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Klik, Swipe, Akhlak: Building a Generation of Character Through Islamic Religious Education in the Digital Era

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technology has revolutionized educational practices, including Islamic Religious Education, while simultaneously presenting ethical and moral challenges for students in the digital age. This study aims to examine the role of Islamic education in fostering students' character and digital ethics in the digital era. Employing a library research approach, the study analyzed scholarly articles, books, and international and national journal publications related to Islamic education, digital literacy, and character education published between 2020 and 2025. The collected data underwent thematic categorization and critical interpretation. The findings reveal that digital technology offers significant opportunities to enhance accessibility, interactivity, and collaboration in Islamic education. However, the digital era also contributes to moral challenges such as misinformation, cyberbullying, declining digital ethics, and weak character development among students. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education should not merely focus on technological adaptation but must also strengthen students' moral awareness by integrating Islamic ethical values into digital activities. This article contributes by proposing the concept of "digital akhlak" as a framework for incorporating Islamic values like tabayyun, amanah, iffah, tawadhu', and ukhuwah into students' digital behavior. The study emphasizes the strategic role of Islamic education in preparing morally responsible digital citizens capable of navigating the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed educational systems worldwide, including teaching methods, communication patterns, and access to information. Digitalisation enables students to access learning materials instantly through online platforms, social media, and multimedia resources. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (abbreviated in Bahasa as PAI), digital technology not only broadens access to Islamic knowledge but also supports interactive and collaborative learning processes (Budyastuti & Fauziati, 2021).

However, alongside these opportunities, the digital era also raises serious concerns regarding students' character and morality. The widespread use of social media has contributed to various

ethical problems, such as cyberbullying, hate speech, misinformation, digital addiction, and declining standards of respectful communication. Studies on cyber ethics highlight that the rapid expansion of digital interaction has increased unethical practices in cyberspace, making ethical guidance an urgent necessity in education (Santhosh & Thiyagu, 2024). Students are increasingly exposed to unverified information and often engage in digital interactions without sufficient moral guidance. This phenomenon indicates that the challenge of Islamic education in the digital era extends beyond technological adaptation to encompass strengthening ethical awareness and character formation.

Islamic Religious Education holds a strategic role in guiding students to use digital technology responsibly and ethically. Islamic teachings emphasise moral values such as honesty, responsibility, humility, respect, and self-control, which remain highly relevant in digital environments. Therefore, integrating Islamic ethical values into digital literacy practices is essential to developing morally responsible digital citizens. Research on character education in the digital era confirms that integrating moral values with digital literacy helps students develop ethical awareness, responsibility, and empathy in online interactions (Hukubun et al., 2024; Marwan et al., 2025).

Previous studies have examined the relationship between digital technology and Islamic education from different perspectives. Budyastuti & Fauziati (2021) focused on constructivist learning approaches and demonstrated how digital platforms can support interactive learning environments. Hasanah & Sukri (2023) emphasised the importance of digital literacy in Islamic education, particularly in addressing challenges such as hoaxes, cyberbullying, and low critical awareness among students. Other studies have explored Islamic digital literacy as a means to enhance students' religious awareness and critical engagement with digital religious content (Baen et al., 2025).

At a broader level, international research has discussed digital citizenship and ethical online behaviour. Digital citizenship education has been widely recognised as a framework to guide responsible participation in digital environments, encompassing behavioural, cognitive, and affective dimensions (Öztürk, 2021; Webster, 2025). Additionally, studies on digital ethics show that understanding moral standards and rules in digital interaction plays a key role in strengthening character education in the digital age (Ainia, 2024).

Despite these contributions, a critical gap remains. Studies on Islamic education tend to focus on technological integration and digital literacy skills (Baen et al., 2025; Hasanah & Sukri, 2023), while studies on digital learning emphasise pedagogical approaches such as constructivism (Budyastuti & Fauziati, 2021). Meanwhile, research on digital citizenship and ethics mostly adopts a general or secular framework without explicitly incorporating Islamic moral values (Öztürk, 2021; Webster, 2025). Consequently, there is still limited research that systematically integrates Islamic ethical principles into students' actual digital behaviour. This indicates the absence of a comprehensive framework that bridges Islamic moral teachings with daily digital practices such as communication, information verification, and online interaction.

In this article, the concept of *digital akhlak* is proposed to address this gap. Digital akhlak refers to the internalisation and application of Islamic moral values in students' online behaviour, including practices such as verifying information (*tabayyun*), maintaining trustworthiness (*amanah*), exercising self-restraint (*iffah*), demonstrating humility (*tawadhu'*), and fostering solidarity (*ukhuwah*) in digital spaces. This concept provides an ethical framework that integrates Islamic teachings with digital literacy in a holistic manner.

Therefore, this study aims to analyse the transformation of Islamic education in the digital era, identify the moral and ethical challenges students face, and explain the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education in developing students' digital character. The study contributes theoretically by proposing the concept of digital akhlak as an ethical framework for Islamic digital literacy, and practically by offering insights for educators and Islamic educational institutions in strengthening character education in the digital era.

Method

This study employed a qualitative library research approach to examine the role of Islamic Religious Education in strengthening students' character and digital ethics in the digital era. The research focused on analysing scholarly literature related to digital literacy, Islamic education, character education, and digital morality. Data were collected from several reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, SINTA (Science and Technology Index), and DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), as well as supporting sources such as academic books and conference proceedings. The literature selection was limited to publications from 2020 to 2025 to ensure relevance to current developments in digital education.

To ensure the quality and relevance of the data, this study applied both inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria consisted of studies discussing Islamic education in the digital era; studies addressing digital literacy, digital ethics, or character education; peer-reviewed journal articles; conference papers; academic books; and publications written in English or Indonesian. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included studies not directly related to educational or ethical issues; non-scholarly sources, such as blogs or opinion articles without academic validation; duplicate publications across databases; and studies published before 2020 unless they were considered highly relevant as foundational theoretical references.

The data collection process was carried out in several stages. First, relevant literature was identified using keywords such as "Islamic education," "digital literacy," "digital ethics," "character education," and "digital morality." Second, the search results were screened by title and abstract against the established criteria. Third, the selected articles were examined through in-depth reading and subsequently coded based on emerging themes.

The data analysis employed thematic analysis techniques, including coding, categorisation, and thematic mapping. The coding process aimed to identify recurring concepts related to digital challenges, moral degradation, Islamic ethical values, and the role of Islamic education in the digital era. These concepts were then organised into broader thematic categories, such as digital literacy, ethical challenges, accessibility, digital morality, and character formation. Through this systematic approach, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of both the opportunities and challenges of Islamic education in the digital era, while highlighting the importance of integrating Islamic ethical values into students' digital behaviour.

Findings

The findings of this study reveal five interconnected themes that illuminate the transformation of Islamic education in the digital age. These themes are: (1) digital transformation in Islamic education, (2) ethical challenges in digital environments, (3) the significance of digital literacy, (4) the emergence of digital akhlak, and (5) the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education. Rather than existing independently, these themes form a cohesive pattern. Technological transformation

generates ethical challenges that, in turn, necessitate digital literacy and value-based guidance. Ultimately, Islamic education emerges as a pivotal agent in shaping students' digital character.

1. Digital Transformation in Islamic Education

The reviewed literature indicates that digital technology has significantly transformed Islamic education by increasing accessibility to learning resources and enabling flexible learning environments (Rahma & Mufidah, 2025). Digital platforms such as online learning systems, social media, and multimedia applications allow students to access Islamic materials without geographical constraints.

In addition, teachers are increasingly integrating digital media, including videos, animations, and interactive applications, to enhance learning engagement (R. Ali, 2025). These tools facilitate collaborative and interactive communication between teachers and students, thereby shifting the learning paradigm from teacher-centred to student-centred learning (Abdullah & Nasution, 2024).

However, this transformation also serves as the starting point of emerging ethical issues, as increased exposure to digital environments inevitably shapes students' behaviour beyond formal learning contexts.

2. Ethical Challenges in the Digital Era

The rapid expansion of digital technology has introduced significant ethical challenges among students (Aprilia et al., 2025). These challenges include cyberbullying, hate speech, misinformation, digital addiction, and declining communication ethics in online spaces.

The literature further highlights that students often consume and disseminate information without critical evaluation, indicating a lack of verification practices. Excessive digital engagement has also been associated with reduced empathy, weaker interpersonal relationships, and the emergence of narcissistic tendencies (Mahrik et al., 2025).

These findings suggest that digital transformation, while beneficial, simultaneously creates moral vulnerabilities, making ethical guidance an urgent necessity in education.

3. The Importance of Digital Literacy in Islamic Education

In response to these challenges, the literature consistently emphasises the importance of digital literacy as a core competency in Islamic education. Students are required to develop skills in evaluating information credibility, identifying reliable sources, and using digital media responsibly (Silvina et al., 2025).

Educational institutions increasingly recognise that digital literacy is not merely technical competence, but also includes critical thinking and ethical awareness to prevent the spread of misinformation and harmful online behaviour (Phippen et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that digital literacy alone is insufficient if it is not accompanied by strong moral and ethical foundations, particularly in the context of Islamic education.

4. The Emergence of Digital Akhlak

The findings reveal that Islamic ethical values remain highly relevant in guiding students' behaviour in digital environments (Oktavia & Khotimah, 2023). Several Islamic principles such as tabayyun (verification of information), amanah (trustworthiness), iffah (self-restraint), tawadhu'

(humility), and ukhuwah (brotherhood and empathy) are frequently identified as important moral foundations in digital interactions (Untung et al., 2025).

These values provide a moral framework that complements digital literacy skills by emphasising not only *how* technology is used, but also *how it should be used ethically*. Thus, the concept of digital akhlak emerges as a synthesis between technological competence and moral responsibility, bridging the gap between knowledge and ethical practice.

5. The Strategic Role of Islamic Religious Education

The reviewed literature highlights the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education in strengthening students' moral awareness and digital ethics (Safiqo & Ghofur, 2025). PAI teachers are not only responsible for delivering religious knowledge but also for guiding students to use digital technology ethically and responsibly (Al Ma'ie & Jazilurrahman, 2024).

The findings indicate that Islamic education can integrate ethical digital practices into learning activities by encouraging students to verify information, communicate respectfully online, avoid cyberbullying, and utilise technology for positive purposes (Barus & Hasanuddin, 2025). Therefore, Islamic education serves as a mediating force, connecting digital transformation with ethical awareness through the internalisation of Islamic values.

Synthesis of Findings

The relationship among the identified themes can be understood as a causal–integrative framework in which each element is interconnected in a continuous process. The digital transformation of Islamic education increases students' exposure to information and access to digital platforms, thereby giving rise to various ethical challenges in online environments. These challenges highlight the urgent need for digital literacy skills, particularly in critically evaluating information and engaging responsibly in digital interactions. However, digital literacy alone is insufficient without a strong moral foundation; therefore, it must be supported by Islamic ethical values, conceptualised as *digital akhlak*, which provide moral direction in navigating digital spaces. In this context, Islamic Religious Education plays a central role as an integrative agent, connecting technological competence with ethical awareness through the internalisation of Islamic values. This pattern demonstrates that the development of students' digital character requires not only technical skills but also a holistic integration of literacy and moral education.

Table 1. Integration of Digital Challenges, Islamic Values, and Educational Implications

Digital Challenges	Relevant Islamic Values	Educational Implications
Misinformation / Hoaxes	*Tabayyun* (verification)	Teaching students to verify sources before sharing information
Cyberbullying	*Ukhuwah* (empathy), *Amanah* (responsibility)	Promoting respectful communication and anti-bullying behaviour online
Digital addiction	*Iffah* (self-restraint)	Encouraging balanced and controlled use of technology
Narcissism / self-centredness	*Tawadhu'* (humility)	Developing humility and awareness in social media use
Unethical content sharing	*Amanah* (trustworthiness)	Instilling responsibility in digital content creation and distribution

Discussion

The discussion section analyses the relationship between the findings and previous studies while highlighting the theoretical and practical implications of Islamic Religious Education in responding to moral and ethical challenges in the digital era. This section also emphasises the importance of integrating Islamic ethical values into digital literacy practices, using the concept of digital akhlak as a framework to strengthen students' character and digital responsibility.

Digital Morality as a New Paradigm in Islamic Education

The findings demonstrate that the challenges of the digital era are not limited to technological adaptation but also involve serious moral and ethical issues among students (Rosyidah et al., 2025). Previous studies mainly focused on the effectiveness of digital learning and technology integration in Islamic education. However, this study emphasises that moral awareness and ethical responsibility are equally important in digital learning environments.

This article argues that Islamic Religious Education should move beyond technological orientation and position digital morality as a central component of character education. In this context, the concept of "digital akhlak" becomes relevant as a moral framework for guiding students' behaviour in cyberspace.

Integration of Islamic Values into Digital Literacy

Studies indicate that Islamic ethical principles can serve as an important foundation for digital literacy practices. One such fundamental value is iffah, which relates to maintaining personal honor, purity, and self-control (Zulmi et al., 2024). In the cyber world, challenges concerning honor are increasingly significant due to the easy access to inappropriate content, such as pornography or immoral entertainment. Teenagers urgently need guidance on how to lower their gaze, limit access to prohibited content, and use the internet for good. Iffah's attitude helps students realize that a Muslim's dignity is reflected in how they use technology. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a vital role in providing consistent learning about the boundaries of sharia, the urgency of maintaining personal purity, and how to select content that is halal, beneficial, and dignified.

Amidst the unstoppable flood of information, the principle of tabayyun (verification) has also become highly relevant in preventing the spread of misinformation and hoaxes in digital environments (Asran & Amaluddin, 2025). Allah SWT strictly commands Muslims to verify the accuracy of information before disseminating it, as stated in Q.S. Al-Hujurat: 6 (Mahmud et al., 2024). Tabayyun is not merely a technical act but a moral stance to reject slander and misunderstandings that can harm others. Given that teenagers are the most active internet users, they are vulnerable to exposure to content with unclear validity. Digital literacy that prioritizes tabayyun and the internalization of Islamic values is essential for ensuring that social media is used wisely, productively, and responsibly (Reply & Unnijaah, 2026). Therefore, PAI teachers are required to play a crucial role in training students to verify facts, investigate the credibility of information sources, and build an intellectual bulwark in digital interactions.

In addition to iffah and tabayyun, *amanah* (trustworthiness) is another pillar of online communication ethics, promoting responsibility and honesty. In the Islamic perspective, amanah has a very broad scope, ranging from safeguarding entrusted items to being honest in every human action (Hermawan et al., 2020). In the digital context, trustworthiness is reflected in an individual's ability to protect personal data, respect others' privacy, and refrain from plagiarism or unauthorized theft of digital works. Cases of data misuse, hacking, and the leaking of confidential information

are tangible manifestations of breaches of trust in the cyber era. Through PAI learning, students are taught to realize that every online footprint and activity is constantly under the monitoring of Allah SWT, making the maintenance of digital trustworthiness not just a social and ethical obligation, but a part of worship.

Unlike previous studies that predominantly emphasized technical competencies alone, this article asserts that digital literacy must absolutely include moral and spiritual dimensions. The integration of the concepts of adab and akhlaq into social media ethics enables the digital-based PAI curriculum to serve not only as a means of knowledge transfer but also as a primary instrument for student character formation (Mukhlis & Cahyadi, 2026). This also demands a systematic transformation of Islamic education pedagogy, in which the use of technology is guided by ethical intentionality to synergize academic excellence with moral cultivation. Consequently, educational institutions and PAI learning must continuously integrate the principles of iffah, tabayyun, and amanah into digital literacy programs to strengthen students' cyber responsibility.

Digital Akhlak as a Foundation for Twenty-First Century Muslim Citizenship

The concept of digital akhlak proposed in this study can be positioned as an epistemological foundation for developing responsible Muslim citizens in the twenty-first century. Contemporary educational discourse increasingly emphasizes the importance of digital citizenship, which refers to the ability of individuals to participate critically, ethically, and responsibly in cyberspace. However, most Western digital citizenship frameworks are secular, focusing primarily on technical competencies, legal awareness, and socio-legal responsibilities.

In contrast, from the perspective of Islamic education, digital akhlak does not merely regulate human behavior but binds it to spiritual accountability. Muslims are taught that every action, including digital footprints, will be accounted for before Allah SWT (*muraqabah*). Therefore, through digital akhlak, activities such as posting content, commenting, and distributing information are no longer merely social interactions but moral actions with otherworldly consequences (Nurfadilah & Pebriana, 2026). This transcendental approach complements contemporary digital citizenship theories by ensuring that students navigate the cyber world with a moral consciousness rooted in the intention of worship (Pranoto & Haryanto, 2024).

Given its strategic essence, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) must position digital akhlak not merely as theoretical material but as a means of internalizing practical values. This internalization refers to the process of integrating values into the students' belief systems, which subsequently manifests in their daily behavior. In practice, PAI teachers need to shift from conventional lecturing methods to project-based learning or case-based reasoning (Mukhlis & Cahyadi, 2026).

For instance, students can be facilitated to analyze authentic moral dilemmas—such as cases of cyberbullying, online fraud, or the spread of hoaxes—using the lens of Islamic ethics. These reflective activities cultivate students' moral reasoning skills, enabling them to understand the practical relevance of religious teachings in the realities of cyberspace. To maximize this internalization, a consistent synergy is required among school culture, parental supervision at home, and the broader ecosystem, ensuring that the values taught in the classroom do not contradict the practices students encounter in their external digital environments.

A crucial challenge in implementing digital akhlak lies in the assessment and measurement process. Because it encompasses affective and spiritual dimensions, measuring digital akhlak is insufficient if it relies solely on multiple-choice cognitive tests. PAI teachers must adopt authentic

and comprehensive assessment instruments, such as digital portfolio evaluations, behavioral observation sheets, self-assessments, and peer assessments.

Digital portfolios, for example, can be used to evaluate students' track records when interacting in online learning forums. Meanwhile, self-assessment instruments can be designed around the pillars of Islamic literacy—such as indicators for tabayyun (the frequency of verifying news before sharing it) and amanah (respecting others' intellectual property rights) (Nurfadilah & Pebriana, 2026). Such assessments not only evaluate student learning outcomes but also stimulate their metacognition to continuously evaluate the intentions and impacts of every click they make in the virtual world.

The Role of Teachers as Moral Mentors in Digital Environments

The digital era has fundamentally transformed the educational paradigm, particularly regarding the role of teachers. While teachers were historically regarded as the primary sources of authoritative knowledge, today's students can access information instantly through search engines, social media platforms, and artificial intelligence. Consequently, the teacher's role has shifted from merely providing information to serving as a facilitator, mentor, and moral guide. This transformation is exceptionally crucial within Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Given that students can easily obtain religious literature online, the greatest challenge is that not all of this information is accurate or aligned with sharia. Without proper guidance, students are vulnerable to radical interpretations, misleading religious content, and misinformation disguised as religious advice (Romadloni & Muqit, 2025).

Addressing this issue, PAI teachers bear the crucial task of equipping students with a critical attitude toward evaluating information. Teachers must guide students in identifying the credibility of digital religious authorities, understanding contextual exegesis, and distinguishing facts from hoaxes. This guidance strongly aligns with the Islamic principle of tabayyun, which necessitates multi-layered verification before accepting an information claim. Furthermore, the spiritual role modeling provided by PAI teachers is recognized as the most effective method for instilling moral values in the technological era (M. Ali et al., 2025). When educators consistently demonstrate honesty, mutual respect, humility, and professionalism in digital spaces, students find it much easier to internalize and replicate these ethical behaviors compared to relying solely on verbal instructions.

Although the role of the PAI teacher is vital, holistic character education cannot be realized exclusively through formal schooling. The family remains the primary institution responsible for a child's moral foundation, especially in the digital era, where students spend the vast majority of their time interacting with gadgets outside school hours. Therefore, parental involvement and digital literacy in mediating children's cyber activities have become increasingly urgent. Parents are expected to remain aware of technological opportunities and risks and to provide proportionate supervision, guidance, and emotional support. Over-restrictive parenting models can trigger resistance in children, while absolute freedom risks exposing them to destructive content (Saimun & Hanafi, 2025).

To achieve this necessary balance, the application of Islamic parenting principles can significantly contribute to shaping children's digital character. These practices can be actualized by establishing open discussions at home about internet ethics, encouraging critical evaluation of digital media consumption, and instilling muraqabah (awareness of Allah's constant surveillance) when engaging with social media. The alignment between home-based parenting and school-based learning creates a robust continuity of values (Romadloni & Muqit, 2025). Additionally, this synergy

must be expanded by involving social institutions such as mosques, youth organizations, and religious study groups (*majelis taklim*). Through collaborative, cross-sectoral educational programs, communities can provide alternative, conducive spaces for teenagers, promoting positive and morally upright online participation.

Ethical Challenges and Character Formation Among Students

The findings indicate that students face increasing ethical challenges in digital spaces, including cyberbullying, hate speech, digital addiction, and declining empathy. These issues reflect the growing moral crisis among adolescents in the digital era. This article explains that Islamic values such as *tawadhu'* and *ukhuwah* can contribute to strengthening respectful communication, empathy, and social responsibility in online interactions. Through these values, students can develop healthier and more ethical patterns of digital engagement.

Tawadhu (Humble): on social media, individuals often use it as a space to excessively display their achievements, wealth, or lifestyle. The phenomenon of flexing, the need for recognition, and even narcissistic behavior can worsen adolescent character. From an Islamic perspective, *tawadhu'* is an attitude of humility and not boasting, even if one possesses many advantages (Wahyuni, 2025). PAI needs to instill an understanding that a person's glory is not determined by the number of followers, uploads, or popularity in cyberspace, but by his morals and piety. The attitude of *tawadhu* helps students remain simple and introspective and avoid getting trapped in a hedonistic and competitive digital culture.

Ukhuwah, Islamic brotherhood in a digital context, means building harmonious relationships, respecting and caring for one another in cyberspace (Masripah et al., 2025). The phenomena of cyberbullying, hate speech, and conflict on social media demonstrate that the ethics of interpersonal relationships are increasingly eroded when interactions take place without face-to-face contact. Therefore, digital empathy and the ability to communicate politely are crucial. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) can emphasize the values of patience, good manners in dialogue, and the prohibition of gossip and cursing on social media. Furthermore, students need to be accustomed to offering positive comments, helping friends in need through digital platforms, and building online networks of kindness.

The findings of this study suggest the need for curriculum reform within Islamic educational institutions. Current curricula often address religious knowledge and digital literacy separately. However, the emergence of digital akhlak underscores the need to integrate these domains.

Curriculum development should incorporate learning outcomes related to digital ethics, critical thinking, online communication, information verification, and responsible technology use. These competencies should be embedded across learning activities rather than treated as isolated topics.

Assessment practices should also evaluate students' ethical behaviour in digital contexts. In addition to measuring cognitive achievement, educators may assess students' ability to apply Islamic ethical values in online interactions, information evaluation, and digital content creation. Such curriculum innovations would enable Islamic education to remain relevant while preserving its commitment to moral and spiritual development.

Practical Implications for Islamic Educational Institutions

This study provides several practical implications for Islamic educational institutions. First, schools should integrate digital ethics into Islamic Religious Education curricula. Second, teachers need training related to digital literacy and ethical online communication. Third, educational

institutions should develop learning strategies that combine technological innovation with character education. The implementation of digital akhlak in learning activities can help students become morally responsible digital citizens while maintaining Islamic values in digital environments.

The findings of this study suggest the need for curriculum reform within Islamic educational institutions. Current curricula often address religious knowledge and digital literacy separately. However, the emergence of digital akhlak underscores the need to integrate these domains. Curriculum development should incorporate learning outcomes related to digital ethics, critical thinking, online communication, information verification, and responsible technology use. These competencies should be embedded across learning activities rather than treated as isolated topics.

Assessment practices should also evaluate students' ethical behaviour in digital contexts. In addition to measuring cognitive achievement, educators may assess students' ability to apply Islamic ethical values in online interactions, information evaluation, and digital content creation. Such curriculum innovations would enable Islamic education to remain relevant while preserving its commitment to moral and spiritual development.

Many discussions of digital literacy focus primarily on technical skills such as information searching, content creation, and technology utilisation. However, the findings of this study suggest that digital literacy should be understood more comprehensively. From an Islamic educational perspective, digital literacy involves cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Students should not only learn how to access information but also how to evaluate its credibility, understand its implications, and use it responsibly.

Critical thinking is particularly important in the era of information overload. Students are constantly exposed to vast amounts of information from multiple sources, making it difficult to distinguish between facts and misinformation. Consequently, digital literacy must include critical evaluation skills supported by ethical judgment. Furthermore, emotional literacy is equally essential. Digital interactions often reduce face-to-face communication and may weaken empathy. Students need to develop emotional awareness that enables them to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others. Such awareness aligns closely with Islamic teachings on compassion, respect, and social responsibility.

Conclusion

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed Islamic education by improving accessibility, flexibility, and interaction in learning activities. Digital platforms, social media, and online learning resources provide broad opportunities for students and teachers to access Islamic knowledge more effectively. However, the digital era also presents serious ethical and moral challenges, including cyberbullying, misinformation, hate speech, digital addiction, and declining empathy among students.

This study demonstrates that the challenges of Islamic education in the digital era extend beyond technological adaptation to include strengthening students' moral awareness and ethical responsibility in digital environments. Islamic Religious Education, therefore, plays a strategic role not only in delivering religious knowledge but also in guiding students to use digital technology responsibly, ethically, and constructively.

The findings further indicate that Islamic ethical values such as *tabayyun, amanah, iffah, tawadhu',* and *ukhuwah* remain highly relevant in addressing ethical problems in cyberspace. These values can function as moral foundations for digital interactions by encouraging students to verify

information, maintain honesty, control behaviour, respect others, and develop empathy in online communication. The main contribution and novelty of this article lies in the formulation of the concept of "digital akhlak" as an ethical framework for Islamic digital literacy. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on technological integration and the effectiveness of digital learning, this study emphasises integrating Islamic moral values into students' digital behaviour and character formation. The concept of digital akhlak provides a new perspective on how Islamic Religious Education can contribute to the development of morally responsible digital citizens in the twenty-first century.

Practically, Islamic educational institutions are encouraged to integrate digital ethics into curricula, strengthen students' digital literacy, and develop learning strategies that combine technological innovation with character education. Future studies may further explore the implementation of digital akhlak in classroom practices and students' interactions in digital environments.

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