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SHAPING FUTURE LEADERS: HOW TECHNOLOGY IS TRANSFORMING ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education has a rich tradition of instilling moral values, religious principles, and leadership qualities in young learners, laying the foundation for them to become ethical and responsible future leaders in Muslim societies. However, the advent of the digital age has brought about profound changes in education worldwide, introducing technology as a powerful tool that both enriches and challenges traditional educational approaches. This research aims to explore the intricate relationship between technology and Islamic education, with a particular focus on how technology is shaping the character development of future leaders in this digital era. This research employs a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively examine the multifaceted impact of technology on Islamic education. Participants include 20 students. The study involves structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data on students' experiences with technology-enhanced Islamic education, in-depth interviews with educators, students, and parents to gather qualitative insights, and content analysis of educational materials and digital resources used in technology-based Islamic education to assess their alignment with Islamic values and character development. In conclusion, technology has the potential to significantly impact character development and student engagement in Islamic education. However, its benefits must be harnessed thoughtfully, considering content quality and the necessity of responsible technology usage guidance. As we navigate the evolving landscape of Islamic education in the digital age, it is crucial to strike a delicate balance that leverages technology's benefits while ensuring the preservation of Islamic values. This research provides valuable insights for educators, parents, and institutions as they guide the next generation of leaders toward a harmonious fusion of faith and technology.

Keywords: : *Islamic education, technology, character development, digital age*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has a rich history of nurturing individuals with strong moral values, deep faith, and leadership qualities. It plays a crucial role in shaping future leaders who are not only well-versed in Islamic teachings but also exhibit exemplary character. However, the advent of the digital age has brought about significant changes in the way education is delivered and received. Technology has become an integral part of our lives, influencing various aspects of society, including education (Abdolmohammadi, M. J., & Kamyabi, A, 2018).

The integration of technology into Islamic education offers both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it has the potential to engage students more effectively through interactive learning experiences. On the other hand, it raises concerns about the quality of content, the supervision of technology use, and its impact on character development (Al-Rawahy, S. M. A., & Al-Louzi, N, 2019).

This research seeks to explore how technology is transforming Islamic education in the digital age and its implications for shaping future leaders. By understanding the benefits and challenges associated with technology in Islamic education, we can better navigate this evolving landscape and ensure that our future leaders continue to uphold Islamic values and ethics.

The integration of technology into Islamic education holds great promise. It offers interactive and engaging learning experiences, facilitates access to a vast repository of digital resources, and enables educators to employ innovative teaching methods. These benefits align with the broader goals of Islamic education, which seeks to develop not only cognitive skills but also strong moral character and a deep connection to faith.

However, this transformative potential also brings with it a set of questions and challenges. The digital age has raised concerns about the preservation of Islamic values and ethical considerations in education. There is a need to ensure that the integration of technology aligns seamlessly with the core tenets of Islamic education and that it contributes positively to character development.

As we embark on this research journey, it is crucial to recognize that technology is a tool—a means to an end. It can either enhance or hinder the development of character and the cultivation of strong moral values. Our goal is to understand how to strike a harmonious balance between the benefits of technology and the ethical considerations that are integral to Islamic education (Mahfouz, M. M, 2018).

This research brings together a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and content analysis. Through the voices of students, educators, and parents, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted impact of technology on Islamic education. By examining both the advantages and challenges associated with technology in Islamic education, we seek to provide insights that will guide educators, parents, and institutions as they navigate this evolving landscape.

The digital age presents an unprecedented opportunity to enrich Islamic education through technology, while also requiring us to be vigilant custodians of Islamic values and ethics. Ultimately, the goal is to shape future leaders who are not only well-informed in Islamic teachings but also exemplify the values and character traits that will contribute positively to society (Samad, A. A., & Rahman, M. A, 2020).

Based on the information provided above, the problem statement in the context of shaping future leaders: how technology is transforming islamic education in the digital age can be formulated as follows:

How to explore the intricate relationship between technology and Islamic education, with a particular focus on how technology is shaping the character development of future leaders in this digital era?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. In this research, a mixed-methods approach was chosen as the research design. A mixed-methods approach involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect and analyze data (Umar, M, 2018). This approach was selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between technology and character development in Islamic education within the digital age.

1. **Quantitative Research:** Quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data. In this study, quantitative methods were employed through surveys administered to participants. These surveys consisted of structured questionnaires with predefined questions and response options. The quantitative data collected from these surveys provided numerical insights into various aspects of the research, such as student engagement, perceptions of technology, and the impact of technology on character development. Quantitative data allows for statistical analysis, which enables researchers to identify patterns, trends, and statistical relationships within the data. This approach provides a quantitative basis for drawing conclusions and making generalizations.
2. **Qualitative Research:** Qualitative research, on the other hand, involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, such as interviews, open-ended responses, and observations. In this study, qualitative methods were used through in-depth interviews conducted with educators, students, and parents. Qualitative data provides a deeper and richer understanding of participants' experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. It allows researchers to explore nuances, uncover themes, and gain insights into the subjective aspects of the research topic (Rosenberg, M. J, 2001).

The choice of a mixed-methods approach in this research was driven by several reasons (Al-Rawahy, S. M. A., & Al-Louzi, N, 2019):

1. **Comprehensive Understanding:** The research sought to provide a holistic and multifaceted understanding of the impact of technology on character development in Islamic education. By combining both quantitative and qualitative data, the study could explore both the numerical trends and the nuanced perspectives of participants.
2. **Validation and Triangulation:** Using multiple data sources and methods allowed for the validation and triangulation of findings. The convergence of findings from different data types strengthens the overall validity and reliability of the research.
3. **Contextualization:** Qualitative data provided context and depth to quantitative findings. It allowed researchers to understand the "how" and "why" behind numerical trends, uncovering the underlying reasons for participants' experiences and perceptions.
4. **Richness of Insights:** Qualitative data, particularly from interviews, provided rich insights into the experiences and viewpoints of educators, students, and parents. These insights added depth to the research findings and enriched the discussion.

In summary, the mixed-methods approach was chosen to provide a well-rounded and comprehensive exploration of the research topic, offering both quantitative data for statistical analysis and qualitative data for a deeper understanding of the human experiences and perspectives related to technology and character development in Islamic education within the digital age.

The research involves students, educators, and parents from Islamic educational institutions. A total of 20 participants were surveyed, and 20 participants were interviewed. Surveys: Participants were provided with structured questionnaires to gather quantitative data on their experiences with technology-enhanced Islamic education. Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted with educators, students, and parents to gain qualitative insights into their perspectives on technology in Islamic education. Content Analysis: Educational materials and online resources used in technology-based Islamic education were analyzed for content relevance and alignment with Islamic values. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software, while qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically. Content analysis was conducted on educational materials.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research indicate that the integration of technology in Islamic education has a significant impact on character development and the engagement of students.

Quantitative data from surveys reveal that most students feel more engaged in their Islamic studies when technology is incorporated. They appreciate the interactive nature of digital resources, which fosters a deeper understanding of Islamic values. However, a significant number of students express concerns about potential distractions and the need for guidance in using technology for educational purposes.

Qualitative data from interviews with educators highlight the potential of technology to enhance teaching methods and engage students in meaningful discussions about Islamic values. However, educators also stress the importance of selecting appropriate digital content and providing guidance to students to ensure a responsible and ethical use of technology.

Parents, as indicated by survey responses, generally support the integration of technology in Islamic education. They believe it can make religious learning more accessible and enjoyable for their children. However, they emphasize the need for effective parental supervision and guidance to prevent misuse of technology (Turkle, S, 2017).

Content analysis of educational materials and online resources reveals a wide range of content quality. While some resources align well with Islamic values and teachings, others may require improvement or adaptation to ensure they promote the intended character development.

The results suggest that technology-enhanced Islamic education has the potential to positively impact character development and engagement among students. However, careful consideration is needed in content selection and supervision to maximize its benefits.

Enhanced Student Engagement and Understanding

Quantitative data from the surveys reveal that the integration of technology into Islamic education generally leads to enhanced student engagement. A significant majority of students reported that technology-enhanced learning experiences in Islamic education

captured their interest more effectively. The interactive nature of digital resources, including multimedia presentations, online quizzes, and educational applications, played a pivotal role in fostering a deeper understanding of Islamic values and principles.

This finding underscores the potential of technology to make religious learning more accessible and engaging for students in the digital age. Technology offers opportunities for interactive exploration of complex religious concepts, enabling students to connect with and internalize Islamic teachings more effectively.

Challenges: Distractions and Guidance

Despite the positive impact on engagement, concerns emerged regarding potential distractions associated with technology use. Some students expressed concerns about the temptation to deviate from educational content to unrelated online distractions. This raises the importance of responsible technology use guidance and supervision to ensure that the digital tools intended for educational purposes do not hinder the character development goals of Islamic education.

Educator Perspectives on Enriched Teaching Methods

Qualitative insights from interviews with educators provide a deeper understanding of technology's impact on teaching methods. Educators highlighted the potential of technology to diversify instructional approaches, making learning more dynamic and inclusive. Technology allowed them to create interactive lesson plans, share multimedia content, and facilitate online discussions about Islamic values and ethics.

However, educators also emphasized the importance of selecting appropriate digital content and providing guidance on responsible technology use. They recognized that technology, while enriching, should not compromise the ethical and moral objectives of Islamic education. This dual role of technology as both an enhancer and a potential challenge in character development necessitates vigilant oversight.

Parental Support and Supervision

Survey responses from parents generally indicated support for the integration of technology into Islamic education. They recognized the potential of technology to make religious learning more enjoyable and accessible for their children. However, parents stressed the importance of effective parental supervision and guidance to ensure responsible technology use.

Content Quality and Alignment with Islamic Values

Content analysis of educational materials and digital resources used in technology-based Islamic education revealed a wide spectrum of content quality. While some resources aligned well with Islamic teachings and values, others required refinement or adaptation to fulfill their intended role in character development.

Balancing Technology Benefits and Ethical Considerations

In conclusion, the findings suggest that technology holds significant potential to positively impact character development and engagement in Islamic education. However, this potential must be harnessed thoughtfully. The challenges of potential distractions and the need for guidance in technology use cannot be overlooked.

As we navigate the evolving landscape of Islamic education in the digital age, it is imperative to strike a harmonious balance between the benefits of technology and the ethical considerations that are central to Islamic values. Ensuring that technology aligns seamlessly with the goals of character development and the preservation of Islamic ethics is essential to shape future leaders who not only possess knowledge but also embody the values that contribute positively to society.

This research underscores the transformative potential of technology in Islamic education and the need for responsible content selection and guidance to maximize its benefits while preserving the core principles of Islamic character development.

Quantitative Result: Effectiveness of Technology in Islamic Education

The research aimed to assess the effectiveness of technology in Islamic education. Participants, including students, educators, and parents, were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "Technology enhances the effectiveness of Islamic education," on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree."

The following chart summarizes the quantitative results based on the responses of 20 participants:

Rating	Number of Respondents
1 (Strongly Disagree)	2
2 (Disagree)	3
3 (Neutral)	4
4 (Agree)	6
5 (Strongly Agree)	5

Key Observations:

Diverse Perspectives: Even within this smaller sample size of 20 participants, there is a range of perspectives on the effectiveness of technology in Islamic education. Responses vary from strong disagreement to strong agreement.

Majority Positive Views: A notable observation is that a significant portion of the participants (11 out of 20) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, suggesting that they perceive technology as a positive enhancer of Islamic education.

Variability in Neutral Responses: Some participants (4 out of 20) indicated a neutral stance, suggesting that they neither strongly agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Divergence in Negative Views: A minority of participants (5 out of 20) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they have reservations or negative perceptions about the role of technology in Islamic education.

These simplified quantitative findings regarding the effectiveness of technology in Islamic education among 20 participants demonstrate the diversity of perspectives even within a smaller sample. The majority of participants hold positive views regarding

technology's role in enhancing Islamic education, but there are variations in responses, including neutral and negative views.

These results emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of technology's impact on Islamic education, taking into account the diverse perspectives of stakeholders. In a larger-scale study, statistical analysis would provide more robust insights, and qualitative data would help delve deeper into the reasons behind these perspectives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, technology is transforming Islamic education in the digital age, offering new opportunities for engagement and character development among students. The findings of this research emphasize the need for educators and institutions to harness the potential of technology while addressing challenges such as content quality and supervision.

As we navigate the evolving landscape of Islamic education, it is essential to remember that technology is a tool that can either enhance or hinder character development. To shape future leaders grounded in faith and ethics, a balanced approach that combines the benefits of technology with responsible content selection and guidance is crucial.

By embracing technology to strengthen Islamic education, we can ensure that future leaders are not only well-informed in Islamic teachings but also exemplify the values and character traits that will contribute positively to society.

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