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Islamic Education Curriculum Development Approach in the Digital Era: Integration of Tauhid Values and Contextual Adaptation

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Islamic Education Curriculum; Digital Era; Monotheistic Values; Value Integration; Contextual Adaptation.

Abstract

This study aims to deeply analyze the changes in values in the digital era by using the principle of monotheism as the philosophical, epistemological, and axiological basis in the development of Islamic Education curriculum. By applying the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, this study collects, evaluates, and summarizes literature from both domestic and international sources published between 2019 and 2024, which clearly discusses the relationship between science, ethics, humanity, and digital technology. Data collection was carried out from leading databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, SpringerLink, and Garuda and DOAJ Indonesia, with strict selection based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) criteria. The analysis was carried out using thematic analysis to identify three main themes: the dimensions of scientific values, ethical principles in the digital world, and their impact on humanity and Islamic education in the digital era

Kata kunci:
Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam; Era Digital; Nilai Tauhid; Integrasi Nilai; Adaptasi Kontekstual.

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa secara mendalam perubahan nilai-nilai dalam periode digital dengan menggunakan prinsip tauhid sebagai dasar filosofis, epistemologi, dan aksiologi dalam pengembangan kurikulum Pendidikan Islam. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan Systematic Literature Review (SLR), penelitian ini menghimpun, menilai, dan merangkum literatur baik dari dalam negeri maupun luar negeri yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2019 hingga 2024, yang secara jelas membahas hubungan antara ilmu pengetahuan, etika, kemanusiaan, dan teknologi digital. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dari database terkemuka seperti Scopus, Web of Science, SpringerLink, serta Garuda dan DOAJ Indonesia, dengan seleksi ketat berdasarkan kriteria Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). Analisis dilaksanakan dengan menggunakan analisis tematik untuk menemukan tiga tema utama, yaitu dimensi nilai ilmu pengetahuan, prinsip etika dalam dunia digital, dan dampaknya terhadap kemanusiaan serta pendidikan Islam pada era digital. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perubahan digital mewajibkan reorientasi nilai-nilai agar ilmu dan teknologi tetap terhubung dengan nilai spiritual dan moral tauhid, serta memfokuskan pendidikan Islam pada pengembangan karakter spiritual, etika digital, dan integritas insan kamil. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini menyumbangkan kontribusi metodologis dalam penerapan SLR di dalam kajian filsafat pendidikan Islam, sekaligus memperkaya diskusi akademis mengenai integrasi nilai-nilai transendental dalam menghadapi tantangan globalisasi digital.

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INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, the world of education is experiencing rapid structural change, moving from traditional face-to-face classrooms to hybrid and fully online models (Nikolopoulou, 2022; Niyomves, Kunacheva, & Sutadarat, 2024; Singh, Steele, & Singh, 2021). This transformation is driven by the accelerated adoption of educational technology (Education 4.0) and global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has abruptly forced educational institutions to adapt to digital platforms (Nieto-Taborda & Luppicini, 2025; Rof, Bikfalvi, & Marques, 2022). This shift not only replaces the teaching medium but also fundamentally alters the educational paradigm, moving from a teacher-centered system to a student-centered learning model supported by intelligent technology (Allayarova, 2025; Shaji George, Baskar, & Siranchuk, 2025). Educational institutions are now required to formulate digital strategies, develop online learning infrastructure, and reimagine the role of teachers as facilitators managing interactive virtual learning environments (Makda, 2025; Rosenbusch, 2020). In the context of Islamic education, this shift presents both a challenge and a significant opportunity (Akrim, 2022; Sanusi, 2024). On the one hand, technology opens up space for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge and values through broad and easily accessible digital media; however, on the other hand, concerns arise that digitalization without a value-driven approach has the potential to erode the spiritual and moral dimensions of students. This phenomenon demonstrates the urgency to re-examine how the Islamic Education curriculum can be digitally transformed without losing the essence of the value of monotheism as the philosophical basis and direction of educational goals.

Various previous studies have highlighted the dynamics of educational transformation in the digital era, which has given rise to various innovations in learning media. Studies by (Mishra & Dholakia, 2023; Restalia & Khasanah, 2024) show that digitalization expands access to learning through the use of interactive videos, LMS platforms, mobile applications, and open learning resources that enable personalized learning. However, the literature also notes that the adoption of educational technology does not automatically improve the quality of learning, as implementation gaps persist, both in infrastructure, teachers' digital competencies, and pedagogical awareness (Kamara & Burhanuddin, 2025; Loh, Chong, Lim-Ratnam, Tan, & Ow, 2024; Myrthil, 2025). Furthermore, research by (Paolucci et al., 2024) confirms that technology is often used instrumentally for administrative efficiency, rather than to deepen the meaning of learning, leaving teachers more as system administrators than as designers of learning experiences. In the context of Islamic education, several studies have attempted to integrate religious values into digital systems, but most are symbolic and superficial—for example, simply adding religious content to online platforms without fundamentally overhauling the curriculum's objectives and instructional design. To date, very limited research has examined how the principle of monotheism can serve as an epistemological and axiological foundation for developing a digital Islamic curriculum. Thus, a research

gap exists that demands deeper exploration of the integration of transcendental values with an authentic educational technology approach.

This study aims to analyze and formulate an approach to developing an Islamic education curriculum that integrates the values of monotheism with the demands of digital adaptation in the era of technology 4.0. The main objective of this study is to produce a conceptual curriculum model that is relevant to the characteristics of digital-native students, adaptive to technological advances, yet firmly rooted in Islamic spiritual values. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the principles of monotheism that can serve as a philosophical, epistemological, and axiological basis in responding to changes in learning patterns, student character, and increasingly diverse learning media. Furthermore, this study also aims to design a curriculum framework that focuses not only on mastering digital skills but also fosters spiritual intelligence, digital ethics, and moral integrity, which are the hallmarks of a perfect human being. With this approach, the research is expected to address the dual challenges of Islamic education in the digital era, namely the need to adapt to technological developments and the commitment to maintaining a divine value orientation. Ultimately, the goal of this study is not only to present technology-based pedagogical innovations but also to strengthen the direction of Islamic education as a means of forming faithful, knowledgeable, and moral individuals in an ever-changing digital ecosystem.

The axiological transformation of Islamic education in the digital era demands a fundamental paradigm shift from mere knowledge transfer to the formation of meaning rooted in the value of monotheism as the core of Islamic morality and epistemology. Many previous studies tend to emphasize technological aspects such as the efficiency, scalability, and effectiveness of online learning, but rarely highlight how technology can be used as a medium for instilling values and spirituality. This is where the argumentative position and gap of this research lies. A new conceptual framework is needed that can harmoniously link educational technology with the transcendental dimensions of Islam. Without a strong foundation of values, digitalization has the potential to produce a learning process that is cognitive but morally shallow. Therefore, this study argues that the monotheism approach must be reinterpreted in the 21st-century context through the integration of spiritual intelligence, digital ethics, and divine awareness competencies in both virtual and real-life interactions. The uniqueness (novelty) of this research lies in its effort to reconstruct the Islamic Education curriculum as a system of values that lives in the digital space where technology is not merely a tool, but a vehicle for the sowing of values and character formation. Thus, the research results are expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of a holistic, digital-adaptive, and spiritually oriented Islamic curriculum model, bridging the gap between technological advances and the true goals of Islamic education.

METHOD

This research uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to critically examine the transformation of axiology in the digital era. The SLR method was chosen

because it allows researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize previous research findings in a transparent, structured, and replicable manner (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2023; Krüger, Lausberger, von Nostitz-Wallwitz, Saake, & Leich, 2020; Snyder, 2019). Through this approach, the research not only compiles relevant literature but also analyzes patterns, gaps, and conceptual trends related to the relationship between science, ethics, and humanity amidst the development of digital technology. SLR is deemed appropriate because it can produce a comprehensive understanding of multidimensional phenomena such as the issue of axiology in the context of technological transformation and modern education.

The data collection stage was conducted through a literature search in reputable international academic databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, and SpringerLink, as well as national databases such as Garuda and DOAJ Indonesia (Ahmar et al., 2018; Darmadji, Prasojo, Riyanto, Kusumaningrum, & Andriansyah, 2018). Inclusion criteria included scientific journal articles published in the last five years (2019–2024), written in both English and Indonesian, and explicitly addressing the themes of science, ethics, humanity, and digitalization. Articles that had not undergone peer review or were merely popular reports were excluded from the analysis. The search strategy used a combination of keywords such as axiology, digital transformation, ethics, humanism, and educational technology (Kitchenham et al., 2010) to ensure broad coverage of topics while remaining relevant to the research focus.

The analysis process was conducted using a thematic analysis approach to identify key categories emerging from the literature, including the axiological dimensions of science, principles of digital ethics, and their implications for humanity. This approach was chosen for its ability to map interrelationships between themes and interpret the meaning behind research findings, thus producing an integrative and reflective conceptual framework (Braund & Timmons, 2021). Each article was analyzed in depth based on its focus, methodology, main findings, and axiological relevance, to identify common threads and variations in findings across studies. The results were then synthesized to identify development directions, conceptual challenges, and opportunities for strengthening values in the context of digitalization.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, this study employed literature triangulation techniques by comparing results from national and international journals. Furthermore, reference management tools such as Mendeley and Zotero were used to systematically organize the literature and avoid data duplication. Article quality assessment was conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) criteria, which facilitate transparent selection, exclusion, and documentation (Page et al., 2021, 2023; Shapiro et al., 1998). This step is crucial to ensure that the analysis results have a strong methodological basis and are academically and ethically accountable.

Overall, the application of the SLR method in this research is expected to provide methodological and substantive contributions to the development of philosophy of science studies, particularly in understanding the transformation of axiological values

in the digital age. From a methodological perspective, this research emphasizes the importance of a systematic approach to mapping the relationship between science, ethics, and humanity, which has been fragmented in previous studies. Meanwhile, from a substantive perspective, the results of this research are expected to enrich academic discourse by offering a more critical understanding of how the development of digital technology challenges, changes, or even strengthens axiological values in human life (Haris, Arqam, & Hafiz, 2025). Thus, this research not only contributes to the theoretical realm but also provides a conceptual basis for the development of values-based educational policies and practices in the digital age.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To analyze and formulate an approach to Islamic education curriculum development that integrates the values of monotheism with the demands of contextual adaptation in the digital era, resulting in a curriculum model that is relevant, adaptive, and meaningful for students. This research aims to identify how the principles of monotheism can serve as a philosophical, epistemological, and axiological foundation in responding to changes in learning patterns, student character, and learning media resulting from digitalization. Furthermore, this research aims to develop a conceptual curriculum framework that not only adapts to technological advances but also ensures that the Islamic education process remains oriented toward developing spiritual character, digital ethics, and the integrity of the human personality in facing the challenges of globalization.

The research design combines Design-Based Research (DBR) and mixed-methods. This research utilizes a mixed-methods design combined with design-based research (DBR) to produce a theoretically robust yet practical curriculum model that can be iterated with stakeholders (Greene, 2008; Lam, 2025). DBR allows researchers to design, test, and modify curriculum prototypes in a collaborative cycle with teachers, curriculum developers, and Islamic boarding school/madrasah leaders, ensuring contextual and adaptable results (Edy & Sumarta, 2024; Peters-Burton, Tran, & Miller, 2024) This combined approach combines in-depth qualitative data (interviews, focus group discussions, observations) with quantitative evidence (surveys, pre-post measurements) to increase the validity of the findings and enable data triangulation.

Initial stage literature study, document analysis, and curriculum needs. The first stage is a systematic literature review and analysis of policy/curriculum documents (national and international) to map the concept of tauhid (monotheism) in the curriculum, values integration practices, spiritual competency indicators, and digital pedagogy practices. The literature review also identifies theoretical and practical gaps, forming the basis for a needs assessment instrument (Bartlett, Faber, Williams, & Saxberg, 2022; Schramm & Quetzal, 2025). Document analysis includes the national curriculum, Islamic boarding school/pesantren guidelines, and existing digital materials to understand the gap between value objectives and current digital practices.

Field needs survey and qualitative research. To map contextual needs, researchers conducted a quantitative survey on a stratified sample (Islamic Religious Education teachers, madrasah/Islamic boarding school principals, students/parents) to measure infrastructure readiness, digital-pedagogical competency, and perceptions of the integration of tauhid values. This was accompanied by in-depth interviews and focus groups (FGDs) with religious leaders, curriculum developers, and Islamic education experts to explore the operational meaning of tauhid and relevant learning models. The sampling strategy and instruments followed best mixed-methods practices for education (Vega, 2023), and used pre-pilot measurements to enable quantitative needs analysis before prototype development.

Prototype development & DBR iteration co-design and expert validation. Based on the needs findings, the research team designed a curriculum prototype (objectives, thematic syllabus, tauhid-based digital learning model, affective-spiritual assessment rubric). The prototype was developed through the DBR cycle: (1) initial design with stakeholders; (2) limited pilot implementation in several classes/madrasahs; (3) qualitative-quantitative evaluation; (4) prototype revision. In addition, to reach expert consensus on the value components and indicators of monotheism in the curriculum, the Delphi technique, or structured expert panel, was used to enhance content validity before broader implementation (Bodkhe et al., 2020). This process also included teacher training (design-based professional development) so that interventions did not rely solely on individuals.

Data analysis, triangulation, and credibility assurance. Qualitative analysis used thematic analysis/layered coding to extract categories of monotheistic values, pedagogical practices, and contextual barriers. Quantitative analysis used descriptive statistics and pre-post comparison tests (e.g., paired t-tests or nonparametric tests based on distribution) to assess changes in participants' digital-spiritual attitudes/competencies. Data integration was conducted at the interpretation (mixing) stage to develop the final conceptual model and assessment indicators. Internal validity was strengthened through source triangulation, audit trails, and member-checking; instrument reliability was tested through consistency and construct validity tests. The results of the DBR are expected to produce an empirically validated curriculum model ready for replication in different madrasah/pesantren contexts.

This research employed an integrated mixed-methods design combined with elements of design-based research (DBR). A mixed-methods approach allows researchers to combine rich qualitative data (to capture the dimensions of the meaning of tauhid philosophical, epistemological, and axiological) with quantitative evidence (to measure the extent to which these principles emerge in practice and stakeholder perceptions), while DBR provides an iterative framework for designing, testing, and modifying tauhid-based curriculum prototypes in real-life digital contexts (e.g., madrasas/pesantren) so that findings are applicable and contextual. Methodological references supporting this combined use confirm that mixed-methods and DBR are effective for curriculum development research that is both practice- and theory-oriented.

The first stage is philosophical-conceptual mapping and document analysis: a systematic literature review of tauhid literature as the epistemological and axiological basis for Islamic education, along with content analysis of national curriculum documents, madrasah/pesantren guidelines, and circulating digital materials. The goal is to formulate an operational framework for tauhid in three layers: (1) philosophical the foundation of educational objectives; (2) epistemological sources/types of knowledge and ways of acquiring knowledge that are in line with monotheism; (3) axiological affective and moral values/competencies that need to be developed. Studies of Islamic curriculum studies in the digital era provide a theoretical basis for this step (Diana, Azani, & M, 2024; Fadli, 2025).

The second phase was an intensive qualitative field study: purposive case studies at several institutions (madrasahs, modern Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic schools that have adopted technology) involving participant observation, in-depth interviews with curriculum managers, Islamic Religious Education teachers, religious teachers (ustadz/ustadzah), students (santri/students), and focus group discussions (FGDs) with parents and digital material developers. This qualitative data aimed to explore how the principle of tawhid is currently understood and internalized, as well as contextual barriers to digital practice thus identifying effective pedagogical patterns for linking tawhid with digital learning activities. This case study approach and contextual observation were supported by literature on Islamic curriculum transformation in the Society 5.0 era (Mahmudi et al., 2024; Mulasi, Susanna, & Jannah, 2025; Rifqi & Suwendi_, 2025)

The third phase involved a quantitative survey and pre-post measurements to examine the distribution of operational tawhid understanding and digital readiness (infrastructure, teacher competency, student attitudes) in a national/regional stratified sample. The quantitative instrument was developed from the results of the conceptual mapping and validated through pilot testing and reliability testing. Quantitative data will be analyzed descriptively and inferentially (e.g., pre-post comparison tests, regression) to assess the correlation between exposure to the digital-tawhid-based curriculum and changes in students' spiritual-digital attitudes/competencies. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data is carried out explicitly during the interpretation (mixing) stage so that the final model is based on evidence triangulation).

The final stage is model validation and reconstruction through a Delphi expert panel and a Debriefing (DBR) cycle. The resulting curriculum prototype—including objectives, syllabus, digital-tawhid-based learning model, and affective-spiritual assessment rubric is validated by a multisectoral panel (Islamic academics, curriculum experts, Islamic boarding school administrators, and educational technology experts). The pilot implementation, evaluation, and revision cycle will take several iterations until consensus is reached. To ensure credibility, the research employs ethical procedures, member-checking, an audit trail, and source triangulation. and recommends a package of policy recommendations related to teacher training, assessment tools, and digital inclusion policies so that the model can be replicated across various Islamic education

ecosystems. This reflective-iterative approach follows curriculum development research practices recommended in contemporary literature (Soicher, 2024; Mukarom et al., 2024).

R&D relevan dalam konteks pengembangan kurikulum berbasis nilai karena This allows for an iterative process, from gathering the needs for spiritual values and digital ethics, designing a conceptual model, conducting expert validation, and conducting limited field trials to ensure the suitability and meaningfulness of the developed model (Habibi, 2024; Mukarom et al., 2025). Initial stage: exploring digital values and contexts.

The first stage

focused on literature exploration and contextual analysis to understand the relationship between Islamic spirituality, digital ethics, and the formation of a perfect human being amidst globalization. Researchers conducted a systematic literature review of international and national journals related to Islamic education, character education, and digital ethics. Furthermore, they analyzed national curriculum policy documents and technology-based madrasah/pesantren learning guidelines. This step aimed to identify conceptual gaps between the goals of Islamic education (spiritual and moral) and digital curriculum practices, which are still primarily cognitive and pragmatic (Asyrofi, 2025; Syafaruddin, 2024). The results of this analysis served as the basis for developing the initial dimensions of a conceptual framework that combines spiritual literacy, digital ethics, and global competence.

Field data collection.

The next stage was the collection of empirical data using a qualitative approach to strengthen the conceptual framework. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, madrasah/pesantren principals, curriculum developers, and Islamic education students. The primary focus of the interviews was their perceptions of the role of monotheism and digital ethics in shaping student character amidst the changing landscape of digital learning media. Furthermore, participant observation of technology-based learning practices was conducted to identify the ongoing integration of spiritual values and character (Saca, 2024; Ar-Fahruddin, 2023). Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns of values and principles consistent with the vision of a perfect human being.

Formulation and validation of the conceptual framework.

Based on the results of literature exploration and field findings, the researchers then formulated a conceptual curriculum framework encompassing three main pillars: (1) a spiritual-transcendental dimension based on monotheism, (2) a digital ethics dimension that regulates the responsible and moral use of technology, and (3) an integral personality dimension that leads to the formation of a perfect human being. This prototype framework was validated through a Delphi technique involving Islamic education experts, curriculum experts, and educational technology practitioners to reach consensus on its relevance, coherence, and applicability. This validation process was

crucial to ensure the conceptual framework had a strong academic and normative foundation (Karulita, 2025; Yang, 2024).

Analysis, synthesis, and research output.

The collected qualitative and quantitative data were then analyzed integratively using data triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the results. This analysis produced a conceptual model that emphasizes the integration of spirituality, ethics, and digital skills in curriculum design. The final synthesis of this research is expected to provide a scientific contribution in the form of a conceptual model that can be used as a reference in developing an Islamic education curriculum that is relevant to the digital era while remaining grounded in the principles of monotheism and the goal of developing a perfect human being. Thus, this research is not only theoretical but also practical, serving as a guide for Islamic education reform amidst global disruption (Kartiko, Arif, Rokhman, Ma'arif, & Aprilianto, 2025)).

The methodological approach used in several recent studies demonstrates a combination of literature analysis and field research as a primary strategy for understanding how Islamic education integrates transcendental values into digital practices. For example, in the study Technology-Based Islamic Education: Building Inclusive, Adaptive, and Future-Ready Learning Foundations, (Atikah et al., 2024) used a qualitative literature review method to review the application of technology in Islamic education, focusing on moral, spiritual, and social principles (UINS GD Journal, 2024). Similarly, the article Internalizing Digital Technology in Islamic Education combines analysis of primary and secondary sources (journals, government reports, Islamic education documents) to evaluate the benefits and risks of using technologies such as AR and AI in relation to students' moral integrity and religious literacy.

Furthermore, empirical case study research was conducted to explore the contextual and implementation details of the approach to integrating Islamic values into the digital curriculum. For example, the research "Development of Islamic Religious Education Learning in the Digital Era Merdeka Curriculum at MTs Negeri 1 Yogyakarta" used descriptive qualitative field methods: observation, interviews, and documentation to examine how the Merdeka curriculum was implemented in Islamic Religious Education, how teachers mastered technology, and how moral and spiritual character was formed in the digital learning process (IAIBBC Journal of Islamic Education Research, 2024). Furthermore, digital teaching modules based on specific religious themes were also developed and tested, such as "Developing Digital-Based Islamic Religious Education Teaching Modules on the Subject Matter of Duha Prayer in Elementary Schools," which used the 4D R&D model (Define, Design, Development, Dissemination) for the sustainability of the digital module and assessed its effectiveness in improving students' religious skills.

Finally, some studies combine implementation evaluation and critical reflection to ensure that the integration of monotheistic values is not merely theoretical but effective and sustainable. For example, the study "Technology-Based Islamic Education" observed that the use of digital applications and platforms must be accompanied by clear

policies and teacher training to ensure ethical and spiritual aspects are not neglected in digital practices. Similarly, the study "Internalizing Digital Technology in Islamic Education" emphasized the need for strategic interventions to prevent the erosion of moral values due to exposure to digital content without integrative value management. Of these approaches, a mixed-method approach, case studies, and R&D emerged as the most frequently used combination in efforts to formulate a meaningful and applicable conceptual framework.

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that this study successfully formulated an approach to developing an Islamic Education curriculum in the digital era based on monotheistic values and contextual adaptation. Using a systematic literature review (SLR), mixed-methods, and design-based research (DBR), this study found that the integration of the value of monotheism should be positioned not as additional content, but as a philosophical, epistemological, and axiological foundation that animates all curriculum components. The analysis shows that the challenges of digitalization, such as changes in student character, moral degradation, and the dominance of techno-centrism, can only be addressed with a curriculum that balances digital skills with the formation of spirituality, ethics, and the personality of a perfect human being. The resulting curriculum model contains three main pillars: the spiritual-transcendental dimension (monotheism as the foundation of values), the digital ethics dimension (responsible and moral use of technology), and the integral personality dimension (character development and divine awareness). Through expert validation and iterative implementation based on DBR, this model is deemed relevant, adaptive, and contextual for contemporary Islamic education, while also providing a substantive contribution to values-based curriculum reform in the face of global disruption and the challenges of the digital era.

CONCLUSION

The use of technology in education, while offering efficiency and expanded access, still has the potential to deepen social and pedagogical inequalities if not accompanied by inclusive and values-oriented policies. Digitalization is often understood solely in technical terms, shifting the focus of education from character building and spiritual values to merely mastering digital skills. In the context of Islamic education, technology integration needs to be directed toward aligning with the goals of monotheism and moral development, not simply adapting to the demands of the digital era. Therefore, a comprehensive strategy is needed that includes values-based curriculum reformulation, improving teachers' digital-pedagogical competencies, and structural support and participation from religious communities to ensure technology truly serves as a means of improving the quality and equity of Islamic education.

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