

Beyond the Classroom: The Role of Personal Branding in Teacher Professional Identity Construction

Arilana Nur 'Izi ^{a,1,*}, Intan Dian Saputri ^{a,2}, Diah Eka Sulistia Rini ^{a,3}, Fahrudin ^{a,4}, Zuhrufa Redina Izza ^{b,5}

^a Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

^b Al-Azhar University, Kairo, Mesir

¹ o100240036@student.ums.ac.id; ² o100240031@student.ums.ac.id; ³ o100240043@student.ums.ac.id; ⁴ o100240040@student.ums.ac.id; ⁵ redinaizza@gmail.com

* Corresponding Author

<https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v37i1.10008>

ARTICLE INFO

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received Month 04, 2025

Revised Month 05, 2025

Accepted Month 05, 2025

KEYWORDS

Personal branding

Islamic religious education

Teacher professionalism

Competence in education

Personal integrity

ABSTRACT

This study examines the strengthening of the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers through the formation of personal branding at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen. PAI teachers have a strategic role in instilling moral and spiritual values in students, but challenges in the digital era make strengthening professionalism very important. Personal branding is seen as a strategy to display a teacher's identity that is inspiring and consistent in attitudes, communication, and actions. The research uses a phenomenological qualitative approach by collecting data through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that authentic and consistent personal branding of PAI teachers can strengthen professionalism, increase confidence, and build harmonious relationships with students and the school environment. Supporting factors include support for the school environment, spiritual and leadership competency standards, and the use of social media. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors are time limitations, lack of training, and understanding of the concept of personal branding. These findings make an important contribution to the development of a contextual and reflective model for PAI teacher professionalism coaching.

This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY](#) license.



1. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers have a strategic role in instilling moral and spiritual values in students [1]. This task has become increasingly challenging along with the rapid development of information technology in the digital era, which also affects students' mindsets and behaviors. The unstoppable flow of information often leads students to an instant lifestyle and tends to move away from religious values. In the Vocational High School (SMK) environment, these challenges are increasingly felt because the focus of education is more directed towards mastering

skills and work readiness, so that aspects of character development and religious values often receive less attention.

In facing this reality, strengthening the professionalism of teachers is very important. Teacher professionalism is not only measured by the ability to convey subject matter, but also by the ability to build exemplary, integrity, and a positive self-image in the eyes of students [2]. One of the approaches that is starting to be relevant is personal branding, which is a teacher's strategy in displaying an inspirational and consistent identity, both in attitude, communication, and action, in carrying out the role of educator.

Thus, this case study is expected to make an important contribution to the development of a model for fostering the professionalism of PAI teachers, especially in the realm of personal branding to support the creation of a young generation of Indonesia who are religious, adaptive to changing times, and have superior character.

This study aims to describe and understand in depth the process of forming the personal branding of PAI teachers at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen; including internal and external factors that influence; and its impact on the educational climate in schools.

PAI teachers not only function as conveyors of religious subject matter [3], but must also be role models for religious and social values in daily life in the school environment. In the midst of the dynamics of socio-cultural change and the advancement of information technology, the demand for the quality of the teaching profession is increasing, including the ability to build a positive self-image or personal branding in order to compete effectively in front of students and other educational communities [4].

As a vocational education institution with a diversity of student backgrounds and the need for an adaptive religious approach according to the times [5], SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen offers an interesting phenomenon to be studied related to how the process of personal branding is formed in the figure of PAI teachers so that it can have an optimal impact on the development of students' character through the integration of spiritual values in teaching and learning activities.

Studies on strengthening the professionalism of PAI teachers through the formation of personal branding are still relatively limited, especially in the context of vocational high schools (SMK). So far, teachers' professionalism is more often understood in a traditional framework that emphasizes mastery of teaching materials, methodological skills, and the fulfilment of administrative obligations. In fact, the aspect of personal branding also plays an important role in shaping students' perception of the credibility and example of teachers. This shows the need for an in-depth study of how PAI teachers can develop personal branding as a strategy to improve professionalism as a whole.

The urgency of this research lies in its contribution to the development of a more contextual and reflective model of teacher professionalism, especially in the vocational school environment. The approach through personal branding allows teachers to not only appear as teachers, but also as figures who are able to provide inspiration and exemplary values for students. The findings of this study are expected to be a practical reference for schools, teacher professional development institutions, and policymakers in developing strategies to improve the quality of educators, both from technical aspects and personal characters inherent in their role as role models in the midst of changing times.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method. The phenomenological method was chosen to explore the subjective experience of PAI teachers in shaping their personal branding in the school environment [6]. The main focus of this study is to understand the meaning of personal branding as experienced by these teachers.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation [7]. The research informants were selected purposively, namely PAI teachers who actively teach at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen and are considered to have a prominent personal

branding. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawn, with an interpretive approach to explore the essence of the informant's experience [8].

The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques of sources and methods, member examinations, and discussions with peers (peer debriefing) to increase the validity of the research results [9]. With this approach, it is hoped that the research will be able to provide an authentic picture of the process and dynamics of the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers in vocational school environments.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Case Study Findings

Research at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen revealed that PAI teachers have not reflected efforts to build an authentic and influential self-image in the school environment. Based on in-depth interview data, class observations, and social media documentation. The personal branding of PAI teachers in this school does not have a consistent combination of professional qualities, spiritual attitudes, and interpersonal communication skills. The strengthening of PAI teachers' personal branding is greatly influenced by their self-awareness of the uniqueness of their role as educators as well as spiritual guides. The results of this finding confirm that the personal branding of PAI teachers at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen has not been rooted in authentic and consistent Islamic values.

The main supporting factors in the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers are the support of a conducive school environment and the existence of clear competency standards, including spiritual competence and leadership that are characteristic of PAI teachers. The principal and fellow teachers provide appreciation and space for PAI teachers to develop themselves, both through training and religious activities at school. This strengthens the motivation of teachers to build a positive and professional self-image. In addition, the use of social media as a means of communication and *da'wah* is also an important factor. PAI teachers who actively utilize digital platforms are able to expand the reach of their personal branding, not only in the school environment but also in the wider community.

This study also identified several inhibiting factors in the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers. One of them is time limitations, some teachers admitted that the lack of understanding and special training on personal branding strategies is also an obstacle. Teachers who are not familiar with the concept of personal branding tend to be less optimal in utilizing their potential and digital media to build a professional image. This shows the need for more intensive support and training from educational institutions.

In terms of student perception, the strong personal branding of PAI teachers contributes to increasing respect, trust, and motivation to learn. Observation of classroom interactions shows that students are more active and enthusiastic when PAI teachers are able to show communicative, caring, and inspirational attitudes. Students feel closer and more comfortable learning with teachers who have a positive personal branding, which is reflected in the way teachers communicate and give individual attention. This strengthens the harmonious relationship between teachers and students, which in turn supports an effective learning process.

To clarify these findings, the following table summarizes the factors that support and inhibit the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen. The following [Table 1](#) summarizes the factors that support and inhibit the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers.

Table 1. Complex and multidimensional internal and external factors

Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
Standards of spiritual competence and leadership	Lack of personal branding training
The use of social media as a means of da'wah	Lack of understanding of the concept of personal branding
Internal motivation and self-awareness	Challenges in consistency in self-image management

These findings show that the formation of personal branding of PAI teachers is a complex and multidimensional process, which is influenced by internal and external factors. The success of personal branding depends not only on the quality of individual teachers, but also on institutional support and effective use of information technology. Therefore, strengthening the personal branding of PAI teachers must be carried out holistically by paying attention to these various aspects in order to have a maximum positive impact on professionalism and learning quality.

Overall, a case study at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen revealed that authentic and consistent personal branding of PAI teachers is able to strengthen teacher professionalism, increase confidence, and build harmonious relationships with students and the school environment. These findings are an important basis for further analysis of how personal branding can be an effective strategy in the overall development of PAI teacher professionalism.

The analysis of strengthening the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers through the formation of personal branding shows a very close and supportive relationship between the two concepts. Strong and authentic personal branding not only improves the teacher's self-image in the eyes of students and society, but also significantly strengthens the competence and confidence of PAI teachers in carrying out their professional duties.

First, personal branding acts as a psychological foundation that increases the confidence of PAI teachers. This confidence is very important because confident teachers tend to be better able to manage the classroom effectively, communicate clearly, and demonstrate a consistent professional attitude. As explained by Farco Siswiyanto Raharjo (2019), personal branding is a way for a person to take control of other people's assessments of him/her, so that teachers who have good personal branding will feel more confident and motivated to show their best quality in the learning process. This confidence also encourages teachers to continue to develop their scientific and pedagogical competencies, because they realize that a positive self-image must be supported by real and sustainable abilities.

Second, personal branding helps PAI teachers build harmonious relationships with students and the school environment. Teachers who are able to manage their self-image effectively will find it easier to create a conducive and fun learning atmosphere. Communicative attitudes, empathy, and attention reflected in the teacher's personal branding are the main keys in building trust and respect from students. This is in line with the findings at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen, where PAI teachers who have strong personal branding are able to increase students' motivation to learn and strengthen interpersonal relationships. Thus, personal branding not only impacts external perceptions, but also strengthens the emotional bonds that support successful learning.

Third, personal branding contributes to the overall development of PAI teachers' professionalism. The professionalism of PAI teachers includes mastery of Islamic religious materials, pedagogical skills, ethical attitudes, and commitment to self-development. Authentic personal branding reflects the integrity and dedication of teachers in carrying out their profession, thereby strengthening the

professional image inherent in the teacher. Teachers who build personal branding based on Islamic values and professional ethics will be more respected and trusted by students, colleagues, and the community. This strengthens the position of teachers as agents of change who are able to have a positive impact on Islamic religious education.

Personal branding encourages PAI teachers to continue to learn and innovate through training, development of teaching methods, and technology adaptation according to student needs. By realizing the importance of self-image and professional reputation, teachers are encouraged to improve their competence and professionalism on an ongoing basis. In the digital era, effective personal branding management through social media not only makes teachers known in the school environment, but also in the wider community as inspirational figures, increasing credibility, legitimacy, and opening up opportunities for da'wah and religious education contributions. The integration between offline reputation and online persona is the key to strengthening the professionalism of PAI teachers in the modern era.

Overall, strong and authentic personal branding strengthens the professionalism of PAI teachers by increasing confidence, strengthening relationships with students and the school environment, and encouraging the development of internal competencies and motivation. Personal branding is not just an image, but a real representation of the quality and integrity of teachers that has a positive impact on the quality of learning and the formation of students' character. Therefore, the development of personal branding must be an integral part of the strategy to improve the professionalism of PAI teachers, supported by training, mentoring, and supportive policies at the school and educational institution levels [10]. Personal branding of PAI teachers has a very broad strategic role because:

- a. **Strengthening Professionalism:** By building an authentic and consistent self-image, PAI teachers can increase confidence and credibility in the eyes of students, peers, and the community. This encourages innovation in teaching methods, effective communication, and spiritual leadership.
- b. **Improving the Quality of Learning:** Teachers with strong personal branding tend to create an inspiring and conducive learning atmosphere, as well as strengthen interpersonal relationships with students so that the internalization of religious values can take place optimally.
- c. **Expanding Institutional Influence:** Managing personal branding offline and online (through social media) not only improves the reputation of individual teachers, but also raises the image of the school as a quality Islamic educational institution, attracts the interest of prospective students, and gains public trust.
- d. **Integrated Approach and Policy Support:** The development of personal branding requires a strategy that includes training, mentoring, the provision of digital facilities, and collaboration between teachers and stakeholders. Supportive policies are also essential to create a culture of professionalism and integrity.

In short, personal branding is the main foundation in optimizing the role of PAI teachers as inspirational figures that not only improve the quality of the learning process, but also have a positive impact on the school's reputation and the spread of Islamic values more widely. This is in line with the view of Farco Siswiyanto Raharjo (2019) who states that personal branding is a way for a person to take control of other people's judgments of him/her, so that teachers who have strong personal branding will be able to manage positive perceptions in a sustainable manner.

3.2. The Process of Forming Personal Branding

Personal branding is basically a strategic process in forming, managing, and strengthening a person's self-image so that it is positively known by the public or a certain audience [11]. In the context of education, teacher personal branding refers to the conscious and continuous efforts of an educator to build an authentic, credible, and influential professional identity, both in the school environment and the wider community.

Personal branding is how a person consistently displays his or her qualities, values, and excellence in order to be recognized and remembered in a certain way by others [12]. Meanwhile,

within the scope of the teaching profession, personal branding includes aspects of communication, attitude, integrity, and the ability to convey values in an attractive and relevant manner. Teachers who have strong personal branding will more easily gain the trust of students, peers, and school management.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, in particular, need personal branding that reflects Islamic values, such as honesty, simplicity, discipline, and example. It is important that the moral and spiritual messages conveyed in learning do not only stop at the theoretical level, but are also reflected in the personal and behavior of the teacher. Thus, the personal branding of PAI teachers not only aims to build a positive image, but also becomes an effective means of da'wah in shaping the character of students.

The role of teachers in the world of education today is no longer limited to teaching tasks in the classroom. Teachers are also expected to be role models who are able to shape students' character through attitudes, speech, and behavior. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), this responsibility becomes broader because PAI teachers are required to convey spiritual and moral values in accordance with Islamic teachings, as well as internalize them in daily life [13]. Therefore, it is important for PAI teachers to have a strong personal branding, as a form of reflection of their professional identity and values.

Personal branding plays an important role in building trust between teachers and students. A positive and consistent self-image can strengthen the credibility of teachers, so that the messages conveyed in learning are easier to accept and appreciate by students [14]. In addition, the presence of PAI teachers with good personal branding can be a counterbalance in the midst of the rapid flow of information from outside that is not always in line with Islamic values.

In the digital era that is full of public figures and content that affects the younger generation, PAI teachers need to appear as an attractive and relevant representation of Islamic values. Appropriately constructed personal branding can expand the reach of teachers' influence, not only in the school environment but also through social media or other public forums [15].

Furthermore, personal branding is also related to career development and teacher professionalism. Teachers who are able to display a superior self-image will more easily gain the trust of educational institutions, play an active role in school development, and become a source of inspiration for colleagues and society [16]. Therefore, building personal branding is not just an effort to form external perceptions, but is part of strengthening professional identities that support the success of value and character education in schools.

Teacher professionalism is one of the main aspects in supporting the quality of education. In general, professionalism can be understood as a person's attitude and behavior in carrying out duties in accordance with competency standards, work ethics, and professional responsibilities [17]. In the context of education, a professional teacher is a teacher who not only masters the field of science and teaching methods, but also has a high commitment to his duties as an educator.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers have a unique role because in addition to being tasked with conveying religious knowledge, they are also required to be moral and spiritual role models for students [18]. Therefore, the professionalism of PAI teachers is not only measured from academic or pedagogic aspects, but also from personal integrity, consistency of values, and the ability to become figures who reflect Islamic teachings in real life in daily life.

The professionalism of PAI teachers includes four main dimensions, namely pedagogic competence (ability to manage learning), professional competence (mastery of PAI materials), personality competence (character and integrity), and social competence (the ability to interact positively with students, colleagues, and society) [19]. These four dimensions are interrelated and form the basis of the teacher's credibility in carrying out their functions as educators and moral coaches.

In today's developments, the demands on teacher professionalism are increasingly complex. PAI teachers are not only required to be able to teach effectively, but also must be able to appear as

inspiring figures and relevant to the dynamics of the times [20]. Therefore, the professionalism of PAI teachers must always be improved, both through competency development and strengthening character and self-image as educators with integrity.

Improving personal branding is very important for teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, because the quality of learning produced often reflects the quality of the teacher himself. To build optimal self-quality, teachers need to master four basic skills, namely pedagogical skills, personality, professionalism, and social skills. This process can be carried out through various activities, both independently and organized by institutions that focus on educator development.

Personal branding is a strategy to market yourself and your career as a brand. This includes the development of a unique professional identity and a consistent message to differentiate individuals from others. For PAI teachers, personal branding is key to building trust, authority, and influence among students, parents, and colleagues. This process involves more than just self-promotion; It reflects values, skills, and contributions to the educational community.

PAI teachers' personal branding strategies include identifying personal values and unique attributes, improving professional competence, and interacting effectively with the educational community. Technology and social media also play an important role in supporting these efforts. Consistency and authenticity are key to ensuring a personal brand still reflects the values and professional ethos of teachers.

In addition to personal benefits, personal branding also enriches the educational environment by fostering trust and respect. PAI teachers who build strong personal branding can have a greater impact, inspire students, and contribute to educational development. This process, supported by research and expert insights, confirms the importance of personal branding in modern education. Regular self-evaluation is an important first step for teachers to continue to develop their qualities as educators. Among the ways are:

3.2.1. Identification of Personal Values and Uniqueness

Personal branding begins with a deep understanding of the core values and uniqueness that individuals possess [21]. PAI teachers must identify what makes them different from other teachers, such as innovative teaching methods or deep spiritual approaches. Personal branding is about finding what makes you unique and communicating that uniqueness consistently.

Personal branding means building an image or image of ourselves that is unique and different from others. To start personal branding, we must first know what important values and special advantages we have. For example, a PAI (Islamic Religious Education) teacher can start by recognizing the following: 1) What makes his teaching method different? For example, he uses the method of learning while playing or interesting stories so that students can understand more easily. 2) Is there a specific spiritual approach? For example, this teacher always invites students to reflect on themselves after the lesson so that they are not only academically intelligent but also increase in faith.

Personal branding is finding one's own uniqueness and then conveying it continuously to others. So, if the teacher is known as a "PAI teacher who always makes lessons fun and meaningful", then that is his personal brand.

3.2.2. Competency and Expertise Development

The development of professional competencies and special expertise in the field of PAI can improve personal branding [22]. Teachers must constantly update their knowledge through continuous training and education. Continuous learning and upskilling are essential to maintaining a strong personal brand [23].

In order for the personal branding of a PAI teacher to become stronger and more famous, teachers must continue to learn and develop their professional skills. This means that teachers must always add special knowledge and expertise in the field of Islamic Religious Education. For example, namely: 1) A PAI teacher attends the latest training on digital teaching methods so that they can use technology

in the classroom. 2) Teachers also read books or participate in seminars on how to educate students to better understand religious values in a practical way.

This way, teachers not only have up-to-date knowledge but also look like professional figures and experts in their fields. If a teacher continues to learn and improve his skills, then his personal branding will be stronger because he is considered to be always ready to give the best for his students.

3.2.3. Effective Communication and Interaction

Effective communication and positive interactions with students and the school community are key in building personal branding [24]. PAI teachers must be able to convey messages clearly and build good relationships. Effective communication is the cornerstone of a strong personal brand [25].

To build a good personal branding, PAI teachers must be able to communicate clearly and establish positive relationships with students and people at school. For example, namely: 1) PAI teachers always explain lessons in a language that is easy for students to understand, so that they are not confused. 2) In addition, this teacher also often discusses or listens to students' complaints so that they feel appreciated and supported. 3) Teachers also actively communicate with students' parents to inform their child's learning progress.

In this way, teachers will be known as friendly, easy to talk to, and caring about students and the school community. Good communication is the basis of personal branding because it makes others feel comfortable and trust teachers.

3.2.4. Social Media Use and Technology

Highlighting the importance of social media in building personal branding [26]. PAI teachers can leverage platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and blogs to share their knowledge and experiences. Social media is a powerful tool for educators to build and enhance their personal brands [27].

Social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and blogs can be very useful tools for PAI teachers to be more widely known and build a strong personal branding. For example: 1) A PAI teacher made a short video on YouTube about how to easily understand the story in the Qur'an. 2) Teachers also share tips for learning Islam on Instagram, for example with interesting pictures or motivational quotes. 3) In addition, teachers can write articles on blogs about teaching experiences or religious activities at school.

By utilizing social media, teachers not only share knowledge but also show their personality and dedication as educators. Social media is a powerful tool to introduce yourself positively to many people while strengthening the personal branding of a PAI teacher.

3.2.5. Consistency and Authenticity

Consistency in behavior and messages conveyed is an important element in personal branding [27,31][28]. PAI teachers must be authentic and consistent in all their interactions. Authenticity and consistency are the pillars of a successful personal brand.

In order for the personal branding of a PAI teacher to be strong and trusted, teachers must always be honest (authentic) and consistent in the way they act and the message conveyed. For example: 1) If the teacher always teaches the value of honesty to students, then he must also show honesty in his daily life. 2) Teachers who are known to be patient when teaching must remain patient when interacting with students or parents. 3) The positive messages that are often conveyed in class should also be the same as those displayed on social media or when speaking outside of school.

That way, people will see that the teacher is sincere and trustworthy. Authenticity (being yourself) and consistency (always the same in attitude and words) are the keys to making a personal branding strong and successful.

The process of forming personal branding for PAI teachers is a complex challenge but it is very important to increase its influence and effectiveness in education. In the face of challenges such as lack of understanding of branding strategies, limited time for self-development, and resistance to change, PAI teachers need to implement strategic measures supported by research and expert views.

For example, they can start by identifying strong personal values and integrating them into their teaching methods. In addition, by utilizing social media to share teaching experiences and interact with the community, PAI teachers can build a strong and sustainable personal branding, which not only enhances their reputation but also positively impacts students and the educational environment as a whole.

3.2.6. What Are The Factors That Affect Personal Branding

Factors that affect the success of personal branding of PAI teachers The success of personal branding of an Islamic Religious Education Teacher (PAI) at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen is influenced by the following factors, including:

- a. **Character and Personal Values.** PAI teachers who have integrity, honesty, and exemplary in daily behavior are able to build a positive image in the eyes of students and colleagues. These values are the foundation in the formation of a strong personal branding. Personal branding consists of a person's personal attributes, values, motivations, and drives, which distinguish them from other individuals in various environments, including education [29].
- b. **Professional Competencies.** Based on the results of observations at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen, pedagogic skills and good mastery of teaching materials make PAI teachers more trusted and respected by students than teachers who are fixated on books. In this case, teachers are required to be able to master the classroom and be good at attracting students' focus on the material. Teachers who continue to develop themselves through training and further education show commitment to their profession, which can further strengthen their personal branding.
- c. **Communication and Social Interaction.** Based on the results of observations at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen, the researcher made observations on 2 different pie teachers. For the first teacher, the students' attention is directed to the teacher. However, in the second teacher, the students' attention began to decrease. This is due to the difference in teaching methods and communication styles of the two teachers. Authentic communication styles increase teachers' influence in building social closeness that supports professional personal branding [30]. The ability to communicate effectively with students, parents, and colleagues is essential in building harmonious relationships. This certainly greatly affects students' interest in the lesson. Based on research at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh, most students are more interested in a teacher's experience story or a current news that is in accordance with the subject matter. In this case, positive interaction creates a friendly and approachable image of the teacher, which is an important aspect of a teacher's personal branding.
- d. **School Environment Support.** According to Mr. Irfan in his interview, the majority of teachers improve their personal branding independently, but a supportive school environment, including visionary leadership of the principal and a positive school culture, provides space for teachers to develop and express their personal branding. According to Faozan from the Directorate of PAI of the Ministry of Religion, PAI teachers must have characteristics that distinguish them from other teachers, which can be strengthened through institutional support. If the school engages teachers in mentoring programs, cross-school collaborations, or digital education communities, it will strengthen the teacher's existence as a credible and progressive figure [31].
- e. **Utilization of Social Media and Technology.** Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Suhadi, who is one of the PAI teachers at SMK Tunas Harapan Plupuh Sragen, the use of social media as needed and using it wisely allows teachers to share positive activities, learning materials, and achievements, which can improve professionalism in the school environment.

4. Conclusion

Strong and authentic personal branding plays a role in strengthening the professionalism of PAI teachers. By building a positive self-image, teachers can increase confidence, credibility, and harmonious relationships with students and the school environment. Personal branding also encourages teachers to continue to develop competencies and innovations in teaching. Effective

management of personal branding, both offline and through social media, not only improves the reputation of individual teachers but also the image of the school as a quality Islamic educational institution. The development of personal branding requires adequate policy support, training, and digital facilities. Therefore, personal branding must be an integral part of the strategy to improve the professionalism of PAI teachers to create a young generation that is religious, adaptive, and has superior character.

Author Contribution: The first author contributes to the first draft of the article, while the other authors improve the existing content. All authors have read and approved the final paper.

Acknowledgment: Not related.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] M. Judrah, A. Arjum, H. Haeruddin, and M. Mustabsyirah, "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membangun Karakter Peserta Didik Upaya Penguatan Moral [The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Building Students' Character as an Effort to Strengthen Morality]," *J. Instr. Dev. Res.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 25–37, (in Indonesia), 2024, doi: <https://doi.org/10.53621/jider.v4i1.282>.
- [2] K. Khairunnisa, M. Vedita, C. Charles, and A. R. Pratama, "Guru Profesional dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an dan UU NO 14 Tahun 2005: Membangun Generasi Rabbani [Professional Teachers from the Perspective of the Qur'an and Law No. 14 of 2005: Building a Rabbani Generation]," *Educ. Achiev. J. Sci. Res.*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 1365–1378, (in Indonesia), 2024, doi: <https://doi.org/10.51178/jsr.v5i3.2195>.
- [3] Muhaimin, *Pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan agama Islam: Di sekolah, madrasah, dan perguruan tinggi*. Yogyakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2005.
- [4] C. Kaputa, *URA brand: How smart people brand themselves for business success*. California: Davies-Black Publishing, 2005. [Online]. Available: https://www.defence.lk/upload/ebooks/U_R_a_Brand.pdf
- [5] M. Yamin, *Strategi pembelajaran berbasis kompetensi*. Jakarta: Gaung persada press, 2005.
- [6] C. Moustakas, *Phenomenological research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage, 1994. [Online]. Available: [https://books.google.co.id/books?hl=en&lr=&id=QiXJSszx7-8C&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Moustakas,+C.+\(1994\).+Phenomenological+Research+Methods.+Sage+Publications.&ots=PyLavZ_ZOp&sig=2kG5rg200bUU-mQYVt2EGsgfDDI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Moustakas%2C+C.+\(1994\).+Phenomenological+Research+Methods.+Sage+Publications.&f=false](https://books.google.co.id/books?hl=en&lr=&id=QiXJSszx7-8C&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Moustakas,+C.+(1994).+Phenomenological+Research+Methods.+Sage+Publications.&ots=PyLavZ_ZOp&sig=2kG5rg200bUU-mQYVt2EGsgfDDI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Moustakas%2C+C.+(1994).+Phenomenological+Research+Methods.+Sage+Publications.&f=false)
- [7] S. Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif dan R & D*. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018.
- [8] J. W. Creswell and C. N. Poth, *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Los Angeles: Sage publications, 2016. [Online]. Available: [https://books.google.co.id/books?id=DLbBDQAAQBAJ&dq=Creswell,+J.+W.+\(2015\).+Qualitative+Inquiry+and+Research+Design:+Choosing+Among+Five+Approaches.+Sage+Publications.&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s](https://books.google.co.id/books?id=DLbBDQAAQBAJ&dq=Creswell,+J.+W.+(2015).+Qualitative+Inquiry+and+Research+Design:+Choosing+Among+Five+Approaches.+Sage+Publications.&lr=&source=gbs_navlinks_s)
- [9] M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Los Angeles: Sage, 1990.
- [10] M. C. Welagedara, *Crafting Your Educational Identity: The Crucial Role of Personal Branding in Modern Pedagogy*. 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://library.nie.ac.lk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/RESC-2023-Ebook-FC.pdf#page=41>
- [11] S. E. Rosnaini Daga, *Personal Branding: Bagaimana Mendefinisikan Diri Dan Membangun Citra Untuk Kehidupan Yang Lebih Baik*. Penerbit Adab, 2025.

- [12] J. S. Davis, *Building a professional teaching identity on social media: A digital constellation of selves*. German: Springer, 2016. [Online]. Available: https://books.google.co.id/books?hl=en&lr=&id=USEIDQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=Beyond+the+Classroom:+The+Role+of+Personal+Branding+in+Teacher+Professional+Identity+Construction&ots=XYe161-qaZ&sig=S3yLlKkM1aeFNg_KfuJ22lkPyQg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
- [13] R. E. Brandabur, "Personal branding of a teacher-an approach into e-educational environment," in *Conference proceedings of eLearning and Software for Education «(eLSE)*, Carol I National Defence University Publishing House, 2012, pp. 44–49. [Online]. Available: <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=41681>
- [14] D. Beijaard and P. C. Meijer, "Developing the personal and professional in making a teacher identity," in *The SAGE handbook of research on teacher education*, vol. 1, London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2017, pp. 177–192. [Online]. Available: <https://www.torrossa.com/en/resources/an/5018786#page=226>
- [15] Á. Calanche Urribarri *et al.*, "Personal Branding and Positioning in the Scientific and Student Community: A Study on Peruvian University Teachers," *Przestrz. Społeczna (Social Space)*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 35–75, 2023, doi: <https://socialspacejournal.eu/menu-script/index.php/ssj/article/view/247>.
- [16] D. Beijaard, P. C. Meijer, and N. Verloop, "Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity," *Teach. Teach. Educ.*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 107–128, 2004, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2003.07.001>.
- [17] A. Fox and T. Bird, "The challenge to professionals of using social media: Teachers in England negotiating personal-professional identities," *Educ. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 22, pp. 647–675, 2017, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-015-9442-0>.
- [18] P. P. Somani, "Crafting an Authentic Narrative Exploring the Dynamics of Personal Branding in the Contemporary Academic Landscape," in *Developing Managerial Skills for Global Business Success*, IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025, pp. 93–108. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3057-9.ch006>.
- [19] M. A. M. Thomas and N. Mockler, "Alternative routes to teacher professional identity: Exploring the conflated sub-identities of Teach For America corps members," *Educ. Policy Anal. Arch.*, vol. 26, p. 6, 2018, doi: <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.26.3015>.
- [20] D. Beijaard, N. Verloop, and J. D. Vermunt, "Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective," *Teach. Teach. Educ.*, vol. 16, no. 7, pp. 749–764, 2000, doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(00\)00023-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00023-8).
- [21] H. Nejadghanbar, J. Song, and G. Hu, "English language teachers' emotional vulnerability in the era of self-branding on social media," *TESOL Q.*, vol. 58, no. 4, pp. 1734–1760, 2024, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3312>.
- [22] M. Jephcote and J. Salisbury, "Further education teachers' accounts of their professional identities," *Teach. Teach. Educ.*, vol. 25, no. 7, pp. 966–972, 2009, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.05.010>.
- [23] V. V. Mantulenko, E. Z. Yashina, and S. I. Ashmarina, "Personal brand of university teachers in the digital age," in *International Scientific Conference "Digital Transformation of the Economy: Challenges, Trends, New Opportunities"*, Springer, 2019, pp. 62–70. doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27015-5_8.
- [24] H. P. Widodo, F. Fang, and T. Elyas, "The construction of language teacher professional identity in the Global Englishes territory: 'we are legitimate language teachers,'" *Asian Englishes*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 309–316, 2020, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2020.1732683>.
- [25] E. P. Gracia, R. S. Rodríguez, and A. P. Pedrajas, "Teachers' professional identity construction: A review of the literature," *Profesorado, Rev. Currículum y Form. del Profr.*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 371–393, 2022, doi: <https://doi.org/10.30827/profesorado.v26i1.13211>.
- [26] S. P. Vallas and A. Christin, "Work and identity in an era of precarious employment: How workers

- respond to 'personal branding' discourse," *Work Occup.*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 3–37, 2018, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888417735662>.
- [27] S. Gorbatov, S. N. Khapova, and E. I. Lysova, "Personal branding: Interdisciplinary systematic review and research agenda," *Front. Psychol.*, vol. 9, p. 2238, 2018, doi: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02238>.
- [28] M. Khedher, "Conceptualizing and researching personal branding effects on the employability," *J. Brand Manag.*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 99–109, 2019, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-018-0117-1>.
- [29] I. Han, "Development of teacher professional identity through problem-based learning programmes," in *The Development of Professional Identity in Higher Education*, Routledge, 2024, pp. 11–30. [Online]. Available: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003407133-4/development-teacher-professional-identity-problem-based-learning-programmes-insuk-han>
- [30] M. W. Shohib, M. Z. Azani, N. L. Inayati, D. Dartim, and A. Nubail, "Islamic Perspective on Organizational Citizenship Behavior Among Academic Staff in Indonesian State Islamic Higher Education: Is It Effective?," *Suhuf Int. J. Islam. Stud.*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 155–169, 2024, doi: <https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v36i2.4702>.
- [31] M. Murjazin, A. Nurhuda, L. Susanti, and Y. S. Azami, "Psychological and Physiological Motives in Humans (Study on Verses of The Qur'an)," *Suhuf*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 30–44, 2023, doi: [10.23917/suhuf.v35i1.22581](https://doi.org/10.23917/suhuf.v35i1.22581).