). Within academic environments, these principles may be operationalized through policies promoting information verification, respect for privacy,

protection of intellectual property rights, and the responsible use of AI to support learning and scientific advancement (Rizqia & Mustofa, 2025).

Based on the overall synthesis of the literature, this study proposes that strengthening academic integrity in the era of Artificial Intelligence requires the integration of three complementary dimensions. The first is the technological dimension, which emphasizes AI literacy to enable students to use AI critically and responsibly. The second is the institutional dimension, which involves developing adaptive academic policies that accommodate AI while upholding the principles of academic integrity. The third is the moral-spiritual dimension, which focuses on internalizing the values of Islamic academic ethics, including *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility), and *maṣlaḥah* (public welfare). These three dimensions are mutually reinforcing and collectively establish a conceptual framework capable of guiding the ethical use of AI in higher education.

In conclusion, this study argues that strengthening academic integrity in the age of Artificial Intelligence cannot rely solely on technological advancement or institutional regulation. Rather, it must be rooted in the values of Islamic academic ethics, which regard knowledge as a sacred trust (*amānah*), scholarly activities as acts of worship (*'ibādah*), and technology as a means of promoting public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). Through this perspective, AI is understood not as a threat to higher education but as a valuable instrument that can advance knowledge while preserving honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity.



Picture 1. Framework for Strengthening Generation Z's Academic Integrity Through Islamic Academic Ethics in the AI Era

Conclusion

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed higher education, particularly for Generation Z, who demonstrate a high level of adaptability to digital technologies. AI offers substantial benefits in supporting learning processes by improving efficiency, accelerating access to information, and assisting students in completing academic tasks. Nevertheless, these advantages are accompanied by emerging challenges to academic integrity, including increasing dependence on AI, plagiarism, diminished critical thinking skills, and reduced intellectual responsibility in scholarly work. Therefore, the central issue lies not in AI as a technology itself but in its use without an adequate ethical foundation.

The findings of this literature review indicate that strengthening academic integrity in the AI era cannot rely solely on institutional regulations, plagiarism detection systems, or digital literacy initiatives. Rather, it requires an ethical framework capable of cultivating students' moral character and ethical awareness. In this regard, Islamic academic ethics provides a comprehensive normative framework grounded in the values of *ṣidq* (truthfulness), *amānah* (trustworthiness), *'adl* (justice), *mas'ūliyyah* (responsibility), and *maṣlaḥah* (public welfare). These values not only discourage academic misconduct but also foster the understanding that scholarly activities constitute both a sacred trust (*amānah*) and an act of worship (*'ibādah*), for which individuals are accountable before Allah SWT and society.

This study further argues that AI should be positioned as a learning partner rather than a substitute for students' critical thinking, creativity, and intellectual responsibility. By integrating Islamic academic ethics into institutional policies, curricula, and academic culture, higher education institutions can promote the responsible use of AI while continuing to encourage educational innovation without compromising academic integrity. Accordingly, this article contributes a conceptual framework for strengthening academic integrity through Islamic academic ethics, offering a relevant foundation for developing AI governance in higher education during the era of digital transformation.

This study is limited by its reliance on a literature review; therefore, the proposed conceptual framework has not yet been empirically validated. Future research should empirically develop and examine this framework using quantitative, mixed-methods, or policy-oriented research across diverse higher education contexts. Furthermore, empirical studies are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating AI literacy with Islamic academic ethical values in fostering responsible AI use and strengthening academic integrity among Generation Z university students.

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