

The Integration of the Theo-Anthropocentric Approach in the Digitalization of Islamic Religious Education Learning: A Study at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar

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ABSTRACT

The advancement of digital technology has transformed the educational landscape, including in Islamic Religious Education learning. While digitalization offers flexibility and ease of access, it also presents new challenges such as the risk of secularization, shallow spiritual understanding, and the loss of personal touch in education. This study aims to examine the integration of a theo-anthropocentric approach in the digitalization of Islamic Religious Education learning, by establishing divine values (theocentric) and human values (anthropocentric) as the main foundation to maintain the depth of Islamic values and character. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with field studies at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar. Data was collected through observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, as well as documentation of the digital learning media used. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify the integration of theocentric and anthropocentric values in digital learning practices. The findings indicate that Islamic Religious Education teachers have implemented digital learning strategies that emphasize the values of monotheism, ethics, and spiritual reflection. Teachers not only serve as facilitators of learning materials but also as murabbi who guide students' ethics in the digital space. This value integration is evident in educational videos containing spiritual messages, ethical discussion forums, and reflective assignments that foster students' self-awareness. and reflective assignments that foster students' self-awareness.

Keywords: Theo-Anthropocentric, Digitalization, Islamic Religious Education, character, development, students

1 Introduction

The transformation of digital technology has touched almost every aspect of human life, including the field of education. This change is marked by the emergence of various digital media and platforms that enable the teaching and learning process to take place in a flexible, interactive, and personalized manner [1]. The digitalization of Islamic Religious Education presents a great opportunity to deliver Islamic teachings in a more engaging, contextual, and far-reaching manner. Technology can serve as an effective medium to enrich learning with visual, audio, and multimedia content that facilitates students' understanding [2]. Nevertheless, the digitalization of Islamic Religious Education also presents several serious challenges. These include the tendency to reduce spiritual values, a lack of deep reflection on Islamic teachings, and the weakening of etiquette and ethical dimensions in the educational process [3]. Technology, which is meant to be a means of support, can instead shift the essence of education into merely the transfer of information. [4]. The interaction between teachers and students becomes impersonal, and religious understanding risks becoming superficial as it focuses only on cognitive aspects without spiritual depth. Therefore, a philosophical and pedagogical approach is needed to balance technological advancements with the depth of Islamic values.

The theo-anthropocentric approach is a relevant alternative to addressing these challenges. This

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approach emphasizes the importance of centering education on God (theocentric), while still humanizing students as learning subjects who possess spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions (anthropocentric) [4]. In this context, the digitalization of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) should be positioned as a means to strengthen faith, refine character, and instill etiquette through the wise use of technology. This article will explore the integration of the theo-anthropocentric approach in digital Islamic Religious Education learning based on a field study at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar.

This research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar, an Islamic-based secondary school that continues to adapt to technological advancements in the learning process. Like many other schools, this institution faces challenges in maintaining the depth of religious values amid the shift toward increasingly digital learning methods. The study focuses on the subjects of Al-Qur'an and Hadith, which play a central role in shaping students' religious understanding and attitudes. This study aims to understand how the theo-anthropocentric approach—an approach that emphasizes the balance between human relationships with God and with fellow beings—is implemented in the teaching of Al-Qur'an and Hadith in the digital era. Furthermore, this research explores the extent to which these values can be meaningfully instilled in students within an increasingly digitalized learning context.

2 Literature Review

Theo-Anthropocentrism in Islamic Education

The theo-anthropocentric approach in Islamic education has not been widely explored, but discussions on the importance of integrating values and technology in religious learning are gaining increasing attention. Hayati [5] emphasizes the need for Islamic education that maintains a balance between theological and humanistic dimensions. Education that focuses solely on cognitive aspects risks neglecting character development and students' spirituality. Meanwhile, Rahmawati [6] states that the process of internalizing values in religious education is insufficient if it relies solely on lecture or memorization methods. A dialogical and contextual approach is more effective in fostering deep understanding and reflective attitudes. In the digital context, Mardati [7] emphasizes that digital learning media should be used selectively and directed toward strengthening value comprehension, rather than merely presenting instant content.

The theo-anthropocentric theory in Islamic education is based on the understanding that humans have two primary relationships: with God and with fellow human beings. Ideal education is one that fosters awareness of both relationships in a balanced manner. In this context, the theo-anthropocentric approach not only teaches religious knowledge but also cultivates religious attitudes that reflect etiquette (*adab*) and social responsibility.

The Concept of Ta'dib

Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is a prominent thinker who introduced the concept of *ta'dib* as a fundamental idea. According to al-Attas, the primary objective of Islamic education is to nurture a virtuous individual—someone who embodies knowledge, morality, and a well-rounded spiritual foundation. The concept of *ta'dib* does not merely refer to etiquette but encompasses an awareness of one's place and role in the cosmic order, namely as a servant of Allah and a steward (*khalifah*) on Earth [8]. Al-Attas criticizes the modern education system for being disconnected from values and spirituality. He emphasizes that knowledge, when not framed by *adab* (ethics and proper conduct), leads to moral disorientation [9]. Therefore, education must integrate intellectual and ethical dimensions while fostering unity between reason, heart, and action. In the digital context, these principles remain relevant: technology should serve as a tool to support the *ta'dib* process, rather than replace the depth of human interaction in education.

This research framework is developed based on the premise that effective Islamic education must be holistic—not only teaching subject matter but also shaping well-rounded individuals. The theo-anthropocentric approach provides a framework for understanding how the educational process can maintain a balance between spiritual and social dimensions, especially in the digital era full of challenges. Within this framework, teachers are positioned as key agents of change. They do not merely deliver material but also guide students in the process of meaning-seeking and value internalization. Technology, in this regard, serves as a supporting tool that must be used critically and creatively. The relationship

between teachers, students, learning materials, and digital media is an essential component in building an educational process deeply rooted in Islamic values.

This study focuses on the practice of Al-Qur'an and Hadith learning at Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar High School, examining how the theo-anthropocentric approach is implemented in everyday classroom settings. Using Al-Attas' thoughts as the theoretical foundation, this research seeks to capture how values, technology, and human relationships can collaborate to shape a relevant and meaningful Islamic education in this digital era.

3 Research Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar. The research focuses on Al-Qur'an and Hadith learning in the digital era. Data is collected through non-active participatory observation [10], in-depth interviews, and documentation related to the Islamic Religious Education learning process [11]. Observations were conducted to study the use of digital media in teaching Al-Qur'an and Hadith, while interviews were held with Islamic Religious Education teachers and students. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification [12].

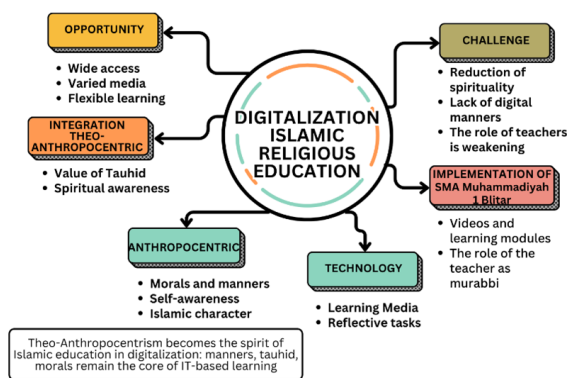
4 Results and Discussion

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar, it was found that the use of digital media in Al-Qur'an and Hadith learning has become part of teacher's pedagogical adaptation in the digital era. Islamic Religious Education teachers have begun utilizing technology such as slide presentations, educational videos, and online learning platforms like YouTube and WhatsApp to deliver material. However, an important finding of this study is the emerging tendency among teachers to implement theo-anthropocentric principles in Al-Qur'an and Hadith learning—although this approach has not yet been systematically applied.

Teachers have begun to implicitly apply theo-anthropocentric principles in their teaching practices. Although they do not explicitly use the term “theo-anthropocentric,” they strive to connect Al-Qur'an and Hadith values with students' real-life experiences, such as moral issues in social media, the wise use of gadgets, and the importance of maintaining digital communication ethics. This approach is more evident as a flowing value embedded in the way teachers manage classrooms, select learning materials, and build relationships with students, rather than as a formally designed teaching strategy.

Islamic Religious Education teachers at this school recognize the importance of balancing theological aspects (human relationship with God) and humanitarian aspects (human relationship with others) in education. This is reflected in the selection of Qur'anic verses and Hadith, which are not only discussed in terms of tajwid (rules of recitation) but also in relation to their ethical, social, and spiritual values. For instance, when teaching QS. Al-Hujurat verses 11–13, teachers do not merely explain the prohibition against mocking others but also connect it to the phenomenon of cyberbullying—an issue closely tied to students' daily lives.

Through interviews, PAI teachers explained that one of the main challenges is maintaining the integrity of religious teachings when packaged in digital formats. While digital media aids in visual presentation and information access, teachers must still be present as guiding figures who facilitate reflection and meaning-making. The relationship between teachers and students also reflects the theo-anthropocentric approach. Teachers do not position themselves as the sole source of knowledge but rather as spiritual and moral mentors. Classroom interactions are based on open dialogue, mutual respect, and an environment that supports students' personal growth.



Gambar 8. The Object of Theo-Anthropocentric Study at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar

These findings indicate that the theo-anthropocentric approach can be functionally implemented in digital learning, even though it has not been explicitly formulated in the curriculum or formally structured in teaching modules. This approach emphasizes the balance between transcendental relationships (human-God) and relational interactions (human-human), which, in the digital context, is highly relevant in countering the negative effects of instantaneous and ethically lacking information flows [13].

In line with Muhammad Naquib al-Attas’ thoughts, education should not be confined to mere information transfer but must instill *adab*—an awareness of one’s place and responsibility within the divine cosmos [14]. In this context, the teacher acts as a *murabbi*—not merely delivering knowledge but also shaping students’ souls and character.

Tabel 7. Implementation of Theo-Anthropocentric Approach

Aspects	Implementation
Selection of materials	Practical and relevant to contemporary issues faced by students
Selective use of digital media	Selectively choosing content that supports students’ understanding of spiritual and social values, rather than merely entertainment or visual appeal
Humanistic and transformative educational relationships	Creating a dialogical, empathetic learning atmosphere that builds trust

In its implementation, this approach is evident in three key aspects:

1. **Material selection** Teachers choose content that is not only normative-theological but also applicable and relevant to contemporary issues faced by students [15]. For example, discussions on Hadith about *amanah* (trustworthiness) are linked to the culture of copy-pasting assignments in the digital era.
2. **Selective use of digital media** Digital media is not the primary goal but rather a supporting tool to reinforce value delivery [16]. Teachers selectively choose content that supports students’ understanding of spiritual and social values, rather than merely providing entertainment or visual displays.
3. **Humanistic and transformative educational relationships** Teachers create a dialogical, empathetic learning atmosphere that fosters trust and meaningful engagement [17]. This is essential to ensure that the values conveyed do not merely enter students’ minds but also touch their hearts.

Thus, digitalization in religious education does not contradict Islamic principles if managed wisely. In fact, digitalization can serve as an effective medium in the *ta’dib* process, as long as teachers remain central figures in guiding the direction and values of learning

5 Conclusion

This study illustrates that the digitalization of Islamic Religious Education learning, particularly in the subjects of Al-Qur'an and Hadith at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Blitar, provides an opportunity for the application of the theo-anthropocentric approach in educational practices. This approach emphasizes the balance between human relationships with God and with others, while striving to embed spiritual and humanitarian values within the learning process in the digital era.

The findings indicate that although it has not been formally designed, the implementation of the theo-anthropocentric approach is beginning to manifest in teachers' daily practices—especially in material selection, selective use of digital media, and educational relationships between teachers and students. Educators attempt to connect Al-Qur'an and Hadith values to students' real-life contexts, including digital-era challenges such as social media ethics. This study highlights the critical role of teachers as value guides rather than mere information providers, as well as the necessity of learning strategies that integrate technology with the internalization of adab and spirituality. The findings show that although digitalization is often associated with instantaneous learning and shallow understanding, the teachers at this institution have made efforts to position technology as a supportive tool for strengthening the ta'dib process. Thus, the theo-anthropocentric approach emerges as a relevant and applicable paradigm for addressing the challenges of Islamic education in the digital transformation era.

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