

RECONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT IN THE DIGITAL ERA: AN INTERPRETATIVE STUDY OF THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS AT MTS. IHYA' ULUMUDDIN, BONCAH MAHANG VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has brought about major transformations in all aspects of life, including Islamic Education. Teachers as the main agents of education are required to be able to reconstruct educational thinking and paradigms to remain relevant to the needs of the times. This study aims to analyze the reconstruction of Islamic Education thinking in the digital era through an interpretive study of the paradigm of teachers at MTS. Ihya' Ulumuddin, Boncah Mahang Village. The method used is qualitative research with an interpretive-phenomenological approach. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers. The results show that teachers at MTS. Ihya' Ulumuddin,

Boncah Mahang Village, strive to integrate Islamic values with digital technology through digital media-based learning innovations, but still face obstacles in aspects of digital literacy, curriculum adaptation, and moral challenges for students. The reconstruction of Islamic education thinking is carried out by shifting the paradigm from traditional teaching models to interactive, reflective, and spiritual value-based learning that is contextual to current developments. Thus, Islamic education in the digital era requires a balance between technological mastery and internalization of Islamic values.

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Introduction

The development of digital technology has created and resulted in fundamental changes in various aspects of human life, including the education system. The digital era is marked by the rapid development of information and communication technology, which has emerged as a new phenomenon in the world of education that can change the way humans acquire, manage, and disseminate knowledge (Rohman: 2021). In the current context of globalization and modernization, Islamic education cannot remain passive. We must all be able to adapt without losing our spiritual and moral identity, which is the soul of education. Islamic education has a tremendous responsibility to provide learning that is adaptive to current developments and grounded in divine values (Sutrisno: 2020).

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The digital era currently offers both excellent opportunities and challenges for Islamic education. The opportunities we all see lie in the availability of learning resources, the use of interactive media, and the widespread and rapid access to knowledge. However, on the other hand, serious challenges arise related to moral degradation, the spread of non-educational content, and the reduction of spiritual interaction between teachers and students (Fauzan: 2023). This phenomenon necessitates a reconstruction of Islamic educational thought, a process of renewing educational perspectives, concepts, and paradigms to meet the challenges of today's modern era. This reconstruction of thought is seen as not only abandoning classical Islamic principles but also reinterpreting them within the context of contemporary life (Azra: 2019).

Islamic Religious Education is truly holistic, aiming to develop human intellectual, spiritual, and moral potential in a balanced manner. However, in practice, the Islamic religious education system is often trapped in conventional teaching methods, where the teacher serves as the central source of information and students play a passive role (Nasution: 2022). Meanwhile, the current generation is known as digital natives – a generation that grew up in a digital environment and has different learning styles that require interactive, contextual, and technology-based learning. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education needs to reconstruct a relevant, dynamic, and inspiring learning approach that provides a source of inspiration for today's millennial and generation Z generations.

Teachers hold a crucial and strategic position. They serve not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as *murobbi* (value educators), *mu'allim* (teachers of knowledge), and *murshid* (moral guides). The role of teachers in Islamic education extends beyond teaching to helping shape the character, personality, and spiritual awareness of students (Anwar, 2020). In today's digital era, teachers are required to utilize technology as an effective learning tool without diminishing spiritual values. Logical teachers will undoubtedly view technology not as a threat, but as a tool for *da'wah* and a source of strengthening one's faith. In other words, teachers must reconstruct their ways of thinking and teaching so that Islamic values remain alive and well amidst digital culture (Munir, 2022).

Reconstructing Islamic educational thought is one way to reorganize the basic paradigm/viewpoint in education, which has tended to shift from a textual to a contextual one. The new paradigm also demands that teachers integrate religious knowledge with information technology. Ideally, Islamic education in the digital era is one that fosters both knowledge and morality, mastering technology while upholding the values of monotheism (Hidayat, 2021). Therefore, digitalization should not be viewed as a threat to the implementation of Islamic values, but rather as an opportunity to expand the reach of Islamic *da'wah* and teaching globally.

MTS. Ihya' Ulumuddin can be used as an interesting example in the context of learning. As an Islamic educational institution located in an area with dynamic social development, this madrasah has begun to try to integrate technology into the learning process, including

in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects. The madrasah's PAI teachers involved certainly face significant challenges in managing digital-based learning, both in terms of ability to use technology, infrastructure readiness, and adaptation to curriculum changes (Rahman: 2023). However, on the other hand, there is a strong spirit from the teachers to maintain Islamic values amidst the rapidly developing digitalization. This phenomenon is the basis for conducting an interpretive study of the teacher paradigm at MTS. Ihya' Ulumuddin, Boncah Mahang Village.

The social and cultural context within the madrasah environment also influences teachers' thinking patterns in responding to changes in technology use in today's digital era. Teachers face not only changes in teaching methods but also changes in student character, who are becoming more critical, easily bored, and accustomed to receiving information instantly. Therefore, a creative and adaptive approach to Islamic education is needed, utilizing digital technology as a medium for preaching and as a means of developing morals.

Today's teachers must possess both digital and spiritual competencies, enabling them to become religious digital educators who teach Islamic values with a humanistic technological approach (Suharto, 2023). Furthermore, the reconstruction of Islamic educational thought is also closely related to the shift in educational orientation from the transfer of knowledge to the transformation of character. In the current paradigm, Islamic education aims not only to develop students intellectually but also to foster ethical awareness in the use of technological media. Every teacher is also expected to be a role model in the wise use of technology and to instill the values of responsibility, digital etiquette, and media literacy based on Islamic ethics.

Reconstructing Islamic educational thought is an urgent need for teachers and Islamic educational institutions in the digital age. The world of Islamic education cannot operate with the old, rigid paradigm that is closed to change. Instead, it must develop a new, interactive, moderate, and innovative paradigm, where Islamic values and technology are harmoniously combined to produce a generation that is intelligent, creative, and virtuous.

This study aims to analyze how teachers at MTS Ihyā' Ulumuddin in Boncah Mahang Village interpret and reconstruct Islamic thought in the digital era. An interpretive approach was chosen to understand the meaning behind teachers' actions and experiences in facing the challenges of digitalization in learning. This research also aims to gain a deeper understanding of how Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher paradigms are formed, how they integrate Islamic values through technology, and how the process of reconstructing thought can influence Islamic education practices in the madrasah environment.

Islamic education should not stop at a normative approach, but must be present in modern realities as a solution-oriented, relevant, and visionary educational system. Al-

Attas (1980) emphasized that the goal of Islamic education is to shape civilized individuals, capable of balancing knowledge, faith, and good deeds. Therefore, teachers in today's digital age must be pioneers in reviving this spirit through reflective, adaptive thinking and actions grounded in Islamic values.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with an interpretive study type, because the main objective is to understand in depth the meaning, values, and views of teachers regarding the reconstruction of Islamic educational thought in the digital era. The interpretive approach was chosen so that researchers can explore social realities and teachers' subjective experiences in interpreting the paradigm shift of technology-based learning, rather than simply measuring phenomena statistically. Creswell (2018), interpretive research allows researchers to interpret human experiences contextually through understanding the meanings that emerge from social and cultural interactions. This research was conducted at MTS. Ihya' Ulumuddin, Bengkalis Regency, with the consideration that this madrasah is adapting to the development of digitalization in its learning system, but still maintains strong Islamic educational values.

The research subjects were Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and several general teachers who actively utilize digital media in their teaching and learning activities. The informant selection technique used purposive sampling, selecting informants deemed to have the best understanding of the research issue based on their competence and involvement in digital education practices (Sugiyono, 2022). Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation of learning activities, teaching materials, and teacher-student interactions in the madrasah environment. The interviews were conducted semi-structured to allow informants the freedom to express their views reflectively, while the researcher maintained a guideline for the main themes to be explored. The data obtained were then analyzed using thematic analysis, which is the process of identifying patterns, themes, and categories of meaning that emerge from the interviews and observations (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2014).

Data validity was maintained through triangulation of sources and techniques, cross-checking interview results with field observations, and discussions with informants to ensure the researcher's interpretations aligned with the intended meaning. This research focuses on a holistic understanding of how teachers reconstruct Islamic educational thinking in the context of digitalized learning. The results are expected to provide conceptual contributions to the development of modern Islamic educational theory and practical recommendations for Islamic educational institutions in designing adaptive strategies for the digital era.

Results

1.1 The Concept of Reconstruction of Thought in Islamic Education

The reconstruction of thought in Islamic education is a process of reviewing the concepts, values, and paradigms that have been the basis of Islamic educational practices, with the aim of adapting them to current developments without eliminating the basic principles of Islamic teachings (Azra: 2019). The term "reconstruction" etymologically means rebuilding something that already exists by adapting it to a new context. In the context of Islamic education, reconstruction is interpreted as an effort to refresh and renew thought so that the Islamic education system is able to meet the challenges of globalization and digitalization (Fauzan: 2023).

Islamic educational thought is rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith, and strengthened by the *ijtihad* of scholars throughout history. Values such as *ta'dib*, *tarbiyah*, and *ta'lim* form the philosophical foundation of Islamic education. Al-Attas (1980) stated that true Islamic education does not merely transfer knowledge, but also forms civilized individuals (*insan adabi*) capable of placing knowledge, faith, and good deeds in the right place. However, over time, the orientation of Islamic education often experiences a narrowing of meaning, where the spiritual aspect is often marginalized by the pragmatic demands of the modern world. Therefore, a reconstruction of thought is necessary so that Islamic education returns to its essence as a system that fosters a balance between reason, soul, and morals. Hidayatullah (2020) stated that the reconstruction of Islamic educational thought must be directed toward creating

an educational model capable of integrating Islamic values with advances in science and technology. Thus, the process of Islamic education not only produces individuals with knowledge, but also those with noble character, strong faith, and able to contribute to modern social life.

1.2 Digital Era Education

The digital era is a phase of development in modern society characterized by the dominance of information technology, global communication, and automation in various aspects of life (Rahmawati: 2022). In the world of education, this era brings a major paradigm shift, shifting from traditional systems to technology-based learning. Learning media are no longer limited to the classroom but have reached cyberspace through online platforms, digital applications, and social networks. In the context of Islamic education, the digital era provides opportunities to expand access to *da'wah* (Islamic outreach), enrich learning methods, and accelerate the spread of Islamic values globally (Suharto: 2023). However, on the other hand, there are major challenges in the form of a rapid flow of unfiltered information, exposure to secular culture, and a weakening of moral values among students. Therefore, Islamic education needs an adaptive strategy to make digitalization a means of *ta'dib* (religious guidance) and *tazkiyah* (religious guidance), not a threat to morality.

One characteristic of Islamic education in the digital era is the integration of technology into teaching and learning activities, such as the use of interactive learning media, digital Quran applications, educational da'wah videos, and learning management systems (LMS) – (Nasution: 2022). However, technology is only a tool; the essence of Islamic education remains in the effort to shape the character and spiritual awareness of students. This is where teachers play a crucial role in interpreting and directing the use of technology so that it maintains educational and religious value. Furthermore, digitalization is also changing the characteristics of students. The current generation tends to think quickly, critically, and interactively. They learn more effectively through digital visualization and interaction than through traditional lecture methods. Therefore, Islamic education teachers must be able to design creative, innovative, and technology-based learning strategies, without losing the exemplary values and morals that are the hallmarks of Islamic education (Rahman: 2023).

1.3 Teacher Paradigm in Islamic Education

Teachers play a central role in the Islamic education system. In classical literature, teachers are referred to by various terms such as mu'allim, murobbi, and murshid, each of which carries the meaning of educating holistically—not only transferring knowledge but also guiding students morally and spiritually (Anwar: 2020). The teacher paradigm in Islamic education reflects a perspective on human nature, the learning process, and the purpose of education itself. In the traditional paradigm, teachers were viewed as the sole source of knowledge and moral authority. However, in the digital era, this paradigm has begun to shift toward a more participatory and collaborative model. Teachers now act as facilitators, motivators, and spiritual guides, helping students discover the meaning of learning through digital exploration (Munir: 2022). In other words, teachers must be able to shift their pedagogical approach from teacher-centered learning to interactive and reflective student-centered learning.

Today's Islamic education teachers must possess three core competencies: (1) technology-based pedagogical competency, (2) spiritual and moral competency, and (3) reflective competency to examine social reality in an Islamic manner. The combination of these three competencies will make teachers agents of change who are not only technologically proficient but also value-resilient (Suharto: 2023). This new paradigm requires teachers to view technology as a means of actualizing Islamic values, not merely a teaching aid. The teacher paradigm is also closely related to ethical and religious responsibilities in guiding students. Teachers are role models in shaping students' morals and ethics, both in the real world and in the digital space. Teachers' attitudes, words, and behaviors in using technology serve as concrete examples for students in practicing Islamic ethics in cyberspace (Hidayat: 2021).

Thus, teachers not only teach values but also serve as concrete role models in implementing them.

1.4 Reconstruction of the Islamic Education Paradigm: Integration of Values and Technology

Reconstructing the paradigm of Islamic education in the digital era is a transformational process that demands critical and reflective thinking from educators. This paradigm requires not only technical changes in the use of learning media, but also philosophical changes in how to understand the meaning of education itself (Fauzi: 2024). Islamic education in the digital era must integrate knowledge, values, and technology. Relevant Islamic learning in the digital era is value-based digital education—a learning model that uses digital technology to instill Islamic values, not simply convey cognitive material (Rahma: 2021). This model can be implemented through project-based learning, the integration of Islamic religious videos, interactive online learning, and the instilling of Islamic digital etiquette.

The concept of integrating values and technology aligns with the Islamization of Knowledge concept proposed by Al-Faruqi (1982), which emphasizes that all forms of knowledge and technology should be directed toward strengthening religious values, not separating them. In this context, teachers play a crucial role as mujaddids (innovators) who reinterpret Islamic values in the digital realm, enabling students to become not merely technology users but also ethical and morally upright critical thinkers. The reconstruction of the Islamic education paradigm must also encompass curriculum and evaluation aspects. The

Islamic curriculum in the digital era should emphasize not only religious knowledge but also

digital literacy, critical thinking, and moral responsibility. Learning evaluation should also focus on measuring attitudes and behavior, not just academic achievement. This aligns with the view (Hasan, 2022) that the success of Islamic education lies in creating a balance between intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence in students.

1.5 The Urgency of Reconstructing Teacher Thinking in the Digital Era

Teachers in the digital era must have the ability to read the changing times and respond to them with innovative thinking. They must engage in educational *ijtihad*—creative reasoning to find new solutions to modern educational problems (Hidayatullah: 2020). Through the reconstruction of thought, teachers are able to reinterpret the function of Islamic education as a process of humanizing humans based on the teachings of monotheism. This reconstruction is urgent because if Islamic education persists with old, non-adaptive paradigms, it risks losing relevance in the eyes of the younger generation. The digital generation needs an Islamic education that is dialogical, open, and contextual, not dogmatic and rigid (Zulfikar: 2023). Teachers need to understand the character of digital students who like to experiment, think quickly, and prioritize

meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, teachers must be able to bridge the gap between normative Islamic values and the dynamic digital reality.

This theoretical foundation emphasizes that reconstructing Islamic educational thought is a strategic necessity in addressing the challenges of the digital era. Teachers, as key actors in education, need to reorganize their thinking paradigms to harmoniously integrate Islamic values, science, and technology. A well-reconstructed Islamic education will serve as a means of developing a digitally savvy, morally upright, and globally competitive Muslim generation without losing its Islamic identity.



Gambar : Rekonstruksi Pemikiran dalam Pendidikan Islam

Conclusion

Research conducted at MTS Ihyah' Ulumuddin shows that reconstructing Islamic educational thinking in the digital era is a crucial need for teachers and educational institutions. The main lesson learned is that a paradigm shift from conventional learning to a transformative

approach based on technology and Islamic values can only be achieved through critical awareness and integrative pedagogical adaptation. Research experience proves that integrating spiritual values with the use of digital media can enrich the learning process and strengthen students' character. Teachers are not only required to master technology but also must be able to be agents of renewal who instill Islamic values through pedagogical and creative practices.

The main benefit is that Islamic education in the digital era must be based on a holistic paradigm that combines spiritual, pedagogical, and digital competencies to remain relevant and able to develop a generation that is knowledgeable, moral, and ready to compete globally.

The strength of this research lies in its scientific contribution to the development of a digital technology-based Islamic education transformation model. The research provides empirical data on changes in teacher mindsets and pedagogical implementation in madrasas, identifying key variables such as technology adaptation, integration of Islamic values, and increased awareness of the relevance of education in the digital age. The approach used successfully explores the concepts of critical thinking, learning innovation, and the integration of digital and spiritual literacy. This study also raises new questions about how Islamic educational institutions can address global challenges without losing their Islamic identity and offers concrete strategies for developing teacher professionalism that is responsive to technological advances. Thus, this research enriches the contemporary Islamic education discourse through the perspective of pedagogical and technological integratio.

The limitations of this research lie in its scope and technical aspects, which have not been optimally covered. The study focused on a single institution with specific characteristics, so the results and findings do not fully represent the broader diversity of Islamic education contexts. Furthermore, the limitations in digital literacy and infrastructure faced by some teachers have prevented optimal implementation of technology. The research also failed to deeply examine the interactions between teachers, students, and the community in a digital context, and it failed to comprehensively explore the role of government policy. Therefore, further research needs to broaden the scope and deepen the methods, such as comparative studies on various types of madrasahs, mapping technology utilization at the policy level, and exploring the digital literacy challenges of Islamic education communities. Future research is expected to produce more diverse and in-depth results and provide adaptive recommendations for the development of Islamic education in the digital era.

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