

Islamic Education Ethics in Kitab *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*: Classical Etiquette and Modern Parental Sensitivity

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of parents' increasing sensitivity to teachers' disciplinary methods, particularly regarding physical reprimands or direct correction, has been increasingly discussed on social media. This situation has created new tensions in educational relations, particularly in Islamic schools, as modern paradigms regarding child protection clash with classical Islamic educational traditions such as Ta'lim al-Muta'allim, which emphasizes etiquette, respect for teachers, and a balance between affection and firmness. On the one hand, this dynamic has had positive impacts in the form of growing awareness of children's rights, transparency, and quality communication between schools and parents. However, on the other hand, it has also had negative impacts, such as the erosion of teacher authority, public pressure on educational institutions, and a diminished understanding of etiquette in the learning process. A research gap is evident in the lack of studies integrating the perspective of classical texts with the viral phenomenon of contemporary digital culture. This study aims to critically examine how the clash of these two paradigms occurs and how the reconstruction of teacher-student etiquette can be contextualized in the digital era. Using a descriptive qualitative approach through analysis of classical literature, educational regulations, and social media content, the study demonstrates the need for an educational communication model based on manners, empathy, and professionalism to build healthy collaboration between teachers, schools, and parents.

Keywords: Digital Culture, Educational Etiquette, Kitab Ta'lim Al-Muta'allim, Parental Sensitivity

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INTRODUCTION

Social media makes the educational space more transparent and vulnerable to quick assessments, thus influencing the way parents interpret the disciplinary learning process at school. Several posts show conflicts between teachers who reprimand their students in the form of physical behavior, while their parents do not accept the reprimand. In recent years, the dynamics of Indonesian education have undergone significant changes along with the development of digital culture

and increasing parental sensitivity to discipline patterns in schools. Every teacher's action, including simple reprimands or physical corrections that were once considered reasonable in the context of manners coaching, can now be in the public spotlight in just a matter of minutes. On the other hand, the classical Islamic educational tradition, as outlined in the Book of *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* an Islamic pedagogy text written by Sheikh Az-Zarnuji, discusses the etiquette of seeking knowledge, the ethics of students towards teachers, and moral principles in the learning process, emphasizing the importance of respecting teachers, sincerity in seeking knowledge, and a balance between firmness and compassion (Acip, 2022a).

This phenomenon has a positive impact that cannot be ignored. The increasing attention of parents to teachers' treatment shows a new awareness of the importance of children's emotional and physical safety in the learning process. Schools are encouraged to be more transparent, communicative, and professional in designing disciplinary guidelines. Parental involvement is also increasing, creating opportunities for partnership relationships between families and schools. In addition, the publication of cases through social media sparked a wide discussion about the quality of education, teacher competence, and the need to update regulations so that learning runs more smoothly and humane (Muhibbah & Kurniawan, 2023).

The authority of teachers is slowly eroded when every action is controlled by ever-changing public expectations. Social pressure makes many teachers hesitant to apply firm disciplinary measures, which in turn weakens the process of character formation and manners internalization in the classroom. Recent studies show that teachers increasingly feel insecure in taking corrective action due to fear of being reported or viralized on social media; for example, Hidayah & Saqinah (2024) found that 67% of teachers in their survey admitted to reducing direct disciplinary intervention after experiencing or witnessing online backlash. This situation is worsened by the overreaction of some parents in cyberspace, which often triggers stigma against schools without understanding the full context of the incident (Hidayah & Saqinah, 2024). This issue is very interesting because it touches on the fundamental problem of how education should be carried out in the modern era. Society is faced with a dilemma between maintaining classical values that are full of wisdom and responding to the demands of the times that emphasize child protection (Nurhikmah, 2024). This tension reflects the crisis of trust between teachers and parents, as well as shows the urgency of reconstructing educational methods that can harmonize tradition with contemporary needs (Winda Sari et al., 2022a).

In the context of Islamic education, adab or ethics occupy a central position as the foundation for shaping students' character and morals. The book *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* emphasizes the importance of morals, politeness, and obedience to parents in the pursuit of knowledge, which remains relevant in the modern era. The Quran emphasizes this principle in Surah Al-Isra', verse 23:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

Meaning: "And your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him and be good to your parents."

Ibn Kathir's interpretation explains that this commandment encompasses not only physical obedience but also ethics and politeness in daily interactions, including in the learning process (Iribaram, 2018). Thus, ethical education demands a balance between knowledge, morals, and concern for parents, which is the primary relevance of this study in examining the classical etiquette of Islamic education amidst modern dynamics.

Prophetic traditions further reinforce gentleness as a core pedagogical principle. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated:

إِنَّ الرِّفْقَ لَا يَكُونُ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ

Meaning: "Gentleness is not present in anything except that it beautifies it." (HR. Muslim)

According to An-Nawawi, this hadith establishes gentleness (*rifq*) as a universal ethical principle applicable to all forms of guidance and correction, including education (An-Nawawi, 1996). At the same time, Islamic pedagogy acknowledges structured discipline, as reflected in the hadith narrated by Abu Dawud:

مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاضْرِبُوهُمْ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ

Meaning: "Instruct your children to pray when they are seven years old, and discipline them for it when they are ten." (HR. Abu Dawud)

Classical scholars caution that the term *darb* in this narration should not be interpreted as violent punishment but as a symbolic, non-harmful corrective measure implemented only after sustained instruction and moral guidance (Al-'Asqalani, 2003). This interpretation challenges simplistic readings that associate Islamic discipline with physical coercion and instead highlight its ethical and educational orientation.

Some recent studies have examined parents' increasing sensitivity to teacher discipline practices and how digital media is shaping public opinion about the educator profession (Ngulandari et al., 2024). Other studies show that the pressure from social media can change school communication patterns and increase the need for transparency and a more empathetic pedagogical approach (Ramadhani & Suyoto, 2024). In the context of Islamic education, several studies highlight the relevance of classical values such as manners, discipline, and respect in building students' character in the midst of digital cultural changes (Sagala & Kandedes, 2024; Setyoningsih et al., 2023). Recent works also reveal that public debates on teacher authority and child protection are increasingly shaped by viral narratives rather than pedagogical understanding (Arantes, 2023a). Meanwhile, other research underscores the need to reinterpret classical Islamic pedagogical texts in light of contemporary educational challenges, particularly those involving digital-era parenting and school expectations (Nasir & Sunardi, 2025). However, these studies still examine the issue in a fragmented manner, whether from the perspectives of educational psychology, school-parent communication, or general Islamic values (Ibnu Imam Al Ayyubi; Nurhikmah; Eko Prayetno, 2026). An integrated analysis is therefore needed to connect these strands and clarify how classical Islamic pedagogical frameworks intersect with modern standards of child protection and digital public scrutiny.

State-of-the-art research shows that there has not been much research that integrates *the perspective of Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* with the viral phenomenon of social media, the sensitivity of modern parents, and the dynamics of digital culture. Most studies still separate classical Islamic education from contemporary issues, so it has not explained how teacher authority, parental perception, and trending topic culture affect each other's educational practices. In addition, research in the last five years has not offered a model for the reconstruction of teacher-student relationships that is relevant to the demands of the digital era. From this gap, the novelty of this research lies in the effort to contextualize the values of classical manners in modern educational situations. The purpose of this study is to analyze the paradigm clash between Islamic manners and parental sensitivity, as well as to formulate an applicative model of adab reconstruction.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth and contextualized understanding of the paradigm clash between classical Islamic educational manners (*adab*) and contemporary parental sensitivity in the digital era. Qualitative inquiry is considered appropriate because the phenomenon under investigation involves values, perceptions, power relations, and socio-cultural dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The study is grounded in an interpretive paradigm that views educational practices as socially constructed and continuously negotiated within changing cultural and technological contexts.

Data sources in this study are derived from three interconnected domains. The first source consists of classical Islamic educational literature, with *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* by Shaykh Az-Zarnuji serving as the primary normative text. This work provides a foundational framework for understanding the ethics of knowledge transmission, teacher authority, student obedience, sincerity (*ikhlas*), and the balance between firmness and compassion in educational discipline (Az-Zarnuji, 2019). The second data source includes contemporary educational regulations and policy documents related to child protection, teacher professionalism, and school governance in Indonesia. These documents are analyzed to identify normative shifts in disciplinary standards and institutional expectations placed upon educators in the modern era (*Ministry of Education and Culture. (2021). Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2024*). The third data source comprises digital data drawn from viral social media cases involving teacher discipline and parental reactions. Viral cases are operationally defined as school-related incidents that generated high public engagement, sustained visibility, and significant discursive responses on platforms such as Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook between 2022 and 2024. The selection of cases was based on relevance to disciplinary practices, involvement of teachers and parents, and their broader impact on public discourse surrounding education.

Data collection was conducted through an extensive literature review and systematic digital content documentation. Classical texts and policy documents were examined using document analysis techniques to identify ethical principles, disciplinary norms, and regulatory frameworks. Meanwhile, digital data were collected by archiving posts, comments, and news coverage related to selected

viral cases (Tamphu et al., 2024). This approach allows the study to capture how educational authority and disciplinary actions are framed, contested, and reinterpreted in the public digital sphere (Kozinets, 2020).

The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis, following an iterative process of open coding, categorization, and theme construction. Initial coding focused on identifying recurring concepts related to authority, discipline, parental sensitivity, child protection, and ethical justification. These codes were then grouped into broader thematic categories that reflect patterns of tension and negotiation between classical *adab* and contemporary expectations. To enhance analytical rigor and validity, source triangulation was applied by systematically comparing findings from classical texts, policy documents, and digital case narratives (Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, 2018). This triangulation enables the study to move beyond fragmented perspectives and to construct an integrated understanding of how Islamic pedagogical ethics intersect with modern regulatory frameworks and digital public scrutiny.

Through this methodological design, the study seeks not only to describe the shifting dynamics of teacher authority and parental perception but also to interpret them through the lens of Islamic educational ethics. The ultimate analytical goal is to formulate a contextual model for reconstructing *adab* that remains faithful to classical Islamic values while being responsive to contemporary demands for child protection, transparency, and humane pedagogy in the digital era.

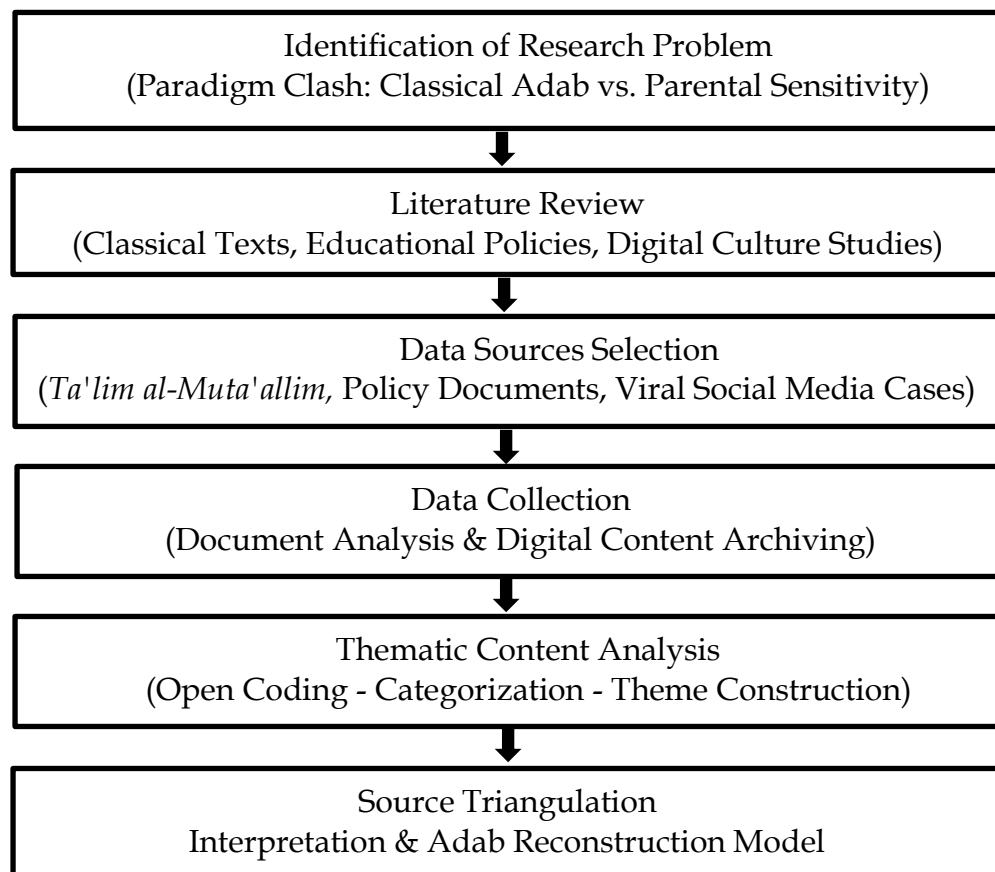


Figure 1. Research Design and Analytical Procedure

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The findings of this study show that the paradigm clash between classical manners and parental sensitivity in the digital era is not only a matter of disciplinary methods, but is a fundamental change in the Islamic educational value framework. Classical literature, such as *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* emphasizing obedience, respect, and firmness as moral elements inherent in student-teacher relationships (Abdurrahman et al., 2024a; Acip, 2022b). However, this paradigm is faced with a digital culture that prioritizes children's emotional protection and sensitivity to teachers' corrective actions. The results of this study confirm that modern society is now faster in assessing teachers' actions through a psychological lens than through the lens of classical manners.

When compared to previous studies, this study corroborates Arantes' findings (2023b) that virality on social media can create significant psychological distress for teachers, even before the context of the incident is clarified. A similar phenomenon is also described by Chen et al. (2024), who show how social media use affects teachers' performance and their mental health. In the Indonesian context, this dynamic is reinforced by Harditia and Sudadi (2025) and Abdullah et al. (2024) who explain that schools now operate in a post-truth environment, where reputations can collapse just because of one viral post. The findings of this study are directly in line with this conclusion: social media is no longer just a communication space, but an arena for the formation of public opinion that determines how teachers' actions are interpreted.

These findings also show that the principles of classical manners have strong relevance in responding to educational problems in the digital era. For example, the concept of student submission to the teacher's scientific authority, as affirmed by al-Zarnuji (Abdurrahman et al., 2024a; Acip, 2022b) can be the foundation for rebuilding healthy communication between teachers and parents. Likewise, al-Ghazali's idea of the role of teachers as spiritual guides (Winda Sari et al., 2022b) It offers a normative framework that can be used to reassess the boundaries of correction in contemporary education. Thus, classical literature cannot be seen as a value of the past, but rather as a source of ethics that can be contextualized.

At the same time, this study reveals that teachers are now faced with a tug-of-war between the demands of professionalism and the fear of facing the digital public. Hidayah & Saqinah Studies (2024) and Sagala & Kandedes (2024) emphasizing that teachers need ethical competence and digital literacy to respond to this pressure. The results of this study support these findings by showing that teachers' discomfort with giving reprimands arises not due to a loss of pedagogical awareness, but due to the risk of virality that weakens their authority. This is where the reconstruction of manners needs to be done: not by mechanically maintaining old patterns, but by integrating aspects of child protection, digital ethics, and the value of respect for scientific authority.

Thus, this study concludes by offering a novel contribution through a synthesized framework that integrates classical *adab* values rooted in Islamic literature with contemporary psychological dynamics, digital communication

patterns, and modern demands for child protection. By bridging these dimensions, the proposed model provides a conceptual foundation for understanding current educational tensions and offers practical guidance for schools, teachers, and parents to foster healthier, more balanced, and character-oriented educational relationships within the digital age.

Table 1. Synthesis of Research Findings

Focus	Findings	Supporting References
Clash of Paradigms	The clash between classical Islamic etiquette and parental sensitivity in the digital era reflects a fundamental shift in the value framework of Islamic education, not merely disciplinary methods.	(Abdurrahman et al., 2024), (Acip, 2022)
Influence of Social Media	Modern society evaluates teachers' actions more through a psychological lens than classical etiquette. Viral social media incidents create significant psychological pressure for teachers even before events are clarified.	(Arantes, 2025), (Abdurrahman et al., 2024)
Relevance of Classical Ethics	Classical etiquette principles remain relevant for addressing modern educational challenges. Concepts such as student obedience to scholarly authority (al-Zarnuji) and the teacher as a spiritual guide (al-Ghazali) can help rebuild healthy communication between teachers and parents.	(Abdurrahman et al., 2024), (Acip, 2022), (Winda Sari et al., 2022)
Teacher Challenges	Teachers face a tension between professional responsibilities and fear of public digital scrutiny. Discomfort in providing corrective guidance stems from the risk of viral exposure rather than loss of pedagogical awareness.	(Hidayah & Saqinah, 2024), (Sagala & Kandedes, 2024)
Integrative Ethical Framework	The study proposes a synthesized framework integrating classical <i>adab</i> values with contemporary psychological dynamics, digital communication patterns, and modern child protection needs. This framework serves as a conceptual foundation for balanced, character-oriented education in the digital era.	

The findings indicate that the tension between classical Islamic etiquette (*adab*) and heightened parental sensitivity in the digital era represents not merely a dispute over disciplinary practices, but a deeper clash of educational paradigms and value systems. In contemporary contexts, teachers' actions are increasingly interpreted through psychological and emotional lenses rather than through the moral framework of classical *adab*, a shift that is intensified by the rapid spread of incidents on social media. Viral narratives often generate public judgment and psychological pressure on teachers even before factual clarification occurs, creating a climate of fear and professional vulnerability. Despite these challenges, classical Islamic ethical principles remain highly relevant for addressing modern educational problems. Teachings such as al-Zarnuji's emphasis on student obedience to scholarly authority and al-Ghazali's view of teachers as spiritual and moral guides offer important foundations for restoring respectful, trust-based

communication between teachers and parents. However, educators today face a persistent dilemma between fulfilling their pedagogical responsibility to guide and correct students and the fear of digital scrutiny that may lead to reputational harm. This discomfort is driven less by a decline in pedagogical competence and more by the risks associated with viral exposure in the digital public sphere. In response, the study proposes an integrative ethical framework that synthesizes classical *adab* values with contemporary psychological awareness, digital communication dynamics, and modern child protection principles, providing a balanced and contextually responsive foundation for character-oriented education in the digital age.

DISCUSSION

The Perspective of Adab in Classical Islamic

Classical Islamic literature consistently positions *adab* as the moral and spiritual foundation of the educational process. Within the epistemological framework of Muslim scholars, *adab* is not merely understood as external etiquette or social decorum, but rather as an integrative ethical orientation that governs the relationship between learners, knowledge, educators, and ultimately God. Education, therefore, is conceived not solely as the transmission of information, but as a transformative moral enterprise aimed at cultivating disciplined character and spiritual maturity.

Among the most authoritative pedagogical texts articulating this vision is *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tariq at-Ta'allum* by Shaykh al-Zarnūjī. This work emphasizes that the efficacy and blessing of knowledge (*barakat al-'ilm*) are determined primarily by the learner's moral disposition rather than intellectual capacity alone (Acip, 2022b). Al-Zarnūjī underscores humility (*tawāḍu'*), respect for scholarly authority, sincerity (*ikhhlās*), and disciplined conduct as indispensable conditions for meaningful learning. In classical Islamic pedagogy, particularly within the pesantren tradition, etiquette is viewed as preceding knowledge, as moral rectitude is believed to prepare the heart to receive the illumination of knowledge (*nūr al-'ilm*). Consequently, education is framed as a moral process in which knowledge functions as a means toward ethical refinement rather than an end in itself (Fatton, 2025).

This ethical orientation is firmly rooted in Qur'anic principles. The Qur'an explicitly links knowledge with humility and reverence for authority, as stated in Surah al-Mujādilah (58:11):

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

Meaning. "Allah will raise those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge by degrees."

Classical exegetes such as Ibn Kathīr interpret this verse as indicating that elevation through knowledge is inseparable from faith, ethical conduct, and proper manners, rather than mere intellectual attainment (Ibn Kathīr, 2003). This interpretation reinforces al-Zarnūjī's assertion that knowledge devoid of *adab* lacks transformative value. Several core principles articulated in *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* remain highly relevant to contemporary tensions in education, particularly those arising from parental reactions to teacher discipline. The first principle concerns

etiquette toward teachers, which includes refraining from raising one's voice, avoiding interruption, and not challenging a teacher's opinion without proper decorum (Masjudin, 2024a). This principle finds its Qur'anic foundation in Surah al-Hujurat (49:2):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ

Meaning. "O you who believe, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet.

Although revealed in a prophetic context, classical scholars have extended its ethical implications to all forms of legitimate authority, including teachers, as representatives of transmitted knowledge (*ahl al-'ilm*) (Al-Qurṭubī & Bakr, 2006). Within educational settings, this verse underscores the ethical necessity of respect as a prerequisite for learning.

The second principle concerns etiquette in accepting correction. Al-Zarnūjī maintains that reprimands, whether verbal or mild disciplinary measures, should be understood as expressions of pedagogical care rather than acts of hostility. Correction is framed as an essential component of *tahdhīb al-akhlāq* (character refinement) and moral formation, not as an infringement upon students' dignity. This ethical stance is supported by the Prophetic tradition:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Meaning. "I was sent only to perfect noble character.

Classical scholars interpret this hadith as establishing moral cultivation as the core objective of all educational and social instruction (Al-Nawawī, 2010). Consequently, teacher assertiveness when guided by compassion and proportionality serves an ethical function aligned with the Prophetic mission.

The third principle relates to self-discipline and moral self-regulation, including structured study habits, simplicity of lifestyle, and restraint of desires as part of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (spiritual purification). This principle is grounded in Surah al-Shams (91:9–10):

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ

Meaning. "He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who corrupts it."

According to al-Ghazālī, this verse establishes moral self-discipline as a prerequisite for intellectual and spiritual success, affirming that education must cultivate ethical restraint alongside cognitive growth (Al-Ghazali, 2011). Beyond *Ta'līm al-Muta'allim*, other classical works reinforce the legitimacy of teacher authority within ethical boundaries. In *Iḥyā' Ulūm al-Dīn*, al-Ghazālī emphasizes that educators bear moral responsibility for guiding students' behavior and correcting misconduct, provided such actions are motivated by compassion rather than anger. Similarly, in *Adab al-'Ālim wa al-Muta'allim*, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari asserts that respect, humility, and trust form the ethical foundation of the student-teacher relationship, and that the absence of *adab* ultimately undermines the acquisition of beneficial knowledge (Abdurrahman et al., 2024a; Winda Sari et al., 2022b).

Within the context of contemporary educational challenges, particularly heightened parental sensitivity amplified by digital media, these classical ethical principles provide a critical normative lens. They offer a framework for reconciling teacher authority with child protection by emphasizing moral intention, proportional discipline, and ethical accountability. Thus, this study situates classical *adab* not as a rigid tradition resistant to change, but as a dynamic ethical resource capable of informing a balanced, humane, and contextually responsive model of Islamic education in the digital era.

A Paradigm Shift in Discipline

The transformation of public perceptions regarding school discipline is increasingly shaped by the logic of digital culture. Short video clips circulating on platforms such as TikTok and online news portals often present disciplinary moments without context, enabling algorithmic amplification and moral judgment to dominate the interpretation of teacher–student interactions. Scenes showing an authoritative school figure speaking firmly or moments of tension between parents and teachers are framed in ways that trigger assumptions of misconduct. Because these videos rely on selective visual cuts and emotionally suggestive captions, audiences are easily led to interpret the actions as forms of violence, even though the pedagogical purpose and broader situational background remain invisible (Mulya & Shasrini, 2023). During classical Islamic education, discipline and character building were placed at the heart of the learning process. The book *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* became a primary reference, illustrating how manners, discipline, and the teacher-student relationship were built on strong moral principles. Classical education focused not only on the transfer of knowledge but also on the development of the soul, humility, sincerity, and respect for scholarly authority (Masjudin, 2024b). In the context of discipline, teachers in the classical era were viewed as spiritual and moral guides. Their firmness was not interpreted as physical punishment, but rather as a form of affection to guide students toward intellectual and emotional maturity (Istiqomah, 2025).

The phenomenon of this shift is clearly seen in the rise of viral videos that show snippets of disciplinary situations at school. People now judge teachers' actions no longer through the context of education, but through the narrative formed by digital media. A video uploaded by the TikTok account @via.bimo, for example, shows a woman who allegedly has an authoritative position at school speaking firmly to students. The upload was accompanied by text claiming that there was an alleged violence by the school principal, so that the audience was directed to interpret the moment as an excessive act even though the whole context was not visible.



Picture 1. Factors Influencing Changes in Perceptions of Teacher Discipline

Several interconnected shifts contribute to this change. Heightened societal awareness of emotional and physical safety has redefined what constitutes acceptable disciplinary measures. Digital media accelerates public judgment by turning isolated classroom moments into viral content, placing educators under constant scrutiny. At the same time, differences in expectations between teachers and parents, where educators view firmness as part of character formation while parents demand greater emotional accommodation, create communicative tensions that are easily magnified online (@via.bimo, 2025, October 15).



Picture 2. The Shift in Social Interpretation of Teacher Discipline in the Digital Era

Ultimately, the core transformation does not lie in changes to teachers' behavior, but in the shifting framework through which society interprets those behaviors. Viral videos compress context, amplify emotional cues, and relocate authority from pedagogical understanding to digital perception. This demonstrates the urgent need for a communication model that harmonizes classical manners with modern educational expectations, ensuring that discipline remains a constructive, purposeful component of student development rather than a source of public misunderstanding. (@metropolitan.id (2025, September 05).

The shift in the way people understand discipline in schools is one of the most significant educational dynamics in the digital culture era. In the classical Islamic educational tradition, discipline is understood as part of the process of character formation, as described in works such as *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, which emphasizes the balance between assertiveness and compassion. Teachers are respected not only because of their position, but because of their position as the inheritors of knowledge that carries moral and spiritual mandates (Abdurrahman et al., 2024). However, such a paradigm is increasingly difficult to apply in the modern educational space, especially when the public has a new sensitivity to child protection and understands the teacher-student relationship through the lens of contemporary psychology (Purnomo et al., 2024).

This paradigm shift is rooted in several fundamental factors. First, society now has a new standard in looking at discipline. Sensitivity to emotional and physical violence is increasing in line with the global campaign on child protection. Teachers' actions that were previously considered a form of supervision and coaching are now easily perceived as a form of aggression. Second, digital culture presents an instant public assessment space. Parents no longer wait for official clarification from the school, but first validate their opinions through the comment column and the reactions of netizens (Firdaun & Nasrah, 2025).

Third, the emergence of an imbalance in expectations between teachers and parents. Parents are increasingly demanding an empathetic and friendly approach to learning, while teachers still hold the principle that assertiveness is part of character education. The tension between these two perspectives gives rise to conflict-communication, as seen in the video of the fight in the classroom. When perceptions are not aligned, actions intended as a form of affection by teachers can be perceived as threats by parents. On the other hand, teachers consider some parents to be too irritable and lack understanding of the dynamics of learning in the classroom (Limbong et al., 2020).

Fourth, social media provides a space for parents to do *public shaming* to the school. This not only affects the reputation of teachers and institutions, but also has an impact on the psychology of educators who feel that their movements are always supervised by the public. Many teachers end up choosing to avoid any form of discipline, including strict advice, for fear of being recorded and twisted into a viral issue. This condition has the potential to weaken the process of forming students' manners and character, because teachers no longer have enough authority to reprimand students in a way that suits their needs (Rajbhandari & Rana, 2023).

The Role of Social Media in Building Public Perception of Teacher-Parent Relations

Social media has become a central arena for shaping public perceptions of events in educational settings, particularly in the dynamics between teachers and parents. Its rapid flow of information allows everyday classroom interactions, often recorded without consent or context, to be reframed through the emotional logic of virality. In this environment, public judgment is driven less by factual accuracy and more by algorithmic amplification and digital moral panic, where emotionally charged content gains prominence regardless of its pedagogical truth (Dikdayanto & Hariyanto, 2024).

Through selective visual framing, short video snippets often detach teachers' actions from their broader disciplinary context. Reprimands or corrective measures that are part of standard classroom management may appear harsh when isolated from the student's behavioral history or the school's regulatory framework. As a result, parents increasingly validate their reactions based on netizen commentary and viral interpretations rather than on formal school communication. This shift intensifies institutional pressure, compelling schools to provide rapid clarification even before internal investigations can take place (Rajbhandari & Rana, 2023).

Social media also restructures communication patterns between home and school. Conflicts that were once resolved through mediated, face-to-face dialogue now frequently escalate online, where frustration or disappointment encourages parents to seek instant digital justice. When an issue becomes viral, narrative correction becomes significantly more difficult, as audiences tend to retain their initial emotional impressions despite subsequent clarifications (Abdullah et al., 2024). These dynamics also influence teachers' psychological well-being and professional identity. Many educators feel their actions are constantly subject to recording, truncation, and disproportionate scrutiny, generating caution that can limit their willingness to enforce necessary disciplinary measures. This situation challenges the development of *adab* and character formation, which remain essential components of both Islamic educational tradition and contemporary character education (Sagala & Kandedes, 2024).

The impact of social media on teachers has to do not only with reputation, but also with psychological well-being and the way they view their professional roles. Many educators now feel that every action can be recorded, truncated, and disseminated without permission. This sense of supervision creates such deep concern that they prefer to avoid any form of discipline, including firm advice that is actually necessary for the formation of a student's character. When teachers lose space to give corrections, their authority in the eyes of students is weakened. As a result, the development of *adab*, which in the tradition of Islamic education and modern character education is considered the core of the learning process, is becoming increasingly difficult to implement (Chen et al., 2024).

At the same time, social media increases public expectations for transparency, requiring schools to shift from closed administrative structures toward more responsive digital communication practices. Effective crisis-management protocols, clear guidelines for addressing viral incidents, and

communication strategies aligned with public expectations have become essential institutional competencies. When managed constructively, social media can strengthen parent-school collaboration; however, without digital communication ethics and responsible engagement, it can instead become a space of conflict and reputational harm. Therefore, the integration of digital communication governance is crucial to ensuring that social media functions as a bridge rather than a barrier in educational partnerships (Hariyono & Maisyaroh, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the paradigm shift between classical Islamic educational ethics and the increasing sensitivity of parents in the digital era. This method allows researchers to explore phenomena holistically, trace the root causes of emerging tensions, and map the socio-cultural dynamics that shape educational practices in Islamic schools. The primary data sources include classical Islamic literature, especially *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* educational regulations on child protection, and viral cases circulating on digital platforms that highlight conflicts between teachers and parents. The findings of this study indicate that the growing sensitivity of parents toward teacher discipline, particularly actions involving physical reprimands or direct correction, reflects a significant transformation in educational paradigms.

The study reveals dual impacts. Positively, parents now show increased awareness of children's rights, there is higher transparency in educational processes, and parental involvement in schooling is strengthened. Conversely, negative impacts include the erosion of teacher authority, heightened educator anxiety in correcting students, and the rise of social media as a judgment arena rather than a space for constructive dialogue. Public pressure often escalates faster than official school clarifications, complicating conflict resolution. It recommends reconstructing teacher-student ethics that remain rooted in Islamic manners while being responsive to modern norms. Ultimately, the study highlights the urgency of an educational communication model grounded in adab, empathy, and professionalism, one that bridges traditional values with contemporary demands and fosters healthy, proportional, and character-oriented collaboration between teachers, schools, and parents.

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