

# THE URGENCY OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS CHARACTER BY ERA DIGITAL

Adek Kholijah Siregar<sup>1</sup>  
Munawirur Rahman<sup>2</sup>  
Elpi Parida Pane<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Tapanuli Selatan

<sup>2</sup>STAI Al-Mujtama Pamekasan

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Tapanuli Selatan

[kholijah@um-tapsel.ac.id](mailto:kholijah@um-tapsel.ac.id)

[munawirurrahman@gmail.com](mailto:munawirurrahman@gmail.com)

[elpi.parida@um-tapsel.ac.id](mailto:elpi.parida@um-tapsel.ac.id)

**Abstract:** *Islamic religious education is the most appropriate solution for strengthening the religious character of students in the digital era. Strengthening the religious character of students must be a top priority in Islamic religious education. This study uses a qualitative approach. This type of research is literature research. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the urgency of Islamic religious education in strengthening the religious character of students in the digital era. The results of this study are that Islamic religious education is very important in strengthening the character of students in the digital era. Therefore, there needs to be the right strategy in its implementation in order to produce students with noble character in the digital era. Islamic Religious Education has a strategic role in shaping the religious character of students in the midst of the challenges of the digital era. Through the integration of Islamic values with the wise use of technology, teachers can guide students to adhere to noble morals, strengthen faith, and develop spiritual skills in a fast-paced and open era. Strengthening religious character is not only carried out through classroom learning, but also through example, habituation, supervision of the use of digital media, and collaboration between schools, families, and the environment. Thus, Islamic Religious Education is an important foundation so that students are able to sort information, behave ethically in cyberspace, and make technology a means of goodness and religious self-development.*

**Keywords:** *Urgensi PAI, Penguatan Karakter Religius, Siswa, Era Digital*

## Introduction

The era of globalization is a challenge for human life. Civilization that has the opportunity to cause complex problems. Islamic religious education is important to foster and educate humans so that they can face this era of globalization as well as possible. Islamic religious education must be able to show its concern in facing this era of globalization so that the world of Islamic education does not experience destruction both in terms of morals, culture, identity, and Islamic educational values (Nasiri, 2020).

The rapid development of technology has caused education to undergo modernization, which is finally referred to as modern education. Currently, modern education has been applied in various educational institutions, both formal and non-formal. Modern education in question is education whose learning is carried out through learning models and learning strategies that are different from the previous era. The development of the digital era is a challenge for the world of

education and teachers today, including Islamic education. Teachers can't help but prepare themselves to face increasingly complex challenges. Especially when faced with the era of society 5.0 where the era of society can solve various challenges and social problems by utilizing various innovations born in the era of the industrial revolution, of course, the complexity of these challenges must be accompanied by adequate abilities possessed by teachers and all components of society (Solehudin, 2022).

The development of the times has changed human life and is one of the impacts arising from the presence of technology. Technology in a narrow interpretation can be interpreted as something that refers to objects that are used to facilitate human activities such as machines, tools or hardware. Technology helps humans when they want to have a social interaction to exchange news without having to wait a long time to send and get a reply. This is one of the positive impacts of technological developments. The continuous use of information technology by the community makes technology increasingly sophisticated along with the demands of the times. The development of information technology has resulted in an abundance of digital information resources, one example of which is gadgets (Agustina et al., 2022).

Character development is almost forgotten by educational developers. There is an inconsistency if the ability to use technology and others is sophisticated, but it eliminates character values in its use. Religious teachers have a great responsibility in Islamic education and character education in this 5.0 era. With the rapid advancement of technology, the role of teachers is an important part of education that is able to filter various problems that will come in the future. Therefore, Islamic religious education needs to be habituated so that it becomes a student's character (Bahiyah, 2022). Religious character serves to build children's awareness of the existence of God and his relationship with the creator (Nurgiansah, 2022).

## Literature Review

### 1. The Urgency of Islamic Religious Education

Islamic religious education is one of the contents that seeks students to move the development of students' morals in responding to values. In striving for value education, it must be done in a just school environment to realize the success of moral education. These values include cultural, formal juridical values, and religious values ('Azzalatifa et al., 2021).

Learning Islamic religious education is an effort to convey the teachings of Islam in the learning process. Through this activity, the teachings of Islam can reach students, not only doctrine but also accompanied by the formation of a critical attitude. The actor who plays a very important role is the teacher. Competence in various fields is a demand for PAI teachers today, because they show a tendency to be very adaptive to the latest developments, especially in students. Huge access to digital resources through smartphone ownership has triggered a spike in students' criticism. So that teachers are no longer the only source of learning information, but have been paired with digital sources. the learning climate of Islamic Religious Education is uncertain and uncondusive, the low readiness of PAI teachers in facing the acceleration of student development, and school policies have not been well formulated in the context of learning Islamic Religious Education (Sastriyani, 2018)

### 2. Strengthening Religious Character

Character education is education to shape a person's personality through ethical education, the results of which can be seen in a person's real actions, namely good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for the rights of others, hard work and so on. The theory of character education according to al-Ghozali is the cleansing of oneself from the nature of savagery, animalism, and demons, then filling it with divine qualities (rabbani). Character education in relation to animalism is the cleansing of oneself from the traits of lust, such as greed, bakhil,

riya', envy, malice, la'b (playfulness), and lahw (joking). Character education in relation to the nature of the devil is to abandon the qualities of the devil in the self such as annoying, deceitful, destructive, and profanity. When the soul is clean from the nature of savagery, animalism, and demons, then it is easy to develop divine qualities within oneself. The education of character in relation to the nature of rabbani is the formation of the soul with the attributes and names of Allah, such as knowledge, wisdom, and other qualities that are independent of the bondage of lust and anger (Zakariya, 2020).

The criteria for the realization of religious character can be known when religious values are embedded in students, so that they have faith and devotion to Allah SWT and have a good personality towards fellow humans, as well as other creatures created by Allah SWT (Ahsanul Khaq, 2019)

### 3. Digital Age

The digital era is a time where most humans at that time use digital systems in their daily lives. This digital system is more sophisticated than the previous system, namely the analog system. Analog systems produce artificial signals obtained from nature, so signal degradation often occurs resulting in less clear signals. In contrast, digital systems can eliminate interfering factors by transmitting the original signal into bits and making a sample of sound waves set it based on a certain speed so that the signal is clearer and does not experience a delay signal. Media in the digital era has the characteristics of being manipulable and networkable. The ability of media in this digital era makes it easier for people to receive information. The increasingly sophisticated digital technology today has made great changes to the world, the birth of various kinds of increasingly advanced digital technologies has emerged (Suhartono & Rahma Yulieta, 2019).

In a digital environment, students are exposed to various stimuli that can affect the formation of students' character. The main challenge involves how to teach honesty and responsibility in the midst of an abundant flow of information, as well as guide the younger generation to develop digital literacy that is balanced with life values. Other challenges include the development of cyberbullying behavior, social media addiction, and a lack of oversight in the use of technology. Collaborative efforts are needed between educators, parents, and related parties to create a balanced educational environment, where technology can be a tool that supports character development, not an obstacle to it. Therefore, innovative strategies and holistic approaches need to be implemented so that character education remains relevant and effective in the midst of dynamic changes in this digital era. The purpose of this research is to analyze the challenges of character education in the digital era and solutions to overcome them. The method used in this study is a pustka study. The results of this study show that with the right strategies, such as integrating character values in the digital curriculum and active parental involvement, character education in the digital age can be a solid foundation for positive personal development in an increasingly connected generation (Sagala et al., 2024).

In this ever-growing digital era, more and more students are slowly but surely moving towards digital online courses in almost every field. In addition to digital learning involving highly advanced technological media, digital learning is also capable of providing learners with a lot of flexibility, allowing them to learn anytime, anywhere at their own pace without worrying about schedules or scheduling. Students also have the freedom to choose what they learn and what they don't want to learn according to the needs of achieving the competencies they want to achieve or master (Sitompul, 2022).

PAI learning can utilize information technology to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education through the teaching and learning process in the classroom and outside the classroom

using various kinds of social media with all its consequences, including changes in the behavior of its users, both teachers and students. The opportunity to improve the quality of learning processes and outcomes in Islamic Religious Education is still very open in line with the current digital era, it is very possible to monitor the development of students' values and character. Another problem is that the Islamic Religious Education learning model requires interactive learning innovations that build humanistic intensive communication, arouse students' reasoning and critical power (Sumarsono, 2021).

### **Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach. This type of research is literature research. The data collection technique in this study is by way of documentation where the researcher collects information from journals and books related to the title of this research Islamic Religious Education, Strengthening Students' Religious Character, Digital Era. The researcher also examines previous research to strengthen the analysis in this study to be more accurate. The data sources are primary data sources in the form of scientific journals on Islamic Religious Education (PAI), research articles related to strengthening religious character, Studies on Islamic religious education in the digital era and digital literacy. Secondary data sources are Islamic education theory books, character and morals books, curriculum documents, and articles from credible scientific websites.

### **Result and Discussion**

The digital era is characterized by technology that can increase the speed and magnitude of knowledge turnover in the economy and society. The Digital Age can be considered as the development of an evolutionary system where the turnover of knowledge is not only high, but also increasingly beyond human control, making the period in which our lives are increasingly difficult to manage. The social implications of the Digital Era are huge and will increase as the function of technology becomes more knowledge-based. Understanding the digital age will help ensure that we build sustainable socio-economic relationships both with technology and with advanced knowledge aided by technology. The digital era has changed the way we live and work a lot by creating a knowledge-based society. As time goes by, the digital era will have the same impact on all areas of life, including education. The increasing availability of information technology and the Internet challenges our understanding of how education is organized and delivered, creating a new learning environment where isolated students are now connected to teachers from around the world. There is no denying that technology has drastically changed the world of education. Today, there are concerns about student behavior in the digital age, from cyberbullying to copyright infringement (Triyanto, 2020).

Nowadays, the complaints of parents, teachers, and people involved in the world of children, especially those who deal directly with children who are young and even teenagers, are difficult to control. Naughty, stubbornness, rudeness, or other things that can disturb public order and harm the child himself. In addition, the use of social media without restrictions and supervision, a poor friendship environment, and the effects of a permissive environment can also have an impact on adolescent moral crises. If this crisis is not handled appropriately, adolescents will consider this behavior as a justification and strategy carried out by PAI teachers in developing character education, namely: role model strategies, discipline enforcement, habituation, and integrity and internalization. The strategy carried out by PAI teachers in forming character is through integration, through daily activities which include: providing examples, habituation, reprimands, advice, and environmental conditioning that supports character education and through integration that is programmed in the form of: Qur'anic tahfidz activities, speeches, and zhuhur prayers and congregational ashar. The implication of this study is the importance of every

PAI teacher being an actor in character education in schools, manifested in systematic strategies and programs (Samrin, 2021).

### Conclusion

From this research, it can be concluded that Islamic religious education is very important in strengthening the character of students in the digital era. Therefore, there needs to be the right strategy in its implementation in order to produce students with noble character in the digital era. Islamic Religious Education has a strategic role in shaping the religious character of students in the midst of the challenges of the digital era. Through the integration of Islamic values with the wise use of technology, teachers can guide students to adhere to noble morals, strengthen faith, and develop spiritual skills in a fast-paced and open era. Strengthening religious character is not only carried out through classroom learning, but also through example, habituation, supervision of the use of digital media, and collaboration between schools, families, and the environment. Thus, Islamic Religious Education is an important foundation so that students are able to sort information, behave ethically in cyberspace, and make technology a means of goodness and religious self-development.

### References

- Agustina, N. I. M., Ismaya, E. A., & Pratiwi, I. A. (2022). Dampak Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Karakter Peduli Sosial Anak. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i2.2465>
- Ahsanulhaq, M. (2019). Membentuk Karakter Religius Peserta Didik Melalui Metode Pembiasaan. *Jurnal Prakarsa Paedagogia*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.24176/jpp.v2i1.4312>
- 'Azzalatifa, N., Mu'awanah, M., & Istighfaroh, M. (2021). Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Akhlak Karimah Siswa Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Di MTS Banat Kudus. *Al-Hikmah*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.30651/ah.v7i2.8156>
- Bahiyah, U. (2022). Urgensi Pendidikan Karakter dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Society 5.0: Studi Pendekatan Filosofis. *EDUKATIF: JURNAL ILMU PENDIDIKAN*, 4(6). <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v4i6.4179>
- Nasiri, N. (2020). Urgensi Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Globalisasi. *Jurnal Keislaman*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.54298/jk.v3i1.3117>
- Nurgiansah, T. H. (2022). Pendidikan Pancasila sebagai Upaya Membentuk Karakter Religius. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i4.3481>
- Rosyadi, I., & Cahyati, A. (2022). Relevansi Kurikulum 2013 Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa (Studi Hambatan dan Tantangan Guru PAI di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0). *PROGRESSA: Journal of Islamic Religious Instruction*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.32616/pgr.v6.2.424.83-104>
- Sagala, K., Naibaho, L., & Rantung, D. A. (2024). Tantangan Pendidikan karakter di era digital. *JURNAL KRIDATAMA SAINS DAN TEKNOLOGI*, 6(01). <https://doi.org/10.53863/kst.v6i01.1006>
- Samrin, S. (2021). Strategi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Mengembangkan Pendidikan Karakter Pada Peserta Didik. *Shautut Tarbiyah*, 27(1). <https://doi.org/10.31332/str.v27i1.2895>
- Sastriyani, S. (2018). Dinamika Pembelajaran PAI di Era Digital (Studi di MTsN Wawotobi, Kabupaten Konawe). *Shautut Tarbiyah*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.31332/str.v24i1.925>
- Sitompul, B. (2022). Kompetensi Guru dalam Pembelajaran di Era Digital. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v6i3.4823>

- Solehudin, M. (2022). URGENSI PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DI ERA DIGITAL. *Jurnal Teknologi Dan Bisnis*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.37087/jtb.v4i1.82>
- Suhartono, S., & Rahma Yulieta, N. (2019). PENDIDIKAN AKHLAK ANAK DI ERA DIGITAL. *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v1i2.9>
- Sumarsono, S. (2021). Peran Massive Open Online Courses dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam di era digital. *Ta'dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.32832/tadibuna.v10i1.3451>
- Triyanto, T. (2020). Peluang dan tantangan pendidikan karakter di era digital. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v17i2.35476>
- Zakariya, D. M. (2020). Teori Pendidikan Karakter Menurut Al-Ghozali. *TADARUS*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.30651/td.v9i1.5463>