

Perusing Learning Challenges in the Digital Era: Between Qur'ānic Concepts and Contemporary Education

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Abstract

The presence of Islām on the internet is remarkable, as Muslims are utilising online platforms for various purposes related to their religion. This includes promoting Islām, expanding their knowledge about their faith, and engaging with fellow believers through virtual interactions. The research question addressed in this study emerged from a growing concern identified in 2020 which highlighted the insufficient integration of Qur'ānic stories into educational curricula. Education plays a crucial role in nurturing individuals who will contribute to the advancement of civilisation. However, numerous studies indicate that while online learning can enhance hard skills effectively, it may be less effective when it comes to developing soft skills. Islāmic education plays a crucial role in the cultivation of character and personality, enabling individuals to establish a thriving civilisation while acknowledging present-day obstacles. The objective of this paper is to critically examine the challenges associated with disseminating various forms of knowledge in the digital age, all while upholding the principles espoused by the Prophets as illustrated in the Qur'ān. These include concepts such as ta'lim (instruction), tadrīs (teaching), ta'dīb (disciplining), and tarbīyyah (nurturing). Given that addressing contemporary challenges necessitates adopting appropriate methodologies which may involve both digital and traditional means of learning, it can be argued that expanding our understanding of these Qur'ānic concepts will ultimately lead to advancements within Islāmic educational practices. This study heavily relies on relevant scholarly sources from libraries. Consequently, this article showcases findings that hold relevance not only for students but also for broader audiences.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islāmic education can be defined as an educational system that nurtures the individual's sensitivity in such a manner that their mindset, behaviours, decisions, and approach towards knowledge are guided by the ethical principles of Islām with deep spiritual significance. The Qur'ān places consistent emphasis on education within the framework of Islām. Learning is regarded as a form of worship in Islāmic teachings. According to the Islāmic perspective, education is a purposeful process rooted in Islāmic values aiming to holistically educate individuals socially, morally, emotionally, and physically so they may attain wholehearted submission to Allāh (Hoque et al., 2019).

The digital age was introduced with the rise of digital technology, internet networks, and computer information technology. The emergence of new media platforms in this era, such as online networks and the internet itself, has led to noticeable changes. This shift is primarily due to a cultural transformation in how information is distributed, resulting in traditional mainstream media migrating towards these new platforms. As a result of the capabilities offered by the digital age's media options, people can access information more rapidly than ever before. Online media has caused a mass migration away from traditional forms of media.

The increasingly complex nature of today's advanced digital technologies has brought about significant global transformations across various sectors. Multiple channels have benefited from diverse means of obtaining and freely controlling information through modern technological advancements (Nana Sutarna, 2018).

With the advent of the digital age, individuals now have unrestricted access to a vast array of information through cyberspace. This phenomenon has created an illusion that our world knows no boundaries ever since the inception of digital systems. Through the internet and electronic devices, people are able to swiftly satisfy their needs without leaving the comfort of their homes by harnessing this virtual network's resources. The objective of Islāmic education is to empower Muslims with knowledge and skills essential for thriving in a secure, prosperous, and harmonious environment (Suroso et al., 2021). Achieving this goal involves integrating Islāmic education with utilising various online resources available through networks. This goal can be accomplished by linking Islāmic education to how a wide variety of materials can be accessed through the network.

The role of the teacher in developing digital skills is crucial. It is essential for teachers to make wise decisions when selecting digital and multimedia programmes that will effectively facilitate student learning, especially considering the demands of technologically literate students. In addition, teachers should integrate teaching with various multimedia tools to enhance the appeal and engagement of each topic discussed in class. Media resources play a significant role in Islāmic education as they aim to instil responsibility and foster positive attitudes towards life and the environment among Muslim students. Given that today's generation faces unprecedented challenges, particularly in terms of their online presence, it becomes imperative for educators to equip themselves with proficiency on relevant internet platforms. By combining technology with Islāmic education through an integrated curriculum, we can cultivate desirable attitudes, behaviours, decision-making skills, and approaches towards accessing and interpreting diverse sources of information. Islāmic education aims to foster a Muslim individual who possesses religious consciousness and exhibits unity within society through an empirical approach. Students of Islāmic studies are guided towards developing awareness and guidance in their spiritual and moral journeys with the principles of religion. Moreover, they are equipped with necessary skills that align with the requirements and standards of contemporary life, while remaining rooted in Islāmic teachings (Suroso et al., 2021).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is separated into two sections: dimensions of prophetic duties such as *Ta'līm*, *Tadrīs*, *Ta'dīb* and *Tarbīyyah*. The second section discusses the challenges of learning in the digital age. Both are crucial because they play a vital role in contemporary education today.

The Concepts of *Ta'līm*, *Tadrīs*, *Ta'dīb* and *Tarbīyyah*.

To establish a well-functioning and harmonious society, it is essential to prioritise recognition based on the principles outlined in the Qur'ān. This entails adhering to a hierarchical structure that follows both legal regulations and rationality. Additionally, one must actively manifest this recognition by putting knowledge into action, fostering appreciation for others' contributions, and expressing praise when appropriate.

These actions align with Prophet Muḥammad’s mission of cultivating exemplary moral behaviour within his community. In addition, the inclusion of Qur’ānic narratives, particularly those centred on the lives of the Prophets, has piqued the students’ interest and captivated their attention. The beauty of this method is its deep link to modern challenges that are relevant to the community’s daily lives. (Raba’ahadawiah et.al, 2022). Teaching and exemplifying Qur’ānic stories, in essence, serves as a guiding light for individuals, providing practical lessons that can be employed to traverse the intricacies of real-life circumstances. Teachers can boost their students’ spiritual growth and encourage them to live more satisfying and purposeful lives by using the great wisdom and teachings of the Qur’ān. (Raba’ahadawiah et.al, 2022). By emphasising these values through recognition grounded in Islāmic teachings, individuals can strive towards personal growth and contribute positively to their communities. According to a ḥadīth reported by Bukhārī, “*I was solely sent to develop excellent character.*” (Komaruddin Sassi, 2018)

Al-Qur’ān and Sunnah are sources of Islāmic teachings. Hence Islāmic education cannot be separated from these two sources. Education is better recognised in both sources by words whose meaning is connected to education. *At-Tarbīyyah* essentially means nursing, bearing, providing development, developing, nurturing, creating, increasing growth, raising, and generating mature and tamed outcomes (Komaruddin Sassi, 2018).

Ta’līm as teaching conveys information to an individual’s soul without regard for restrictions or constraints. Nonetheless, it must be recognised that, while knowledge instruction knows no limitations, there is still a limit to the truth of science; if there is no truth in science, this signifies a mistake (Komaruddin Sassi, 2018).

Tadrīs is a pedagogical endeavour aimed at equipping students (*mutadaris*) with the ability to independently read, analyse, and comprehend knowledge. This process involves the *mudarris* repeatedly reciting, elucidating, expressing and discussing its meanings in order for the *mutadarris* to acquire awareness, retention, comprehension as well as practical application thereof in their daily lives with an aim of seeking divine blessings from Allāh (Ma’zumi, Syihabudin & Najmudin, 2019).

In Arabic, *ta’dīb* is a form of the word “*addaba*”, which implies imparting *adab*, teaching. *Adab* is frequently translated in ways that show individuality. Thus, according to Naquib al-Attās, *ta’dīb* is a term believed acceptable to represent the purpose of Islāmic education with the paradigm of *tawhīd*, in addition to the justifications for other linguistic connotations. As a result, education is *ta’dīb* because *adab*, as defined here, involves knowledge and charity (Komaruddin Sassi, 2018).

The critical aspect of *ta’līm* is the accurate transmission of science, comprehension, understanding, responsibility, and the instillation of confidence in the youngster. *Ta’līm*, in this context, refers to components of life knowledge and abilities, as well as a code of decent behaviour. Meanwhile, in *tarbīyyah*, the emphasis is on the children’s guidance so that they are empowered (have potential), increase their essential wholeness, and develop ideally. Specifically, the experience of the appropriate science in teaching the individual, the growth of knowledge in people, and the cultivation of morality. In terms of *ta’dīb*, the emphasis is on a person’s mastery of the appropriate expertise to develop the steadfastness of kindness and good behaviour. *Tadrīs* is an integral aspect of education that goes beyond academic pursuits, encompassing the cultivation of students’ moral and spiritual values.

It entails not only a focus on enhancing reading skills but also inculcating virtues through teachers' guidance to shape the individuals into well-rounded personalities. This transformative process includes providing education and honing various practical abilities based on their unique talents, interests, and potentialities. Such insights significantly contribute to facilitating effective learning experiences while aiding in accomplishing educational objectives.

These qualities ought to be fostered among the younger generation because they provide a foundation for reshaping the students into individuals who seek knowledge from a reliable source, who understand the digital network, and who do not forget the Islāmic principles that ought to come first in the process of developing their personalities.

The Challenges of Learning in The Digital Era

In the present era of digital advancement, Islāmic Education encounters numerous challenges as education itself evolves. This is particularly evident in the current digital age that we are experiencing. Various issues have arisen in recent times, specifically within the field of education including Islāmic education. These issues were identified even prior to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. A study conducted in 2013 revealed a number of problems encountered by individuals when attempting to access resources for Qur'ān memorisation, recitation and *ḥadīth* knowledge acquisition (M. Khurram & Yasser, 2013).

- Almost all respondents recorded their doubts while reading the holy book on a digital device or online, such as through mobile apps. The causes of confusion include the suspicion of forgeries or other connected difficulties such as typos, medical reasons, other unspecified reasons, etc.
- The lack of a regulatory authority to set rules and guidelines for Muslims utilising the Internet causes a slew of issues, as does the case with the Qur'ān and attempts to make unauthentic and counterfeit copies.
- The Muslim community worldwide is nearly completely oblivious of or ignorant of the fake Qur'ān accessible in the market in various digital formats.

This research led to the discovery of a consequence of which it was difficult to find a credible source of knowledge, eventually leading to misunderstanding among the people, particularly among those not from an Islāmic background. Apart from that, recent research conducted in 2021 revealed several challenges in promoting learning via technology at the time (M. Khurram & Yasser, 2013).

- There are more significant opportunities for learners to deviate from educational objectives and act unethically due to a lack of physical interaction where learners have more flexibility without sufficient teacher monitoring.
- Due to a lack of physical interactions, e-learning pupils felt isolated and uneasy. Physical interaction may also have an impact on the completion rate.
- The absence of body language in an e-learning system may impact the learner's knowledge and attention. On the other hand, physical classrooms allow students to learn more quickly since they can seek advice from their teachers or classmates.

Based on the findings, it is evident that students' interest and motivation to learn are diminished when they use an online learning platform because of the loss of personal connections that comes with it. It's concerning that learners seem oblivious to the fact that the point of education is to bring them closer to Allāh and help them become better people. Consequently, students may be less motivated to finish their work on time and with attention to detail if they are involved in physical contact with others. They may come to believe these traits are less significant. The ability to easily ask for assistance from teachers and peers in a traditional classroom setting is essential in accelerating a child's education. An online learning system that does not incorporate body language may impair a learner's understanding and focus. Lack of concentration might cause students to misinterpret information.

Furthermore, additional obstacles arise in the present digital era with the utilisation of more intricate technologies. These challenges are compounded by the findings from research conducted in 2021 (Yeri N. & Arifmiboy, 2021).

- Inability to master technology improvements, affecting any information required. This situation leads to a lack of competence and quality in our young generation, resulting in social behaviours that diverge from what they should be.
- A lack of dynamic social interactions between teachers and students and teachers' shifting roles being substituted by digital technologies. The fading of students' religious attitudes and lack of respect for teachers as knowledge providers began to fade religious values in students, less able educators to be role models for their students so that students lose excellent role models on the side of their lives, lack of support for obtaining good information and suitable in comprehending a science in the era of technology.
- The formation of disparities in student conduct that deviates from Islāmic ideals and practices. It also stems from the standpoint of educational quality and quality, educational practices that have not been developed, and materials/curricula that cannot meet today's standards when students are expected to compete globally or even beyond.

According to the research, the incapacity to master technology has an impact on information. Our young generation's lack of experience and quality leads to abnormal social behaviour. They will be hesitant to be self-sufficient in their pursuit of knowledge. As the network world expands at a rapid pace, a lack of social skills among teachers and students has an impact on learning outcomes. The fading of students' religious views and lack of respect for teachers as knowledge providers began to erode religious values in students, as did the inability of educators to serve as role models for their pupils, resulting in the loss of excellent role models in the lives of students, as well as a lack of support for acquiring accurate information and comprehension of science in the age of technology. Some educators chose old-fashioned ways of thinking, which resulted in a transfer of knowledge gap when students adapted to the current digital environment.

Significantly, physical learning is necessary because children can learn from the behaviour or actions of their teachers. It is best exemplified by the example of our role model, Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), who preached through his exemplary conduct. Furthermore, students' behaviour deviates from Islāmic ideas and practices. It also stems from poor educational quality and standards, underdeveloped educational practices, and materials/curricula that do not meet today's expectations when students are expected to compete globally or beyond.

Since technology has advanced so much in recent years, curricula should emphasise mastering the fundamentals before moving on to advancements with practical applications rather than merely providing theories.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this paper is to critically examine the challenges associated with disseminating various forms of knowledge in the digital age, all while upholding the principles espoused by the Prophets as illustrated in the Qur'ān.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study employs library research to address the issues of disseminating varied knowledge in the digital world while upholding the Islāmic standards exemplified by Prophets in the Qur'ān.

5. FINDINGS

Within the framework of Islāmic education, the concepts of *Ta'līm*, *Tadrīs*, *Ta'dīb* and *Tarbīyyah* are interrelated. *Ta'līm* refers to the unrestricted transmission of knowledge and talents to individuals. *Tadrīs* include preparing students by reading, explaining, and discussing the meaning of the content being taught. *Ta'dīb* is concerned with the teaching of *adab*, which includes both knowledge and morals. *Tarbīyyah* on the other hand, emphasises individual development and nurturing to maximise potential and build moral ideals. These ideas are consistent with the primary goal of Prophet Muḥammad's apostolate, which is to perfect morals. The Qur'ān and Sunnah are the fundamental sources of Islāmic teachings, and Islāmic education is inextricably linked to them.

However, the limitations of learning in the digital age have made Islāmic education challenging. The absence of regulatory authorities to provide norms, as well as the proliferation of bogus Islāmic content, have all contributed to misunderstandings and confusion among learners. Furthermore, the change to online learning platforms has created issues such as decreased student motivation, feelings of isolation, and a lack of physical interaction and body language cues that aid learning.

Furthermore, the rising complexity of technology has created new obstacles. These include a lack of technological mastery, which limits access to information and contributes to social behaviour that deviates from Islāmic standards. The lack of dynamic social connections between teachers and students, the fading of religious principles, and educators' failure to serve as role models all contribute to the difficulties encountered in Islāmic education. To solve these issues, it is critical to instil key skills in the next generation, such as acquiring knowledge from credible sources, adjusting to the digital network, and prioritising Islāmic principles in personal growth. Not just theoretical knowledge, but also practical applications and the development of moral values, should be emphasised in Islāmic education. By doing so, students may navigate the digital age while adhering to Islāmic beliefs and building a solid foundation in their personality.

6. CONCLUSION

In contemporary times, the pursuit of knowledge in Islām is inseparable from the advancements brought by modern technology. The widespread availability of internet platforms facilitates access to a wealth of information and values pertaining to Islāmic teachings. It is incumbent upon society as a whole to jointly prepare an empowered generation with strong religious foundations for the future. Educational institutions serve as crucial entities that provide formal structures wherein activities and ideals related to Islāmic education can flourish and thrive.

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