THE CONCEPT OF TA'DIB IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION AS A SOLUTION TO THE DIGITAL ETHICS CRISIS AMONG STUDENTS: THE PERSPECTIVE OF SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS

KONSEP TA'DIB DALAM PENDIDIKAN ISLAM SEBAGAI SOLUSI KRISIS ETIKA DIGITAL DI KALANGAN SISWA: PERSPEKTIF SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS

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Abstract

The increasingly pervasive development of digital technology has not been fully accompanied by the strengthening of ethical awareness in its practical use. This situation is reflected in various phenomena among students, including the tendency toward excessive use of social media, the declining quality of ethics in online communication, and the weakening of mutual respect in digital spaces. These conditions indicate that digital ethics cannot be understood merely as a technological problem but are closely related to the direction of values and the fundamental goals of education. Departing from this reality, this study aims to examine the concept of ta'dib in the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas as an alternative conceptual framework for responding to the digital ethics crisis from the perspective of Islamic education. This study employs a qualitative approach through library research by critically examining al-Attas's major works as well as national and international scholarly journal articles from the past five years relevant to digital ethics and Islamic education. The findings reveal that the weakening of digital ethics is rooted in an educational paradigm that tends to emphasize cognitive aspects and technical skill mastery, while the formation of adab as the core of education is neglected. Within this framework, the concept of ta'dib offers a holistic philosophical foundation by positioning education as a process of internalizing adab that integrates intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions in an integral manner. Therefore, this study concludes that the application of the concept of ta'dib has the potential to serve as a strategic foundation for building sustainable, value-oriented digital ethics among students that are relevant to the challenges of Islamic education in the digital era.

Keywords : ta'dib; Islamic education; digital ethics; Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas; adab.

Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi digital yang semakin meresap belum sepenuhnya disertai dengan penguatan kesadaran etika dalam penggunaan praktisnya. Situasi ini tercermin dalam berbagai fenomena di kalangan siswa, termasuk kecenderungan penggunaan media sosial yang berlebihan, menurunnya kualitas etika dalam komunikasi online, dan melemahnya rasa saling menghormati di ruang digital.

Kondisi ini menunjukkan bahwa etika digital tidak bisa hanya dipahami sebagai masalah teknologi, tetapi sangat terkait dengan arah nilai dan tujuan fundamental pendidikan. Berangkat dari realitas ini, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji konsep ta'dib dalam pemikiran Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas sebagai kerangka konseptual alternatif untuk merespons krisis etika digital dari perspektif pendidikan Islam. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui penelitian kepustakaan dengan mengkaji secara kritis karya-karya utama al-Attas serta artikel jurnal ilmiah nasional dan internasional dari lima tahun terakhir yang relevan dengan etika digital dan pendidikan Islam. Temuan ini mengungkapkan bahwa melemahnya etika digital berakar pada paradigma pendidikan yang cenderung menekankan aspek kognitif dan penguasaan keterampilan teknis, sementara pembentukan adab sebagai inti pendidikan diabaikan. Dalam kerangka ini, konsep ta'dib menawarkan landasan filosofis yang holistik dengan menempatkan pendidikan sebagai proses internalisasi adab yang mengintegrasikan dimensi intelektual, moral, dan spiritual secara integral. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penerapan konsep ta'dib berpotensi menjadi landasan strategis untuk membangun etika digital yang berkelanjutan dan berorientasi nilai di kalangan siswa yang relevan dengan tantangan pendidikan Islam di era digital..

Kata Kunci : ta'dib; pendidikan Islam; etika digital; Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas; adab.

1. INTRODUCTION

The digitalization of education has shaped new modes of learning processes, particularly in students' activities of accessing, managing, and producing knowledge. The ease and speed of information flows have opened broad spaces for pedagogical innovation. Notably, this dynamic has also been accompanied by the emergence of increasingly complex digital ethics issues. Recent studies have documented a rise in technology-based academic plagiarism, uncontrolled use of social media, declining ethics of online communication, and the weakening of respect toward teachers and scholarly authority (Yusnita et al., 2023; Pranoto & Haryanto, 2024; Setiawan et al., 2025). These phenomena underscore that technological advancement does not automatically correlate with students' moral development. Accordingly, digital ethics cannot be understood merely as a technical issue but must be recognized as a fundamental educational problem.

In practice, educational responses—particularly within Islamic education—to these challenges remain largely dominated by digital literacy approaches and the reinforcement of behavioral regulations in cyberspace. Digital ethics is often reduced to a set of rules governing technology use or skills for polite interaction in online media (Sayuti, 2025; Lailil & Manshur, 2025; Barocky Zaimina, 2025). Such instrumental approaches tend to produce situational compliance that depends on institutional control. When supervision weakens, the ethical values that have been constructed are easily eroded. This condition indicates that the formation of digital ethics has not substantively reached the level of value internalization.

Various studies in Islamic education highlight that students' digital ethics problems are closely related to the fundamental orientation of education itself. Excessive emphasis on cognitive achievement, mastery of technical skills, and learning efficiency has the potential to shift educational goals from character formation toward mere academic performance (Azizatur et al., 2025; Hasanuddin et al., 2025). As a result, education often produces individuals who

are technologically proficient but lack moral firmness and ethical sensitivity. These findings reinforce the view that the digital ethics crisis cannot be adequately addressed through technical pedagogical strategies alone but requires a more comprehensive, value-oriented philosophical foundation of education.

The thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas offers a conceptual perspective that is relevant for examining digital ethics issues more deeply. Al-Attas positions ta'dib as the core of Islamic education, namely the process of instilling adab that encompasses the recognition and acknowledgment of the proper places of knowledge, human beings, and reality as a whole (Al-Attas, 1980). Education that neglects the dimension of adab risks producing knowledgeable individuals without clear moral direction. In the digital context, this condition is reflected in the sophisticated use of technology that is not accompanied by ethical awareness and moral responsibility.

The relevance of al-Attas's thought becomes even more pronounced when linked to his critique of the secularization of knowledge as articulated in Islam and Secularism. The separation of knowledge and technology from transcendent values fosters the perception that technology is neutral and value-free (Al-Attas, 1993). Contemporary studies in Islamic education indicate that this paradigm contributes to the weakening of digital ethics, as students lack a solid value framework for understanding and utilizing technology responsibly (Elim, 2023; Bukhari & Arif, 2025).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the concept of ta'dib in the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas as a conceptual solution to the digital ethics crisis among students. Unlike previous studies that tend to emphasize normative or pedagogical aspects, this research situates digital ethics within the framework of Islamic educational philosophy. Accordingly, this study is expected to provide a deeper theoretical contribution and enrich the discourse on the development of Islamic education oriented toward the formation of adab in the digital era.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a conceptual-analytical library research design (Nugraha, 2025). This approach was selected because the study is not directed toward hypothesis testing or measuring relationships among variables but rather toward understanding, interpreting, and deeply analyzing conceptual ideas and arguments that develop within Islamic education studies. The primary emphasis of the research lies in textual analysis, particularly of thought related to ta'dib, digital ethics, and student character formation. Through library research, the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is interpreted and synthesized with relevant contemporary research findings, thereby enabling the construction of a systematic and dialogical conceptual framework between classical Islamic educational thought and the challenges of education in the digital era.

The data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data include the major works of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas that directly discuss the concept of ta'dib, the

Islamic worldview, and the philosophy of Islamic education, such as The Concept of Education in Islam, Islam and Secularism, and other works relevant to education as a process of inculcating adab. Secondary data are drawn from national and international scholarly journal articles published within the last five years that examine issues of digital ethics, Islamic education, character formation, and the integration of Islamic values in digital education contexts. The selection of literature was conducted selectively based on thematic relevance, publication recency, and journal credibility, accessed through online academic databases and national journal portals.

Data collection was carried out through systematic literature searches by determining key terms aligned with the research focus, selecting the most relevant sources, and classifying the literature into major conceptual themes. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using content analysis and thematic analysis to uncover meanings, concepts, and core ideas contained in the texts, particularly those related to the digital ethics crisis and the concept of ta'dib. The results of this analysis were then critically synthesized to construct a conceptual framework that positions ta'dib as the ethical foundation of digital ethics in Islamic education. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and consistency checks across the referenced materials.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The synthesis of the literature indicates that the digital ethics crisis among students is a recurring and consistent phenomenon across various educational contexts, both at secondary and higher education levels. Several studies report an increase in unethical behavior in digital spaces, such as technology-based academic plagiarism, disproportionate use of social media, low quality of online communication ethics, and the weakening of respect for teachers and scholarly authority (Yusnita et al., 2023; Pranoto & Haryanto, 2024; Setiawan et al., 2025). These findings suggest that the high intensity of digital technology use does not necessarily align with the strengthening of students' moral awareness. Consequently, digital ethics issues should be understood as structural educational problems rather than incidental effects of technological advancement.

Studies in Islamic education demonstrate that current approaches to addressing the digital ethics crisis remain dominated by the reinforcement of technological literacy and the regulation of online behavior. In many cases, digital ethics is positioned as compliance with rules governing technology use rather than as an expression of deeply internalized values (Sayuti, 2025; Lailil & Manshur, 2025; Barocky Zaimina, 2025). Such procedural and reactive approaches tend to generate ethical behavior that depends on external supervision. As a result, when institutional control weakens, students' ethical attitudes are easily eroded, rendering the digital ethics formed unsustainable.

This condition highlights the limitations of an educational paradigm that excessively emphasizes cognitive achievement, technical skill mastery, and learning efficiency. Several studies affirm that education which marginalizes character and adab formation risks producing

students who are technologically competent but morally and ethically fragile (Azizatur et al., 2025; Hasanuddin et al., 2025). Within this framework, the digital ethics crisis is not merely triggered by technological advancement but reflects a reduction of educational purposes themselves. These findings reinforce the urgency of reorienting educational paradigms in responding to the challenges of the digital era.

The thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas provides a relevant conceptual framework for tracing the roots of this problem more deeply. Al-Attas asserts that the central problem of modern education lies in the loss of adab, namely the loss of humanity's ability to recognize and place knowledge, the self, and reality in their proper order (Al-Attas, 1980). In the context of digital education, the loss of adab is reflected in students' tendencies to utilize technology without adequate ethical consideration. This indicates that the digital ethics crisis possesses an epistemological dimension that cannot be ignored.

The concept of ta'dib formulated by al-Attas positions education as a comprehensive process of instilling adab. Education does not merely function as a means of transmitting knowledge but also as an effort to shape students' structures of consciousness in understanding knowledge and technology correctly (Al-Attas, 1980). This perspective provides a philosophical foundation for developing digital ethics that transcends normative approaches. Through ta'dib, ethics is understood as an inherent part of educational objectives rather than as an additional set of rules.

An analysis of The Concept of Education in Islam indicates that adab toward knowledge has direct implications for academic ethics in digital spaces. When knowledge is understood as a trust (amanah), practices such as plagiarism and digital information manipulation are no longer viewed merely as administrative violations but as serious moral transgressions (Al-Attas, 1980). Several studies support this finding by demonstrating that digital ethical awareness is closely related to students' understanding of educational purposes and the meaning of knowledge itself (Nurul & Sumadi, 2025; Ashidqi et al., 2024).

The relevance of al-Attas's thought is further reinforced through his critique of the secularization of knowledge as articulated in Islam and Secularism. The separation of knowledge and technology from transcendent values encourages the perception that technology is neutral and value-free (Al-Attas, 1993). Recent journal publications indicate that this paradigm contributes to increasing moral relativism in digital spaces, particularly among Muslim students (Elim, 2023; Bukhari & Arif, 2025).

In Risalah untuk Kaum Muslimin, al-Attas emphasizes that adab constitutes the foundation of civilization and a prerequisite for the continuity of knowledge. Without adab, knowledge loses its direction and technology potentially becomes a means of social harm (Al-Attas, 2015). This view aligns with findings in Islamic education research that conclude sustainable digital ethics formation must originate from the internalization of adab, rather than solely from strengthening regulations and sanctions (Setiawan et al., 2025; Barocky Zaimina, 2025).

The synthesis between al-Attas's thought and contemporary Islamic education literature demonstrates that ta'dib possesses advantages over conventional digital ethics approaches. Ta'dib is holistic in nature because it integrates intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions in an integral manner (Kadir, 2019; Aris, 2020). This approach enables the formation of students' ethical awareness that does not depend on external control, consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of integrating spiritual values in digital education (Rahimi et al., 2025). Furthermore, the concept of ta'dib allows Islamic education to formulate contextual digital ethics without losing its value foundations. Digital ethics is not positioned as a reactive response to technological development but as an inherent part of Islamic educational objectives. Several studies indicate that value-based education is more effective in shaping responsible digital behavior than approaches that focus solely on technical skill mastery (Zaiyani et al., 2025; Mulyono et al., 2025).

The discussion also confirms that the digital ethics crisis among students is fundamentally an epistemological crisis in education. When educational goals are reduced to technical achievement and utilitarian orientation, the dimension of adab is marginalized, and digital ethics loses a solid value foundation (Hasanuddin et al., 2025; Elim, 2023). In this context, al-Attas's thought offers a conceptual direction for restoring Islamic education to its essential purpose: the formation of civilized human beings capable of utilizing technology meaningfully and responsibly.

Accordingly, the results and discussion affirm that the concept of ta'dib in Islamic education holds strategic potential as a conceptual solution to the digital ethics crisis among students. The integration of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's thought with recent research findings demonstrates that ta'dib-based education can transcend the limitations of conventional digital ethics approaches because it is rooted in the Islamic worldview and the holistic formation of adab. This approach provides a significant conceptual contribution to the development of Islamic education in the digital era.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis and discussion indicate that the digital ethics crisis experienced by students cannot be understood merely as a consequence of rapid digital technological development. Rather, this issue is rooted in an educational orientation that tends to prioritize cognitive achievement and technical skill mastery as primary objectives, while the formation of adab receives insufficient attention. Various unethical behaviors in digital spaces, such as academic plagiarism, misuse of social media, and poor online communication ethics, reflect underlying epistemological and moral problems in contemporary educational practice. Thus, the digital ethics crisis constitutes a manifestation of the reduction of educational objectives beyond purely technological concerns.

This study affirms that the concept of ta'dib in the thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas offers a relevant and profound conceptual framework for responding to this crisis. Ta'dib views education as a process of internalizing adab that integrates intellectual, moral,

and spiritual dimensions in a holistic manner. From this perspective, digital ethics is not understood as a set of external rules or technical social skills but as a reflection of value consciousness embedded within students. Through ta'dib, knowledge and technology are positioned as trusts (amanah) that must be utilized responsibly in accordance with the objectives of Islamic education.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates that al-Attas's critique of the secularization of knowledge holds strong relevance in the context of digital education. The separation of knowledge and technology from transcendent values results in the loss of moral orientation in education, rendering digital ethics relative and situational. By restoring education to the paradigm of ta'dib, Islamic education gains a solid philosophical foundation for building sustainable digital ethics rooted in the Islamic worldview and the proper recognition of the positions of knowledge, human beings, and technology.

Theoretically, this study contributes to enriching Islamic education scholarship by positioning ta'dib as an alternative conceptual framework within the discourse of digital ethics. Unlike previous studies that emphasize normative, pedagogical, or technological approaches, this research underscores the importance of educational philosophy as the foundation for formulating digital ethics. The integration of al-Attas's thought with contemporary research findings opens avenues for developing a more holistic and value-oriented theory of Islamic education.

Practically, the findings imply the need to reorient the objectives and practices of Islamic education in the digital era. Islamic education must not merely adapt to technological developments but should consciously position adab as the core of curricula, learning strategies, and pedagogical relationships between educators and students. The integration of ta'dib values in digital learning, the use of technological media, and the management of online learning environments constitutes a strategic step toward building sustainable digital ethics among students.

This study is limited by its conceptual library research design and does not empirically examine the implementation of ta'dib within specific educational institutions. Therefore, future research is recommended to develop empirical field studies on the application of the ta'dib concept in digital education contexts, using either qualitative or quantitative approaches. Such studies are expected to strengthen the conceptual findings of this research while generating more operational implementation models for the development of Islamic education in the digital era.

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