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AI Era Education Quality Management: Analysis of Integration Strategies Without Reducing Student Character

Nani Sri Cahyanti*, Lutfi Wakhid
Universitas KH. Mukhtar Syafaat, Indonesia
Email : nanisricahyanti285@gmail.com* , wakhid1@iaida.ac.ic

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ABSTRACT

The increasing use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in secondary education presents opportunities to enhance learning while raising concerns about academic integrity, independent reasoning, and student responsibility. This study examined how MAN 3 Banyuwangi, a public Islamic senior high school (Madrasah Aliyah Negeri) in Indonesia, integrated AI into teaching, learning, and assessment while fostering student character development. Employing a qualitative case study design, the researchers collected data through interviews with the madrasah principal, guidance and counseling teachers, and student representatives, supplemented by direct observations and document analysis. The data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, with triangulation across multiple sources and methods to enhance the credibility of the findings. The findings revealed that the madrasah positioned AI as a supplementary learning tool and encouraged students to verify AI-generated information against primary sources. The school implemented offline computer-based examinations and screen-locking mechanisms to minimize unauthorized assistance during assessments. Teachers monitored student behavior and reviewed written assignments for potential indications of AI misuse, while guidance and counseling activities emphasized self-reflection, academic integrity, and responsible technology use. These practices combined technical assessment safeguards with reflective approaches to character development. The study concludes that AI integration at MAN 3 Banyuwangi was managed through coordinated instructional guidelines, assessment security measures, and reflective counseling practices, prioritizing academic integrity, independent reasoning, and personal responsibility as essential components of educational quality management in the AI era.

INTRODUCTION

Education in the 21st century is undergoing unprecedented technological transformations that present significant challenges and opportunities for educational institutions (Khahro & Javed, 2022; Kotorov et al., 2024)m. Among these developments, artificial intelligence (AI) has fundamentally transformed teaching and learning practices. The integration of AI into school management systems and instructional processes is no longer merely a future possibility but has become an increasingly common reality. AI technologies offer opportunities to improve administrative efficiency, automate assessment procedures, and personalize learning experiences based on student performance data. However, despite the

efficiency and convenience offered by these technologies, their integration raises important concerns about preserving the fundamental values and purposes of education (Bouchard, 2025; Elias, 2025).

Education extends beyond the transmission of knowledge to encompass the cultivation of moral values, ethical awareness, and responsible behavior. When educational institutions prioritize numerical achievement, operational efficiency, and digital assessment outcomes without adequately considering character development, the broader purpose of education may be overlooked. The increasing accessibility of generative AI, particularly technologies capable of producing written content and responding directly to academic questions, introduces potential challenges to students' intellectual independence and ethical development. These challenges include increased academic dishonesty, reduced engagement in independent problem-solving, and diminished opportunities for meaningful interpersonal interaction (Cotton et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2024; Mujallid, 2024). Excessive reliance on AI-generated responses may also discourage students from engaging critically with learning materials or participating actively in discussions with teachers and peers (Gerlich, 2025; Zhai et al., 2024). Consequently, educational institutions must consider how AI integration may influence students' cognitive, social, and moral development.

This study is important because educational institutions face the challenge of balancing technological innovation with the preservation of students' character and ethical values. Effective educational quality management requires schools to integrate emerging technologies while maintaining academic integrity, independent reasoning, empathy, and personal responsibility. Without appropriate institutional policies and pedagogical guidance, excessive or inappropriate reliance on AI may undermine students' opportunities to develop these competencies (Alsharefeen & Al Sayari, 2025; Chan, 2023; Perkins, 2023). Moreover, the rapid advancement of AI technologies may exceed the capacity of educational institutions to establish comprehensive regulatory and instructional frameworks. Therefore, empirical investigation is needed to understand how school principals, teachers, and educational quality assurance teams formulate and implement guidelines governing AI use. Such guidelines should ensure that AI functions as a supportive educational resource rather than a substitute for independent learning, ethical judgment, and character development.

The educational, psychological, and ethical implications of AI integration have attracted increasing scholarly attention. Previous research has identified both potential benefits and challenges associated with AI-assisted educational practices. Andini et al. (2026) reported that AI integration into school management systems could accelerate curriculum development and student assessment processes. However, their findings also indicated that excessive dependence on AI may reduce students' perseverance and willingness to engage independently with complex academic problems. Similarly, Khalifah et al. (2026) examined the regulatory dimensions of AI integration in educational institutions. Their study reported that the absence of clear institutional guidelines governing AI use was associated with increased plagiarism and a 40% decline in measures of academic honesty among high school students. Together, these studies suggest that technological advancement should be accompanied by appropriate institutional regulations, pedagogical supervision, and ethical safeguards to minimize potential risks to students' character development.

Although research on AI integration in education continues to expand, much of the existing literature emphasizes technological functionality, perceived ease of use, instructional efficiency, and improvements in academic performance (Kasneci et al., 2023). Comparatively less attention has been devoted to examining AI integration from the perspective of educational quality management at the institutional level, particularly in Islamic secondary education. This limitation highlights the need for empirical research investigating how school administrators formulate, communicate, and implement AI governance policies while maintaining educational standards and character development objectives. In the context of Indonesian madrasahs, institutional management involves the additional responsibility of integrating academic excellence with moral and religious values. Accordingly, further investigation is needed into how these institutions establish preventive measures, such as offline computer-based examinations, and develop appropriate responses to unauthorized AI use while supporting students' ethical awareness and intellectual independence (Rohman & Fuady, 2026).

For Indonesian madrasahs, these decisions form part of a broader institutional responsibility to develop students' academic competencies, independence, and character. The Ministry of Religious Affairs' Decree No. 1503 of 2025, which amends the guidelines for implementing the madrasah curriculum, identifies learner independence and moral development as educational priorities. At MAN 3 Banyuwangi, a public Islamic senior high school in Indonesia, the central question concerns how these priorities inform institutional decisions regarding AI use in classroom instruction, student assignments, and examinations. Addressing this question requires examining how school leaders establish institutional guidelines, how teachers communicate and implement these guidelines, and how students understand their responsibilities when completing academic tasks (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025).

Evidence from secondary mathematics education illustrates the importance of distinguishing AI-assisted practice from independent academic performance. In an experiment involving nearly 1,000 high school students in Türkiye, Bastani et al. (2025) found that students with access to a general-purpose GPT-4 interface demonstrated improved performance during practice sessions. However, when AI access was removed during examinations, their scores were 17% lower than those of students in the control group. This performance decline was largely absent among students who had practiced using an AI tutoring system designed to provide structured guidance rather than direct answers. These findings demonstrate that the design and implementation of AI-assisted learning environments can influence students' ability to independently apply previously acquired knowledge when technological assistance is unavailable.

The successful implementation of AI in educational settings also depends on teachers' professional judgment and pedagogical competence. Through interviews with 20 teachers from two private schools in Delhi, India, Tripathi et al. (2025) found that participants recognized AI's potential to support instructional activities and administrative responsibilities while expressing concerns about students' dependence on AI-generated responses and their ability to critically evaluate such information. The teachers' perspectives emphasized the importance of professional development programs that integrate technological competencies with ethical judgment, critical thinking, and responsible instructional practices. Their findings also

highlight the need for school leaders to involve teachers in developing practical institutional guidelines that can be consistently implemented across classrooms and assessment activities.

These previous studies provide important evidence regarding two dimensions of AI integration: students' academic performance under different forms of AI assistance and teachers' experiences with AI adoption in classroom settings. However, an important question remains concerning how Indonesian madrasahs coordinate institutional decisions across instructional activities, examinations, and guidance and counseling services. Specifically, further school-level evidence is needed to understand how acceptable AI use is defined, how expectations regarding independent academic work are communicated and enforced, and how suspected instances of unauthorized assistance are addressed. Examining these interconnected practices can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how character education is incorporated into daily institutional quality assurance processes.

The urgency of this issue arises from the increasing accessibility of generative AI tools and their growing use in students' routine academic activities. Educational institutions must establish clear expectations regarding academic integrity and assessment practices while responding to the challenges posed by AI-assisted learning. Assessments intended to measure individual understanding may become difficult to interpret when the extent of AI assistance is unclear or inadequately documented. Similarly, institutional regulations communicated exclusively during examinations may leave students uncertain about the boundaries of acceptable AI assistance in regular coursework. Investigating how these expectations are communicated before assignments, implemented during assessments, and reinforced through guidance and counseling activities can help identify areas in which institutional policies are effective and aspects of their implementation that require improvement.

The novelty of this study lies in its examination of AI integration through the perspective of educational quality management within a single Indonesian madrasah. Unlike studies that primarily emphasize technological performance or individual experiences with AI-assisted learning, this research investigates four interconnected institutional practices: establishing boundaries for AI-assisted instruction, maintaining independent academic performance through offline computer-based examinations, identifying potential indications of unauthorized AI assistance in student assignments, and providing reflective guidance and counseling in response to suspected misuse. Examining these practices collectively enables the study to explore how institutional policies are translated into assessment procedures, classroom supervision, and student support mechanisms. This integrated perspective offers a contextualized understanding of how educational quality management can accommodate technological innovation while maintaining academic integrity and character development.

The purpose of this study is to examine how MAN 3 Banyuwangi manages AI integration into instructional and assessment practices while supporting academic honesty, independent reasoning, and student responsibility. Specifically, the study aims to describe the institution's approach to regulating AI use in teaching, learning, and assessment; identify preventive and corrective measures implemented to address potential AI misuse; and explore how the madrasah principal, guidance and counseling teachers, and student representatives perceive the contribution of these measures to academic standards and character development. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research draws on interviews, direct observations, and

institutional documents to examine the relationship between formal policies, participants' reported experiences, and observed institutional practices.

This study contributes an institution-level perspective on how an Indonesian public madrasah incorporates academic integrity and character development into the management of AI-assisted education. For madrasah leaders and educational quality assurance teams, the findings may provide practical insights into establishing clear guidelines for acceptable AI use and designing assessment procedures that support independent academic performance. For teachers and school counselors, the study illustrates how instructional expectations, classroom supervision, and reflective counseling practices can complement one another in addressing concerns about inappropriate AI use. Furthermore, the findings may provide a foundation for comparative research examining how madrasahs with different institutional resources, assessment systems, technological infrastructure, and student support mechanisms develop and implement AI governance strategies. Ultimately, this research seeks to inform educational quality management practices that balance technological innovation with the sustained development of students' academic competencies, ethical awareness, and personal responsibility.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to examine the implementation of educational quality management strategies in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly how schools integrated AI into educational practices while preserving students' character values. The approach enabled an in-depth exploration of institutional policies, instructional practices, and strategies for maintaining academic integrity and character development.

The study was conducted at MAN 3 Banyuwangi, Indonesia. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in institutional policymaking, educational quality assurance, and teaching and learning activities. The informants included the madrasah principal, guidance and counseling teachers, and student representatives.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis. Interviews explored institutional policies regarding AI integration, educational quality management practices, and strategies for maintaining students' character values. Observations focused on classroom activities, students' use of digital technologies, and assessment procedures. Document analysis included institutional regulations, curriculum documents, student assignments, and educational quality assurance reports.

Data credibility was established through source and methodological triangulation by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and institutional documents. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which involved data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis focused on identifying patterns in AI governance, assessment practices, and character development strategies to understand how educational quality management was implemented at MAN 3 Banyuwangi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of qualitative data analysis explored through in-depth interviews with key informants, namely madrasah heads, BK teachers and student representatives, at MAN 3 Banyuwangi, substantive findings were obtained that answered the focus and research questions related to Education Quality Management in the Artificial Intelligence (AI) era.

Ontological Reorientation and the Position of AI in Quality Management Systems

The findings of the study show that school management sets strict epistemological limits on the use of Artificial Intelligence. AI is positioned absolutely as a supporting instrument, not as a substitute for critical thinking abilities or a single truth entity. Schools realize that as human-made machines, AI outputs are not free from errors. Therefore, the Education Quality Management strategy is directed at restoring the nature of learning: encouraging students to search for valid primary sources of information, independently verifying data, and avoiding depersonalization of thought processes that risk triggering cognitive laziness.

School Policy and Risk Mitigation of Digital Dependency

In order to oversee the sustainability of Character Education, the School Policy at MAN 3 Banyuwangi formulates an Integration Strategy that is preventive and technically operational. This policy manifests itself in the form of structured academic assessment regulations:

a. Isolated Assessments: Mid-Semester Assessments (ATS) and periodic evaluations are required to take place offline. Schools enforce rules to disconnect from the internet, Wi-Fi networks, and self-contained data packages in the exam area to isolate access to smart devices from external servers.
b. CBT (Computer Based Test) Application Security Protocol: The CBT system developed by the school is equipped with active security features. Technically, if students try to commit AI-based cheating such as switching application windows or taking advantage of the split screen feature, the system automatically detects and locks the student's exam account access in real time.
c. Global Policy Contextualization: This restrictive policy is in line with a global trend in developed countries (such as the United States) that are beginning to regulate the use of AI for school-age children to protect neuro-cognitive development and independent learning.

Multidimensional Detection of Digital Violations

Efforts to maintain the quality of graduation standards and the integrity of academic honesty are carried out through a dual supervision strategy:

a. Direct Behavioral Observation (Pedagogical): Teachers monitor students' physical gestures and interactions in the classroom, such as the movement of holding a smartphone secretly or non-verbal communication patterns during the quiz/evaluation process.
b. Linguistic and Semantic Analysis (LKPD Output Study): Teachers analyze the Student Worksheet (LKPD) in terms of language style and syntactic structure. It tends to be based on AI syntax which is very formal, rigid, impersonal, and has a homogeneous pattern regularity. On the other hand, students' original works display a diversity of diction, emotional articulation, and dynamics of personal language styles.

Educational-Rehabilitative Approach in Handling Violations

If indications of misuse of AI technology are found, School Policy does not apply punitive sanctions, but prioritizes a Character Education approach based on rehabilitative guidance. Handling violations is integrated through synergy between the Evaluation Committee and the Guidance and Counseling (BK) team. Students are given space for reflection through the emotional counseling process to map the academic obstacles they face, as well as instill ethical awareness about digital literacy and moral responsibility.

Ontological Reorientation and the Position of AI in Quality Management Systems

The first findings reveal the strategic steps of madrasas in redefining the position of artificial intelligence, namely making it a mere supporting instrument and not a single entity of truth. The management policy of MAN 3 Banyuwangi consciously restores the nature of learning by requiring students to explore primary sources of information independently. This is based on concerns that reliance on instant answers from error-prone artificial machines will erode students' critical reasoning. This step is a crucial initial foundation in keeping the teaching and learning process from depersonalizing which leads to mass cognitive laziness.

The philosophical approach taken by the madrasah has a very strong relevance to the Constructivist Learning Theory initiated by Schunk (2012). This theory emphasizes the basic principle that knowledge cannot simply be transferred instantly or passively from one subject to another, but must be constructed or constructed by the student himself. This process of knowledge construction requires active involvement, exploration, search, and individual intellectual struggle in solving problems.

The connection between the research findings and constructivist theories is evident from the school's efforts to make room for AI to interrupt students' learning processes. When students use AI to get finished answers, they miss out on valuable moments to piece together the various pieces of information that are the main soul of constructivist learning. By limiting the use of AI, madrassas actively protect that phase of self-reasoning, ensuring that students continue to experience the actual cognitive processes rather than simply reproducing the automated outputs of machines.

The implications of these findings and theories on education quality management are very real, namely that cognitive quality is not measured by the speed of students in collecting the right answers pragmatically. The true quality of education lies in the quality of the process of forming the way of thinking itself. Therefore, the policy of onological reorientation of AI in this institution is a very appropriate step to protect academic quality, ensuring that human intellectual capacity is not replaced by algorithms.

School Policy and Risk Mitigation of Digital Dependency

In the second finding, the school was proven to have formulated a technical operational policy to mitigate the risk of digital dependence through structured assessment regulations. The implementation of the Mid-Semester Assessment (ATS) which was changed to a strictly offline format, combined with the disconnection of the internet network and the modification of the CBT system that is able to automatically lock the screen (when cheating is detected), is a very proactive prevention strategy. These physical and systemic measures effectively isolate students from the temptation to misuse their smart devices during the evaluation and assessment process.

This assessment isolation strategy is very much in line with the concept of Situational Crime Prevention Theory developed by criminologist from Rutgers University, Ronald V. Clarke (1997). The essence of Clarke's idea is that rule violations (including academic cheating) are not solely born from bad intentions or weak character of the perpetrators, but are greatly influenced by the existence of opportunities in the surrounding environment. To reduce the number of fraud, the structure of the environment must be engineered to minimize opportunities and increase the risk of being caught.

If the common thread is drawn with the results of the research, the MAN 3 Banyuwangi policy is an absolute manifestation of situational prevention theory in the context of the school's digital ecosystem. Disconnecting Wi-Fi connections and having to turn off data packets serve as a step to "close the opportunity" for students to communicate with search engines or generative AI. Meanwhile, the screen-lock and split-screen detection security systems in the CBT application play a full role as instruments to "increase the risk of being caught," which makes students rethink before trying to cheat.

Managerially, the success of this mitigation policy shows that quality assurance of character education is not enough if it only relies on verbal moral appeals, but must be guarded by a solid security infrastructure. Policy adaptation in line with this global trend confirms that madrasas have a high capacity to anticipate technological risks. In the end, the integration of this sterile evaluation environment successfully guarantees that the quality of graduation obtained by students represents their pure integrity.

Multidimensional Detection of Digital Violations

The third finding shows the pedagogical skills of teachers in detecting digital cheating anomalies without always having to rely on algorithm detector software. Teachers in madrasas carry out dual supervision through direct observation of physical behavior during evaluation, combined with linguistic analysis of the Student Worksheet (LKPD). The teacher's ability to distinguish the uniform, rigid, and overly formal syntax of AI writing from the pure writing of students who are rich in emotional dynamics is an important defense in maintaining the academic originality of the classroom.

The phenomenon of teachers' foresight in evaluating students' work is very relevant to the Theory of Authentic Assessment initiated and popularized by educational innovation figure, Grant Wiggins (1990). Wiggins argues firmly that high-quality evaluation must be able to measure the real-world performance of a student in a meaningful way. Authentic assessment requires educators to see the essence of the process, the authenticity of the thinking style, and the personal uniqueness contained in an assignment, not just give a score based on the right or wrong series of sentences rationally.

Linking the theory of authentic assessment to findings in the field, the output of the text from AI tends to be qualitative-homogeneous, lacks the humanist spirit, and is very neat like a robot—which automatically contradicts the principle of human originality. When educators examine the diversity of diction and the emotional dynamics of the collected assignments, they are actually applying the heart of authentic assessment itself. They are validating whether the work is really a reflection of the students' internal struggles and distinctive original speech styles.

From the point of view of school-level education quality management, this ability of subjective linguistic analysis and psychomotor observation is a very essential institutional strength. These findings scientifically prove that no matter how sophisticated generative AI technology seeks to imitate the products of human reason, the role of educators as evaluators is irreplaceable in assessing the quality of taste of a writing. The success in distinguishing this work ensures that madrasas retain full control over the honesty standards of learning quality.

Educational-Rehabilitative Approach in Handling Violations

In the fourth finding, a paradigm shift in handling digital ethics violations in the school environment is depicted, from a model of imposing punitive sanctions to a rehabilitative approach to guidance. The synergy between the Evaluation Committee and Counseling Guidance (BK) teachers in following up on findings of technology abuse provides a safe space for students to enlighten. This counseling process is focused on efforts to dissect the root of the learning obstacles faced by students, take care of their emotional conditions, and instill digital literacy responsibility, instead of judging them through psychologically oppressive physical punishment.

This problem-solving approach that prioritizes the humanist side intersects very closely with the Theory of Moral Development initiated by the prominent psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg (1984). In this theory, Kohlberg maps the hierarchy of human morality into specific stages. At the lowest (pre-conventional) stage, individuals generally only obey norms because they are afraid of punishment by authority figures. On the other hand, at the highest (post-conventional) stage, moral obedience is born from autonomous conscience awareness, appreciation of the importance of ethics, and an internal drive to do good.

The synchronization between policy practice in madrassas and Kohlberg's theory can be seen from the long-term impact of the BK counseling instrument provided. If the school purely relies on the threat of drop-out sanctions or harsh reprimands, students may stop using AI during exams, but such behavior only represents a stage of pre-conventional morality that is vulnerable to collapse in the absence of supervision. However, by transforming offenses into a forum for rehabilitative dialogue, schools are stimulating students' ethical reasoning to climb the hierarchy towards the post-conventional stage, where honesty is believed to be self-respect.

The implementation of this counseling approach confirms the main principle of quality management that the formation of educational character cannot be forced through repressive regulations. Intact social quality assurance is actually achieved by viewing students' mistakes in technology as the first stepping stone for the psychological development process. The result of this long-term approach is the birth of graduates who do not just obey the rules of the exam on paper, but graduates who have a firmly rooted foundation of digital responsibility (digital citizenship).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, this study concluded that MAN 3 Banyuwangi implemented an adaptive educational quality management strategy to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into teaching, learning, and assessment while maintaining students' character development. Rather than adopting AI without adequate consideration of its ethical implications, the madrasah employed a structured institutional approach that balanced

technological benefits with the preservation of academic integrity, honesty, independent reasoning, and personal responsibility.

The findings identified four interconnected strategies supporting educational quality management and character development. First, the madrasah positioned AI as a supplementary learning tool rather than a substitute for independent reasoning and critical thinking, consistent with constructivist learning principles. Second, preventive measures were implemented through offline computer-based testing (CBT) and screen-locking mechanisms to reduce opportunities for unauthorized digital assistance during examinations, reflecting principles of situational crime prevention. Third, teachers monitored students' learning behaviors and evaluated written assignments for potential indications of AI misuse, incorporating elements of authentic assessment to support academic integrity. Fourth, suspected violations were addressed through reflective guidance and counseling rather than punitive measures, emphasizing ethical awareness, personal accountability, and moral development. Together, these strategies demonstrated how institutional regulations, assessment safeguards, instructional supervision, and counseling practices were coordinated to support responsible AI integration.

Overall, the study highlighted the importance of integrating technological innovation with ethical considerations and character development in educational quality management. The findings suggested that effective AI governance required clear institutional policies, appropriate assessment safeguards, active teacher involvement, and reflective student guidance. Although the findings were limited to the institutional context of MAN 3 Banyuwangi, they provided practical insights for educational institutions seeking to integrate AI responsibly without compromising academic integrity, independent reasoning, empathy, and moral values. Future research could examine the implementation of similar strategies across multiple educational institutions and evaluate their long-term implications for students' academic performance, ethical awareness, and character development.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The author is responsible for all stages of the research, including the conceptualization of the research, the preparation of the methodology, the search and selection of the literature, the analysis of data, the interpretation of the results, the preparation of the manuscript, and the final revision of the article. The author has read and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE STATEMENT

The author states that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not used to produce research data, conduct scientific analysis, or replace the author's intellectual contribution in the preparation of this manuscript. When used in the manuscript preparation process, AI is only used to a limited extent to help improve the language and writing structure. The author remains fully responsible for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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