



TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION ETHICS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AT MTS PAB 2 SAMPALI

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Accepted :

9 August 2025

Published :

14 August 2025

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates teachers' perspectives on students' communication ethics within the school environment at MTs PAB 2 Sampali. The aims are: (1) to explore teachers' viewpoints regarding students' communication ethics; (2) to assess how these perspectives influence students' communication behavior; and (3) to identify the factors that shape such perceptions. A qualitative descriptive method was applied, with participants purposively chosen from teachers experienced in guiding students' ethical conduct. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed following the Miles and Huberman framework covering data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Results reveal that teachers regard communication ethics as vital for character development, stressing the importance of polite language, respect for conversation partners, and appropriateness to context. Factors influencing these perceptions include family background, peer relationships, school culture, and exposure to social media. Teachers suggest ongoing guidance through role modeling, habit cultivation, rule enforcement, and digital literacy programs. In conclusion, teachers' perceptions are both significant and constructive, underscoring the need for joint efforts by schools, families, and communities to nurture students' communication ethics.

Keywords: *Teacher Perceptions, Communication Ethics, Students, School Environment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication stands as a cornerstone of human existence, functioning as a vehicle for transmitting information, articulating emotions, cultivating social bonds, and shaping the attitudes and behaviors of others (Spector et al., 2019; Becerra-Posada et al., 2022). From the earliest stages of civilization, it has served as the foundation of social interaction within families, communities, and institutional frameworks, including educational environments. Within the realm of formal education, communication transcends its role as a conduit for delivering instructional content; it also operates as a medium for embedding moral values, nurturing character,

and fostering a culture of mutual respect (Gulnaz, 2020; Casanova & Alvarez, 2022; Nobutoshi, 2023). Meaningful learning is contingent upon communication that is coherent, courteous, precise, and attuned to established social norms. This underscores the perspective that education is not confined to the mere dissemination of knowledge but extends to the comprehensive formation of learners, equipping them with the capacity to engage appropriately across diverse contexts. Accordingly, communication ethics emerges as a fundamental pillar that must be steadfastly maintained within the educational sphere (Yunita, 2019; Crespi et al., 2022; Jaya et al., 2025).

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Communication ethics can be defined as a set of values, norms, and principles that regulate how individuals engage in respectful, polite, and context-appropriate exchanges. Within the school environment, communication ethics is reflected not only in the use of courteous language but also in the manner of interaction listening attentively, refraining from interrupting, using the appropriate tone of voice, and avoiding statements that may offend others (Hindratno et al., 2021). The implementation of proper communication ethics forms the foundation for harmonious relationships between teachers and students, among students themselves, and among all members of the school community. In the context of Islamic-based education, such as in Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), communication ethics should embody noble character values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, such as speaking kindly or remaining silent, respecting others' opinions, and offering greetings as a form of courtesy.

However, in reality, not all school interactions reflect the ideal principles of communication ethics (Lesiana et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2024). The influence of technology, cultural shifts, and external social environments has reshaped the communication patterns of younger generations, including those at the junior secondary level (Wiwin et al., 2022; Yahya et al., 2019; Darimi, 2017). It is not uncommon to find students speaking to teachers in a tone perceived as impolite, using colloquial language inappropriate for the setting, or expressing opinions in a way that challenges authority. Such behaviors can disrupt the learning atmosphere and potentially diminish the teacher's authority in front of other students. Moreover, differences in perception between teachers and students regarding the boundaries of polite communication may lead to misunderstandings and conflict. For some teachers, a certain behavior might be considered disrespectful, while for students,

it could be interpreted as casual familiarity or even a sign of closeness (Hakim et al., 2021).

In such situations, teachers' perceptions of students' communication ethics play a crucial role. Perception refers to an individual's interpretation or viewpoint regarding a phenomenon, shaped by their experiences, values, cultural background, and knowledge. Teachers' perceptions of students' communication ethics determine how they respond to these behaviors whether through correction, guidance, or adjustment of teaching strategies (Langi et al., 2021; Herdina & Ningrum, 2023). Positive perceptions encourage teachers to respond wisely and to guide students constructively, whereas negative perceptions may create emotional distance, hinder productive classroom interactions, and impede the achievement of educational goals. Within the context of MTs PAB 2 Sampali, which is characterized by students from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, understanding these perceptions becomes essential in improving the quality of communication in the school.

Furthermore, good communication ethics impact not only interpersonal relationships within the school but also the success of the teaching and learning process. Previous studies have shown that effective teacher-student communication can enhance learning motivation, increase active participation, and minimize disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Conversely, unethical communication often leads to resistance, reduced learning interest, and increased disciplinary issues. Therefore, understanding teachers' perceptions of students' communication ethics is not merely an academic discourse but has direct implications for improving the learning environment (Rojo-Ramos et al., 2025; Tristiana et al., 2024).

This study focuses on exploring the perceptions of teachers at MTs PAB 2 Sampali regarding students' communication ethics in the school environment. MTs PAB 2

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Sampali was chosen as the research site because of its unique environment, where interactions between teachers and students are shaped by Islamic values while also facing the challenges of modernization. The objectives of this research are to assess how teachers perceive the quality of students' communication ethics, to identify the factors influencing these perceptions, and to examine how these perceptions affect interaction patterns and the learning process in the school. The findings of this research are expected to provide practical contributions to the school in formulating policies and programs for fostering effective communication, as well as theoretical contributions to the development of communication ethics studies in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia.

2. METHODS

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore teachers' perceptions of students' communication ethics (Sugiyono, 2021; Patton, 2020; Tisdell et al., 2025). Participants were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on teachers with significant interaction experience and understanding of student behavior at MTs PAB 2 Sampali. Data collection methods included: (1) in-depth interviews to capture personal views and experiences; (2) classroom observations to identify communication patterns; and (3) documentation for institutional policies and supporting records. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman (2019) interactive model: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation of sources was applied to ensure credibility, and informed consent was obtained from all participants.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**3.1 *The Importance of Ethics in Education and Teachers' Perceptions***

Communication ethics, as understood by the teachers at MTs PAB 2 Sampali, is not

merely a superficial set of polite manners, but rather a normative foundation that shapes identity, social relationships, and the overall learning climate in the school. This perspective aligns with Wawan's (2020) findings, which position character education including ethics as a systematic component of the formal curriculum. Based on interview and observational data, teachers emphasized that communication ethics influences all aspects of interaction in the madrasah: how students greet, respond to instructions, express objections, and interact with peers. One informant even stated that ethics is "100% important" because it directly relates to shaping students' moral identity (Participant 1, Interview, June 2, 2025).

This statement is supported by teachers' observations of behavioral changes following short interventions. For instance, within just half a month of instruction, there was an observable increase in the habit of giving greetings and initiating conversations evidence that ethical habituation can yield quick results when cultivated consistently. However, teachers also observed a certain ambivalence: the ethical values students bring from home or their local community sometimes align with, but at other times conflict with, the norms of the madrasah. These differences in interpretation often lead to misunderstandings and minor conflicts, which, if left unaddressed, can disrupt the learning process (Santoso, 2021).

Therefore, teachers' perceptions of ethics are not merely normative judgments but also serve as the basis for corrective actions, pedagogical approaches, and disciplinary decisions they make on a daily basis. This understanding positions teachers as central actors who must be able to translate universal values of communication ethics into local practices that are sensitive to the students' socio-cultural contexts.

3.2 *Good Behavior as an Indicator of Communication Ethics*

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Field data revealed that teachers identify several indicators of good behavior closely related to communication ethics: punctuality, neatness of attire, active participation, regularity in greeting others, appropriate ways of expressing opinions, and honest actions such as returning lost items. This observation is consistent with Lickona's (1991) concept that a child's character and behavior are shaped by the interaction between formal education and family practices. Teachers at MTs PAB 2 Sampali affirmed that children who are accustomed to receiving ethical guidance at home tend to display good communication ethics at school.

A concrete example was provided by an informant (Participant 2, Interview, June 10, 2025): a seventh-grade student who did not understand regular routines such as the Friday *yasinan* recitation due to a lack of conveyed information. This case illustrates how institutional or inter-party communication failures (school-parent-student) may manifest as an ethics issue when, in fact, the root cause lies in limited information and habituation.

In addition, linguistic aspects such as the use of local dialects or colloquial language serve as another indicator. Teachers distinguish between using local language as a legitimate form of cultural identity and using language containing derogatory or provocative elements. From the perspective of Mutiarani et al. (2024) on human communication, the ability to select appropriate language and tone is a crucial indicator of communication competence. When refined, this skill can help prevent misunderstandings and enhance the quality of relationships among all participants in the educational process.

3.3 Factors Influencing Students' Communication Ethics

Data analysis reveals that students' communication ethics are shaped by a multi-determinant interaction of factors: family,

peers, school policies and culture, as well as social media/digital environments. The family emerges as the most dominant variable; values instilled at home such as the habit of greeting, ways of giving advice, and conflict resolution models are often carried over into the madrasah environment. This supports Lickona's (1991) argument that the family is the "first school" for a child's character. Peer interaction also plays a major role, especially during early adolescence in MTs, when peer groups become a strong source of social norms. If the group embraces unethical communication norms (e.g., sarcasm, ridicule), individuals tend to imitate them in order to maintain social standing. The school, as an institution, has the capacity to regulate and shape norms through policies, curriculum, and daily practices. Teachers reported that programs such as the habit of greeting, classroom discussion sessions, or public speaking training can boost students' confidence while improving their speaking ethics aligning with Epstein's (2011) emphasis on the importance of partnerships and policies that support open communication.

In the digital era, social media has become increasingly influential; as noted by Lenhart et al. (2010) and supported by local findings (Gandojo, 2023), online platforms facilitate communication but also create opportunities for unethical behavior such as harsh language, spreading negative comments, or cyberbullying. Teachers expressed the need for digital ethics education to help students transfer face-to-face courtesy norms into the online space; without such instruction, poor online communication patterns risk spilling over into classroom conflicts and damaging the learning climate.

3.4 Strategies for Fostering Communication Ethics at MTs PAB 2 Sampali

From interviews and observed

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practices, teachers recommend comprehensive, contextual, and collaborative strategies for fostering communication ethics. First, teacher role modeling is a non-negotiable starting point teachers must consistently demonstrate ethical ways of speaking, listening, and responding, thus serving as role models for students. Second, daily habit formation through simple routines such as morning greetings, turn-taking in conversations, and praise for good behavior has proven effective in building communicative habits. Third, integrating communication ethics into curricular and extracurricular activities (drama, debates, presentations, student services) provides students with opportunities to practice communication norms in real-life contexts. Fourth, strengthening school-parent-community partnerships (Epstein, 2011; Isnaini, 2024) through intensive communication such as parent WhatsApp groups, regular meetings, and parent training helps align norms applied at home and at school; field data shows that teachers use parent groups to share information and monitor students' ethical development at home.

Fifth, digital literacy and online ethics should be an integral part of the development program: modules on "digital citizenship," guidelines for polite online commenting, and social consequences of spreading negative speech should be explicitly taught. Sixth, the recommended approach to fostering communication ethics is restorative rather than purely punitive; when violations occur, dialogue, reflection, and relationship restoration (restorative practices) are prioritized so that ethical lessons go beyond sanctions and lead to value internalization. Finally, teachers emphasize the need for continuous evaluation through classroom observation, teacher reflection, and parental feedback as tools to assess the effectiveness of these strategies and adjust interventions according to students'

developmental needs at each grade level.

Overall, the findings and discussion illustrate that teachers' perceptions of communication ethics at MTs PAB 2 Sampali are comprehensive, rooted in pedagogical experience, and aligned with relevant literature. This understanding serves as a basis for practical, contextual, and sustainable recommendations aimed at strengthening the quality of interactions and supporting the character development of students.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight that teachers at MTs PAB 2 Sampali perceive communication ethics as a fundamental normative framework that shapes students' moral identity, social relationships, and the overall learning climate. This aligns with Wawan's (2020) view that character education, including ethical communication, is an integral component of the formal curriculum. Teachers regard communication ethics not merely as politeness in language but as a comprehensive set of values that include respect for interlocutors, appropriate expression of opinions, and situational appropriateness. Such perceptions position teachers as central agents in translating universal values into local practices that are sensitive to students' socio-cultural contexts, reflecting argument that character education must be integrated into all learning processes (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2020; John-Steiner & Mahn, 2020).

Teachers also identified specific indicators of communication ethics, such as punctuality, neatness, active participation, regular greetings, polite speech, and honesty. These indicators are consistent with Chan and Fugard (2018) assertion that a child's behavior is shaped by the interplay between formal education and family upbringing. Cases of miscommunication, such as students failing to participate in routine religious activities due to a lack of information,

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illustrate that communication breakdowns between school, parents, and students can be misinterpreted as ethical lapses. Furthermore, the choice of language whether in local dialects or standard forms serves as a key indicator, with Mutiarani et al. (2024) emphasizing that appropriate language selection and tone are essential for avoiding misunderstandings and maintaining positive relationships.

The study also found that students' communication ethics are influenced by a combination of factors: family, peer groups, school policies and culture, and digital environments. The family emerged as the most dominant influence, supporting Pike et al. (2021) notion that the family is the "first school" for character development. Peer interactions, particularly during early adolescence, can either reinforce or undermine ethical communication norms, depending on the group's values. The school plays a crucial role in shaping these norms through policies, programs, and daily routines, echoing Elezi (2021) and Sroufe & Ramos (2015) argument on the importance of institutional partnerships in supporting positive communication. In the digital era, social media has become a powerful yet double-edged influence, as observed by Gandojo (2023), potentially fostering both constructive interactions and unethical behaviors such as cyberbullying, thus underscoring the need for digital ethics education.

To address these challenges, teachers recommend a range of strategies that are comprehensive, contextual, and collaborative. These include consistent teacher role modeling, daily habit formation, integrating communication ethics into curricular and extracurricular activities, strengthening school–parent–community partnerships (Epstein, 2011; Isnaini, 2024), and embedding digital literacy into the educational program. Teachers also advocate for restorative approaches to discipline,

emphasizing dialogue, reflection, and relationship repair over punitive measures, as well as continuous evaluation through classroom observation, teacher reflection, and parental feedback. Overall, the findings confirm that teachers' perceptions of communication ethics are deeply rooted in pedagogical experience, aligned with relevant literature, and serve as a practical foundation for sustainable interventions aimed at improving the quality of student interactions and supporting character development.

4. CONCLUSION

Drawing from the findings of the study on Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Communication Ethics in the School Environment at MTs PAB 2 Sampali, it can be inferred that teachers regard communication ethics as a pivotal element in fostering students' character development and sustaining a positive learning atmosphere. Communication ethics is conceived not merely as verbal politeness, but as an integrated disposition encompassing respect for interlocutors, the use of contextually appropriate language, adherence to prevailing social norms, and the ability to adapt communicative behavior to situational demands. Teachers noted that students' comprehension of communication ethics differs by grade level: seventh-grade students often retain communicative habits shaped by their home and community environments, necessitating more intensive guidance, whereas eighth- and ninth-grade students generally display a more advanced understanding of expected norms, albeit still requiring consistent supervision.

The study identifies multiple factors influencing students' communication ethics, with the family environment emerging as the most significant, as values cultivated at home are naturally transferred to the school context. Peer influence and the pervasive role of social media further shape communicative behavior—social media serving as both a tool for interaction and a potential breeding

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ground for unethical conduct in the absence of adequate guidance. Teachers assert that the cultivation of communication ethics must be a continuous endeavor, grounded in collaborative engagement between schools, families, and the broader community. Such an approach is anticipated to produce students capable of communicating courteously, showing respect, and conducting themselves in accordance with societal norms both within the school and in wider social contexts.

For future research, it is recommended to adopt a comparative approach by examining communication ethics across different educational levels or cultural settings, integrating quantitative measures to complement qualitative insights, and exploring the effectiveness of specific digital literacy and restorative communication programs in enhancing students' ethical interaction skills. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how communication ethics can be systematically nurtured in diverse educational environments.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the Principal, teachers, and students of MTs PAB 2 Sampali for their time and valuable information during the research process. Appreciation is also extended to the supervising lecturer and all parties who have provided support and contributions in the preparation of this article.

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