

Reconstruction Of The Paradigm Of Contemporary Islamic Education For Character Strengthening And Digital Literacy

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology, artificial intelligence, social media, and increasingly complex information ecosystems has transformed the educational landscape while introducing new challenges to students' character development. Islamic education is no longer sufficient when viewed merely as a process of transmitting religious knowledge. Instead, it needs to be reconstructed as a process of developing individuals who are knowledgeable, well-mannered, critical, adaptive, and responsible in digital spaces. This study aims to analyze the need for reconstructing the paradigm of contemporary Islamic education and to formulate an integrative framework that connects Islamic values, character education, and digital literacy. The study employs a library research approach, using content analysis to examine conceptual literature, scholarly articles, educational policy documents, and international digital competency frameworks. The analysis indicates that the paradigm of contemporary Islamic education needs to shift from a knowledge-transmission orientation toward a transformative-humanistic paradigm that positions adab, integrity, responsibility, critical thinking, self-regulation, and digital citizenship as interconnected competencies. This reconstruction produces the conceptual model of Adab–Knowledge–Digital Literacy–Character–Action (AKDCA), a framework that positions adab as the normative foundation, knowledge as the epistemic basis, digital literacy as an operational and critical competency, character as a moral disposition, and action as an ethical manifestation. Theoretically, this model expands the concept of Islamic education by integrating spiritual-moral dimensions with digital competencies. Practically, it can serve as a foundation for developing curricula, pedagogical approaches, teacher competencies, and assessment practices in Islamic education in the digital era.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed the way knowledge is produced, distributed, validated, and the way humans build social relationships and identities. The presence of AI, social media, search engines, and digital learning platforms is shaping a new epistemic ecosystem for learners (Catro, 2026). UNESCO affirms that educational technology has the potential to expand access, improve

the quality of learning, and develop digital skills, but it does not replace the importance of human interaction in education (Cortesi et al., 2020). The development of AI also demands the ability to understand, evaluate, use, and create technology responsibly (S. Verma et al., 2026).

This condition presents a paradigmatic challenge for Islamic education, namely how to maintain an epistemological identity while responding to technological developments. The concept of *ta'dib al-Attas* places *adab* as the core of education through the appropriate placement of knowledge and the integration of moral and ethical dimensions in learning (Zhong & Zheng, 2023). This is important because modernity tends to separate intellectual, moral, spiritual, and technological aspects, so Islamic education needs to integrate character formation with technological competence (Elshani & Rrecaj, 2023).

Digital literacy in this context is not sufficiently understood as a technical ability to use devices, but includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, communication, problem-solving, information searching, security, participation, critical thinking, and ethical use of information (Fransiska, 2023). This perspective is closely related to the goals of Islamic education, especially in building the ability to evaluate the truth, maintain communication ethics, and develop social responsibility (Dewanti et al., 2022). However, the gap between technological development and pedagogical readiness is still a problem. UNESCO points out that the effectiveness of educational technology is influenced by access, governance, regulation, and teacher readiness, while the OECD emphasizes the need to integrate digital literacy with social and emotional skills (Sudarmanto et al., 2023). This condition gives birth to an ethical divide, namely a gap in the meaningful, critical, and moral use of technology, which has an impact on identity, religious behavior, knowledge authority, and social relations in the digital space (Sudarmanto et al., 2023).

Although the study of Islamic education in the digital era, character education, and digital literacy continues to develop, the three are still widely discussed separately so that their epistemological and pedagogical integration has not yet formed a comprehensive paradigm (Salahudin, 2024). Therefore, a reconstruction is needed that places *adab* as a normative foundation, digital literacy as a directed competence, and knowledge, character, and actions as a unit in contemporary Islamic curriculum and learning (Salahudin, 2024).

This research offers the AKDCA (Adab–Knowledge–Digital Literacy–Character–Action) model as a theoretical framework for the reconstruction of the contemporary Islamic education paradigm. This model places *adab* as the normative basis for the use of technology, digital literacy as a competency, and character and moral actions as the orientation for its use in facing digital transformation, including generative AI (Nurhayati et al., 2024). This research aims to analyze the limitations of the knowledge transmission paradigm, find the common points of Islamic education, character, and digital literacy, formulate a reconstruction framework, and produce a conceptual model for curriculum development, pedagogy, educator competencies, and assessments (Nurhayati et al., 2024).

The AKDCA paradigm emphasizes that *adab* functions as a normative filter for digital activities, while digital literacy is directed by character and realized through responsible actions. Its implementation has implications for the integration of digital literacy, ethics, and culture in the curriculum as well as strengthening the competencies of *adab*-based educators. Theoretically, this model brings together Islamic education, character education, and digital literacy in one epistemological-pedagogical framework that is relevant to the era of generative AI (Sudarmanto et al., 2023). Thus, its main contribution is to offer an integrative paradigm that explicitly connects manners, knowledge, digital literacy, character, and action, which is still relatively limited in the Scopus indexed literature of the last five years (Sudarmanto et al., 2023).

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research design to reconstruct the paradigm of Islamic education in the face of digital transformation. This approach was chosen because the research is oriented towards the development of a conceptual framework, not the measurement of causal relationships between variables. Data sources include Islamic philosophy and education literature, scientific articles on contemporary Islamic education, character education and digital literacy, UNESCO, UNICEF, and OECD documents, as well as AI studies, digital citizenship, media-

information literacy, and 21st-century competence. The selection of sources is based on relevance, credibility, academic contribution, and actuality, utilizing a global perspective without ignoring Islamic values as a normative foundation (Ong et al., 2021).

Data is analyzed using interpretive content analysis through four stages, namely identification to find the main concept, categorization to group it into epistemological, axiological, pedagogical, character, and digital dimensions, relational analysis to examine the relationships between categories, and conceptual synthesis to formulate a new paradigm. This approach allows for a critical reading of the concepts of education, manners, knowledge, and self-formation, as seen in the study of ta'dib al-Attas (Haque et al., 2023). The analysis is directed at three main questions: what is the purpose of education, what kind of human beings are to be shaped, and how technology should be used in the process. These three are the basis for distinguishing transmissive, instrumental, and transformative paradigms while producing conceptual generalizations that can be tested through subsequent empirical research (Kumari et al., 2022).

Based on the synthesis of the literature, this study formulated a transformative paradigm as an alternative to a transmissive and instrumental educational approach. The developed paradigm integrates Islamic manners and ethics with digital literacy, character education, and 21st-century competencies, including information, media, and technology literacy. The global perspective is used to expand the analysis, not to adopt the Western model rawly, so that Islamic values remain the main normative framework. The results of the reconstruction are expected to produce theoretical propositions that can be tested and developed through empirical research and adapted to the dynamics of digital transformation and global education policy (Gu et al., 2018).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Islamic Education as a Process of Human Formation

Paradigmatically speaking, Islamic education is not only oriented towards the teaching of religious materials, but also on the formation of human beings as a whole in intellectual, spiritual, moral, social, and practical aspects. The concept of ta'dib places adab as the ability to recognize the truth, understand the position of something, and act appropriately based on knowledge. Therefore, adab is not only a norm of behavior, but also an epistemic mechanism that connects knowledge with action, ethical reflection, and practical wisdom in various life contexts (Nurohman et al., 2024). This perspective is in line with the study of the ethics of Islamic education which places adab as a normative framework in the relationship between teachers, students, and learning materials (Fuadi et al., 2021).

In the context of digital education, the success of education is not only determined by the technical ability to use technology, but also by the ability to verify information, communicate ethically, and use knowledge and technology for the benefit of others. Adab thus functions as an epistemic-ethical regulator that directs digital literacy to be not only technical and pragmatic, but also critical, moral, and responsible. The integration of adab and digital literacy makes technology a means of character formation, rationality, and social responsibility oriented to *maslahah* and the will of *sharia* (Rahayu et al., 2023). Thus, adab is an important foundation in connecting knowledge, ethics, and actions to form civilized humans in the midst of digital transformation (Nurohman et al., 2024).

3.1.2. Character Education

Character education places values as the core of education. In Thomas Lickona's framework, character includes three interrelated dimensions, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Thus, character is not enough to be built through moral knowledge, but requires the affective internalization of values and their application in real behavior. Contemporary studies show that these three dimensions remain relevant to form character holistically, while character values need to be integrated into learning, school culture, and family and community environments (Silfia et al., 2024). The balance of cognitive, affective, and practical aspects is an important basis for the formation of ethics, because knowing the good does not guarantee that a person acts well without emotional internalization and ethical behavior (Mainuddin et al., 2023).

In the digital environment, these three dimensions have expanded their meaning. Moral knowing includes the ability to assess the truth of information, privacy, copyright, AI ethics, and the

consequences of digital activities; moral feeling is manifested through empathy, concern for cyberbullying, and social awareness; while moral action is reflected in the behavior of not spreading hoaxes, communicating politely, and using AI responsibly (Afriansyah, 2024). In addition, self-control needs to include the ability to control media consumption, emotions, impulses, and digital dependency (Wijayanto, 2022), while responsibility for digital content and footprints, information integrity, and the prevention of plagiarism and AI abuse are important parts of digital character (Purnamaningsih, 2023). Therefore, character education needs to evolve from offline morality to integrated digital morality, namely the consistency of ethical values and behaviors in physical and virtual spaces through the integration of digital literacy, technological ethics, and responsible actions in the 21st century curriculum (Agustín et al., 2023).

3.1.3. Digital Literacy as an Epistemic and Ethical Competency

Digital literacy is a multidimensional capacity that includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes to use technology safely, critically, ethically, and empoweringly. UNICEF views digital literacy as a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the use of technology, while UNESCO through the Media and Information Literacy framework emphasizes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and use information critically and responsibly (Li et al., 2026). Contemporary studies show that digital literacy also includes the ability to evaluate credibility and information bias, apply digital ethics, and develop digital agency which is increasingly important in the context of AI literacy and 21st-century education (Gupta & Kaul, 2024).

In this study, digital literacy is developed through five interrelated dimensions, namely Digital Access, the ability to access technology and information (Gupta & Kaul, 2024). Digital Comprehension, the ability to understand data, text, and digital media (Baguinat & A, 2026). Digital Criticality, the ability to assess the validity, bias, and credibility of information to prevent misinformation (Yance et al., 2026). Digital Ethics, the use of technology based on the principles of morality, privacy, data security, and social responsibility (Hiele et al., 2026). As well as Digital Agency, the ability to utilize and create technology productively and benefit-oriented. The last dimension is increasingly important in the era of generative AI because learners are no longer only consumers of information, but also responsible co-creators of knowledge (Li et al., 2026). The integration of digital literacy, AI literacy, and ethical literacy is an important foundation for inclusive, socially valued, and sustainable learning (Cucci et al., 2025).

3.1.4. Digital Citizenship

The concept of digital citizenship integrates digital literacy with social responsibility, so that technological proficiency is not only related to operational capabilities, but also an understanding of the social, legal, ethical, and humanitarian consequences of digital activities. Contemporary studies show that digital literacy plays a role in shaping ethical behavior, responsible digital citizen participation, and digital well-being through inclusive and socially responsive practices (Mia et al., 2026). From an Islamic perspective, the concept is in line with the values of amanah, sidq, adl, rahmah, and maslahah, which places technology as a space for moral action that must be directed by intentions, ethical principles, and sharia maqasid. These values can be the basis for the development of curriculum, educational policies, and technology practices that are oriented towards social responsibility and digital ethics (Dulkiah et al., 2026).

Global literature increasingly emphasizes the importance of integrating Islamic values with ethical AI principles and digital literacy to build a concept of digital citizenship that is sensitive to the cultural diversity and needs of modern Muslim society (Suprayogo & Pandin, 2026). Thus, digital citizenship in Islamic education not only teaches the skills to use technology, but also forms a moral commitment based on trust, sidq, adl, rahmah, and maslahah. Technology is positioned as a means of responsible action and in line with sharia maqasid, so that it can support the formation of a digital life that is fair, ethical, inclusive, and oriented towards the benefit of the people (Ibrahim et al., 2024).

3.1.5. Transformative Islamic Education

Based on the synthesis of theories related to contemporary Islamic education, there is a need to change the pattern of knowledge transmission from mere "transmission" to "transformation", so that learning does not stop at the mere inheritance of information but achieves the formation of meaning and critical thinking capacity for students. Several modern studies emphasize the importance of shifting from mere knowledge transfer to knowledge construction carried out by students actively and

contextually within the framework of Islamic values (knowledge transfer → knowledge construction) (Arar et al., 2022). In addition, recent literature also highlights the compatibility between technology and ethics in Islamic education, where the use of technology needs to be accompanied by ethical responsibility and technological agents who play a moral role in learning practices (Tounsi, 2016). These three approaches are in line with the idea that Islamic education is not obliged to choose between maintaining Islamic values and accepting modern technology; however, this transformation requires a reconstruction of the orientation of the use of technology to be in harmony with Islamic values, not just the addition of technical tools (Soleimanieh, 2020).

The fifth transformation—moral instruction → moral habituation—affirms that modern Islamic education must lead to moral habituation through repetitive practices that are internalized in students' lives, so that Islamic ethical values grow into behavioral habits. Contemporary studies show that this ethical orientation can be driven through the continuous integration of moral learning content with responsible technological practices, so that technology is positioned not only as a tool, but as an agent that helps in the formation of consistent moral character and habits (Marzi, 2017). Thus, the main challenge is to Islamize the use of technology through values that are internalized in teaching and learning practices, rather than simply adding technology to religious curricula. These findings are consistent with international findings related to Islamic-based education leadership and policies that emphasize the integration of moral values into the adoption of educational technology in the context of Muslim schools (Gandolfi, 2003).

3.1.6. Theoretical Framework of Paradigm Reconstruction

Based on a synthesis of contemporary literature on adab, knowledge, digital literacy, character, and ethical actions, an AKDCA framework emerged that places Adab as a normative foundation in 21st-century learning. Adab plays a role in determining the use of technological knowledge and ethics, so that this normative foundation directs responsible curriculum design, evaluation, and digital learning (Sukisno et al., 2024). The concept of adab as a foothold for Islamic education ethics has been discussed in the policy framework of modern classroom curricula and practices (e.g. adab as a framework of learning behavior and culture) in various contemporary contexts (Şahin, 2018). AKDCA is assumed to balance spiritual values with students' cognitive abilities and critical abilities in the Digital Era ecosystem (Hadi et al., 2021).

Knowledge in AKDCA acts as an epistemic foundation that integrates religious, scientific, social, and digital knowledge so that students understand multidimensional reality (Umar et al., 2023). The literature shows that adab-based learning needs to be enriched with science literacy and media literacy to support information evaluation, digital literacy, and critical thinking skills for online content (Insyirah et al., 2023). The study of hadith and adab traditions strengthens the importance of mastery of knowledge ('ilm) as a condition for the integrity of knowledge that stands on ethical foundations, not just the accumulation of facts (Khawani et al., 2022).

In AKDCA, digital literacy plays a key role as a key competency for accessing, evaluating, producing, and communicating information ethically (Khoiriyah et al., 2023). Recent research emphasizes that digital literacy is needed to optimize learning, communication, and responsible content creation in a digital environment (e.g., social media, distance learning platforms). Furthermore, Character serves as an internal disposition that internalizes knowledge and skills into integrity, empathy, and moderation, while Action as actualization leads students to apply technology for learning, collaboration, and social problem solving (Yusuf & Kuswandi, 2023).

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Reconstruction from the Transmissive Paradigm to the Transformative Paradigm

The highly transmission-oriented paradigm of Islamic education tends to place teachers as the main source of knowledge and learners as recipients. However, the emergence of the internet, search engines, social media, and AI presents unlimited information that shifts these traditional roles, so that teachers are no longer the only source of information but remain relevant as epistemic mentors, examples of ethical behavior, learning designers, and ethical digital guides (Cremer et al., 2022). UNESCO emphasizes the teacher–AI–learner relationship as a new framework, demanding a redefinition of teacher competence to remain relevant.

In Islamic education, this transformation can be reconstructed as murabbi into digital murabbi,

where teachers guide not only religious understanding but also the assessment of online religious information, source verification, the avoidance of information extremism, the ethical use of AI, and the development of digital communication manners (Cremer et al., 2022). This role is aligned with digital literacy that combines information literacy, media literacy, and AI ethics, ensuring that teacher-AI-learners collaborate responsibly in the modern Islamic education ecosystem (Sions et al., 2022).

The statement regarding the sources and contexts of transformation is supported by literature that describes the shift in the role of teachers in the AI era as well as the need to redefine teacher competencies in relation to AI and students, especially in the context of Islamic education and digital ethics (Cremer et al., 2022).

3.2.2. Character Integration and Digital Literacy

One of the most important conceptual findings is that character and digital literacy should not be treated as two separate programs; digital literacy without character can produce individuals who are highly technologically competent but have the potential to abuse their abilities, while characters without digital literacy can produce individuals who are pious but less able to face complex digital environments (Zahro' et al., 2023). This relationship can be formulated as Digital competence $\times$ Moral character = Responsible digital agency, where digital competence is directed by character and character is realized through digital competence (Solehuddin et al., 2023).

Recent research on Islamic education shows trends in the integration of digital literacy, 21st century skills, and character. The integration of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration with digital literacy in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has been reported to strengthen students' ability to filter religious information and express Islamic values through digital media (Hunaidah & Ikmal, 2023). Empirically, this combination encourages more ethically responsible learning and is relevant to the digital demands of the 21st century (Rochmat et al., 2023).

3.2.3. Adab as the Foundation of Digital Ethics

The proposed innovative framework places adab as the main foundation in digital ethics, considering that modern digital literacy generally emphasizes responsible use, privacy, safety, and digital citizenship. While a number of studies show that the ethical dimension is already represented in the form of these practices, Islamic normative sources offer a deeper foundation through the concept of adab. The emphasis on adab allows for contextual integration of Islamic moral values in the use of technology, thereby building a culturally and religiously authentic digital ethical framework (Sagala et al., 2024).

Adab serves as a conceptual tool to answer five core questions about the use of technology: whether information is accurate (epistemic integrity), is it worth disseminating (responsibility), whether there is a detrimental impact (empathy/mercy), whether it is proportional use (self-control), and whether it brings benefits (maslahah). This analogy is supported by literature that emphasizes the importance of digital literacy accompanied by character building through value-based ethics, as well as the need to integrate the values of honesty, empathy, and social responsibility in the digital curriculum (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023).

The implication is that Islamic education has the potential to produce not only digitally literate students, but also digitally literate Muslims, namely digital literate epistemically, ethically, and religiously. This approach is consistent with studies that emphasize the need to integrate digital literacy, empathy literacy, and value-oriented learning in the era of digitalization Society 5.0/5.0. Thus, adab as a pillar of digital culture contributes to the formation of digital citizens who are responsible, empathetic, and adhere to the benefit of the ummah (Nursanti et al., 2023).

3.2.4. Reconstruction of the Islamic Education Curriculum

The first implication of the AKDCA paradigm is to guide fundamental changes to the curriculum, not just the addition of subjects. Recent research shows the need for transversal integration of digital literacy into the core curriculum, not as a separate module. In the context of Islamic Education, the new curriculum requires source verification, information criticism, and analysis of the context of verses/hadith as core competencies of students. This is in line with digital information literacy that is oriented towards the ethics of information dissemination and caution against the manipulation of digital religious texts (Rahmawati, 2023).

The context of Moral Beliefs, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History needs to build competencies such

as communication ethics, digital footprint, privacy, copyright, and ethical technology. Contemporary research emphasizes the importance of integrity, digital empathy, self-control, and the responsibility of using technology as part of human morality in the digital media ecosystem (Oktavia et al., 2023). In line with this, digital literacy is becoming a new epistemic way to study Islamic education through digital storytelling, historical narrative verification, and verified content production, not just additional material (Yahya et al., 2024).

3.2.5. Pedagogical Reconstruction

A paradigm shift in education requires a pedagogical transformation that is aligned with the demands of the digital age and value pluralism. In the digital Islamic context, critical literacy becomes a key framework for building learning that not only imitates information, but also tests, interprets, and ethically produces knowledge. Several international studies describe how Islamic pedagogical approaches since the digital age can combine the values of revelation with the practice of digital literacies, demonstrating the importance of frameworks that incorporate ethical reflection and social responsibility in the modern learning environment (Anthony & Lourdunathan, 2025). The emphasis on evaluation of sources, contexts, and biases is in line with his findings that critical digital literacy requires the involvement of teachers in guiding students through the process of verification, context verification, and morally responsible knowledge construction (A. Verma & Dhaigude, 2026). Elements such as Explore and Verify are also reflected in the literature that highlights the need to transform the role of students from mere consumers of information to ethical critical assessment agents and producers of knowledge (Suleymanova, 2026).

The Explore phase requires students to discover digital information online, driven by a digital literacy-based curriculum that combines analytical depth and contextual awareness. The Verify phase emphasizes the systematic evaluation of sources, validity, context, and bias, as recommended in bibliometric studies and literature reviews related to digital literacy and AI in higher education (Aiyetoro et al., 2024). The Reflect phase links information to Islamic values, in line with research on pedagogical wisdom and tarbiyah that emphasizes ethical reflection in community-based learning (Alkouatli et al., 2023). The Create phase encourages the production of digital content by learners, consistent with digital literacy that emphasizes production as part of continuous learning (Barjesteh et al., 2026). The Act stage encourages the application of learning outcomes in real action, in line with the values-based pedagogical framework that has been discussed in studies of Islamic education in various global contexts (Zarkasi et al., 2026). This model collectively transforms learners from consumers of information into critical evaluators and ethical producers of knowledge, as discussed in the literature on digital pedagogy, critical literacy, and Islamic values-based learning (A. Verma & Dhaigude, 2026).

3.2.6. AI and the Reconstruction of Islamic Education

Abstractual The proposed narrative implies the dual role of AI in the reconstruction of contemporary Islamic education: as a tool for personalizing learning, material production, text translation, information analysis, and learning support; but without an ethical framework, it has the potential to foster dependency, plagiarism, misinformation, and erode intellectual responsibility. In contrast to alarmistic views, the current literature emphasizes that AI implementation needs a normative and human-centered foundation to maintain human dignity and academic integrity (Sari & Safriadi, 2024). UNESCO emphasizes that human-centered mindset and AI ethics are two main competencies for teachers and learners, so AI curriculum needs to be designed with a focus on human-centred AI and ethics (Budiyono & Haerullah, 2024). This construction is in line with the AKDCA paradigm which places AI not as a threat, but as a tool that is under the control of educational goals, demanding a balance between technical efficiency and moral responsibility (Safitri, 2022).

The Conceptual Principle in the context of AKDCA emphasizes that AI can improve human cognition without replacing human conscience. The infusion of AI as a cognitive support should unravel the cognitive burden without shifting ethical considerations or moral deliberation capacity. In the realm of Islamic Education, AI has the potential to facilitate access to information, but ethical and moral decisions remain exclusive to humans. Thus, AI integration needs to underline digital ethical learning, strengthening media literacy, and adherence to sharia principles that guide human beings. This view is supported by international perspectives that emphasize the importance of a value framework, accountability, and teacher supervision in the digital transformation of Islamic education

(Sulistyo & Ismarti, 2022). In this context, AI does not replace the constituent of humanity, but rather forms a morally and intellectually responsible learning ecosystem (Budiyono & Haerullah, 2024).

3.2.7. Transformation of the Role of Teachers

The reconstruction of the educational paradigm requires the development of teacher competencies across five main domains: Spiritual, namely exemplary, integrity, and manners; Pedagogical which emphasizes digital learning design; Digital which includes technological literacy and artificial intelligence (AI); Epistemic which focuses on information verification and evaluation; and Ethical which includes digital citizenship and AI ethics. The UNESCO framework identifies 15 competencies in these five dimensions, including human-centred mindset, ethics of AI, AI foundations and applications, AI pedagogy, and AI for professional learning (Wiguna, 2023).

In the context of Islamic education, these five dimensions need to be complemented by Islamic ethical literacy, so that teachers are able to associate technological progress with manners, responsibility, justice, benefits, and respect for human dignity. Sharpening the integration of Islamic values into teacher competencies is important to maintain a balance between technological innovation and Islamic ethical principles. Contextually, this balance is supported by religion-based ethical literacy that strengthens the role of teachers as moral role models in the digital era (Kurniawan, 2021).

3.2.8. Reconstruction of the Assessment

Educational assessment now demands fundamental changes, especially when the old paradigm focuses on memorizing religious materials. The international literature of the last five years emphasizes a broader evaluation: Knowledge (mastery of concepts), Criticality (ability to evaluate information), Ethics (moral decision-making), Digital competence (mastery of technology), Character (consistency of behavior), and Action (real contribution). This transformation is in line with the digital literacy framework that emphasizes verification, context analysis, and social responsibility in religious learning (Alquaary et al., 2026).

An example of a social media-based assessment, in which students verify sources, compare arguments, identify biases, explain Islamic views, and produce responsible digital content, features its six-dimensional integration. This approach is in line with global digital literacy recommendations that highlight the importance of resource evaluation, information ethics, and constructive contribution (e.g. MIL literacy, fact verification, and project-based learning) rather than just memorizing definitions, according to recent findings (Chrostowski, 2026).

3.2.9. Implications for the Purpose of Islamic Education

The transformation of contemporary Islamic education goals requires a reformulation from the old paradigm of Knowing Islam to the reconstructive paradigm of Knowing → Understanding → Critical Evaluating → Internalizing → Creating → Acting. The findings of the international literature in the last 5 years confirm that students not only master the teachings, but also become knowledgeable, morally grounded, and socially responsible individuals, with strong digital literacy skills and critical reflection on information. This change is consistent with the 21st century literacy trend that emphasizes critical thinking and digital competence (Alquaary et al., 2026).

The reconstructive paradigm is aligned with 21st century literacy: computational thinking skills, AI literacy, collaboration, and lifelong learning. UNICEF emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, computational thinking, AI literacy, collaboration, and social-emotional skills as part of 21st century competency development, which is in line with the goals of modern Islamic education that integrates ethics, digital literacy, and continuous learning (Chrostowski, 2026). This reformulation maps the Islamic people who do not just know the teachings, but are able to make meaningful contributions at large (Alvarado-Cáceres et al., 2025).

3.2.10. Research Novelty

Paradigmatic novelty emerged by encouraging a shift from a technological approach as a complement to Islamic education to the construction of value-based Islamic education in a digital environment, a paradigm shift that has been thematic in many recent studies on technology-based Islamic education (Chrostowski, 2026). Now, the research focus emphasizes the placement of technology in the value structure of Islamic education, rather than just as a supporting tool. Recent research highlights that technology-based innovation needs to be presented through the framework of values of manners, ethics, and character, so that digital integration not only improves cognitive

outcomes, but also glorifies the spiritual and cultural dimensions (Ramdhani & Juanda, 2026). This concept is in line with the global discourse on humanistic-based education and AI ethics in religious contexts, which emphasizes paradigm transformation so that technology plays an enabler of Islamic values in modern learning (Chrostowski, 2026).

Theoretical novelty is realized through the Adab–Knowledge–Digital Literacy–Character–Action (AKDCA) conceptual framework that connects the five elements holistically, reconciling the fragmentation of themes that have been boxed into separate studies of adab, knowledge, digital literacy, character, and ethical actions in the digital realm (Ramdhani & Juanda, 2026). This kind of framework is in line with the demands of the Scopus literature which highlights the need for a more integrated theoretical design for digital literacy in the context of Islamic education and values-based digital pedagogy (Chrostowski, 2026). Pedagogically, AKDCA underlies the principles of Critical Islamic Digital Pedagogy, which emphasizes evaluation, verification, reflection, creation, and ethical action as core competencies in the digital learning ecosystem (Ramdhani & Juanda, 2026). Thus, the theoretical contribution of this research not only underlines the need to follow technological advances, but places technology within the framework of Islamic values for a more complete quality of education (Chrostowski, 2026).

4. CONCLUSION

Digital transformation and the development of artificial intelligence have created fundamental changes in the way students acquire, produce, evaluate, and disseminate knowledge. This condition shows that the Islamic education paradigm that is predominantly oriented towards knowledge transmission is no longer adequate to answer the complexity of the contemporary educational environment. Paradigm reconstruction needs to shift the orientation of Islamic education towards a transformative approach that integrates epistemological, spiritual, moral, social, and digital dimensions. In this paradigm, digital literacy is not understood as limited to the skill of using technology, but as a critical and ethical ability to manage information, communicate, produce knowledge, use AI, and make responsible decisions.

The main theoretical contribution of this research is the formulation of Adab–Knowledge–Digital Literacy–Character–Action (AKDCA) as a conceptual framework for the reconstruction of contemporary Islamic education. The model places adab as a normative foundation, knowledge as an epistemic foundation, digital literacy as a competence, character as a moral disposition, and actions as a form of value actualization. This framework also expands the conception of ta'dib by applying it to the digital environment: adab not only regulates human relationships with teachers, science, and society, but also human relationships with information, social media, algorithms, AI, and digital technology. Thus, Islamic education is directed to produce not only religiously knowledgeable individuals, but individuals who are able to translate Islamic knowledge into ethical actions in a digital environment.

Globally, this study confirms that the future of Islamic education does not have to be in an antagonistic position to technological modernity. Instead, Islamic education can play a role as a normative force that provides humanity's orientation to digital transformation. UNESCO and UNICEF both emphasize the importance of a human-centered, inclusive, ethical, critical, and responsible approach to the use of educational technology. In this perspective, the reconstruction of Islamic education offers a distinctive contribution through the integration of manners, character, digital literacy, and social responsibility. The AKDCA model can therefore serve as a conceptual basis for subsequent empirical research on curriculum development, learning design, teacher competence, digital character assessment, and AI education oriented towards human values and benefits.

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