



## Conceptual Article

# Strategies for Developing Religious Literacy in Islamic Education in the Digital Era

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### Abstract

This journal aimed to investigate strategies for developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era. The digital era presents both challenges and opportunities in the dissemination of information and communication. Islamic education must effectively utilize digital media to enhance religious understanding and knowledge. In this journal, the concept of religious literacy, the role of technology in religious education, and strategies that can be implemented to develop religious literacy in the digital era were discussed. This study was conducted using a qualitative study approach through a literature review, utilizing various sources such as books and academic literature as data sources. These sources were read, recorded, and analyzed, leading to the presentation of several strategies in the conclusion aimed at developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era.

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## INTRODUCTION

We are currently entering the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, where the digital industry has become a fundamental framework and reference in modern life. This revolution coincides with the era of disruption, bringing rapid changes and challenges. To navigate this shift, 'new literacy' is required in addition to traditional literacy. Traditional literacy, which includes reading and writing skills, remains essential as a foundation for active participation in society. New literacy includes data literacy, technology literacy, and human literacy. Data literacy involves the ability to read, analyze, and draw conclusions based on the required data and information (big data). Technology literacy refers to the ability to understand work processes, including how machine software technology operates and how to utilize technological products for optimal results. Human literacy focuses on the ability to communicate, collaborate, think critically, and be creative and innovative. In facing rapid innovation, education is no longer just about reading and writing skills (Saputri et al., 2017).

According to Brevik, literacy in education aims to recognize the need for information, understand when information is required, and process and utilize data effectively to address existing issues. This is crucial to ensure that the information used in examinations or explorations is applied effectively and adequately (Kurnia et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Baedowi stated that in a society filled with religious understanding, there are often shallow and superficial considerations that can lead to radical and immoral actions in the name of belief (Sari,

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2020)

The importance of Islamic religious education in shaping individual beliefs and religious understanding is becoming increasingly crucial. However, in the rapidly evolving digital era, new challenges arise in disseminating and strengthening religious comprehension. The advancement of technology and digital media has transformed how people interact, access information, and acquire knowledge. Therefore, Islamic religious education must adapt to these developments and implement appropriate strategies to enhance religious understanding in the digital age.

In the digital era, most of the younger generation are easily exposed to various social media platforms, websites, applications, and other digital content. While technology facilitates and accelerates access to information, it also poses risks, such as the spread of inaccurate religious doctrines, radicalism, and superficial understanding. Therefore, a well-designed strategy for developing religious literacy in Islamic education is essential to help students understand religion correctly, critically, and based on knowledge.

Moreover, the development of technology and digital media also presents new opportunities to strengthen Islamic religious education. Digital media can be used to deliver religious teachings in an interactive, engaging, and creative way. This allows easy access to religious texts, interpretations, sermons, and other resources that can enhance students' understanding of religion. Additionally, technology facilitates communication between teachers and students, enabling active participation in discussions and idea-sharing.

Therefore, a study on strategies for developing religious literacy in Islamic religious education in the digital age is crucial. It is essential to explore how technology and digital media can be effectively integrated into the Islamic education curriculum, how teachers can be engaged in utilizing technology effectively, and how parents can be involved in supporting religious understanding at home. Thus, the aim of this journal is to present strategies that can help foster a strong and sustainable religious understanding amid technological advancements and the digital era.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Development Strategy

The term 'strategy' originates from the Greek word '*strategos*', which means 'a set of maneuvers carried out by a general to defeat the enemy in battle' (John M Bryson 1999). In the Dutch-Indonesian dictionary, 'strategy' comes from a compound term meaning 'war tactics.' The term was initially used in a military context as an effort to achieve victory, requiring effective and precise tactics and maneuvers. However, strategy is also a series of continuously evolving actions based on an understanding of what customers may expect in the future (Husein Umar 2011). In other words, strategy almost always begins by considering future possibilities rather than just the current situation.

Meanwhile, development refers to educational efforts, both formal and non-formal, that are consciously, systematically, and responsibly carried out. The goal is to introduce, nurture, guide, and enhance a balanced, holistic, and harmonious personality foundation, along with knowledge and skills that align with an individual's talents, interests, and abilities. In preparation for the future, individuals must continuously improve and develop themselves while also considering others and their environment. This process aims to achieve dignity, quality, and optimal human potential, as well as foster independence (Iskandar Wiryokusumo 1982)

### Religious Literacy

Religious literacy is closely related to various crucial and strategic aspects in applying religious teachings in concrete ways within the social, political, and cultural life of modern society. This literacy involves an understanding of basic religious concepts and world religions, awareness and appreciation of differences in rituals, traditions, and religious expressions, as well as the ability to interpret religious cultural expressions across different contexts and historical periods. Additionally, it includes the application of diverse religious teachings in broader socio-political and cultural situations (Choirul Fuad Yusuf 2021).

Choirul Fuad Yusuf also asserts in his book "*Literasi Keagamaan Generasi Milenial Indonesia: Tantangan Masa Depan Bangsa*" that a society can be categorized as having a high level of religious literacy if it meets several criteria: (a) a strong awareness of religious diversity, including beliefs, rituals, knowledge, and expressions, as a social reality that must be acknowledged, (b) respect and appreciation for existing differences, and (c) the constructive implementation of religious values within a broader social context (Choirul Fuad Yusuf 2021).

Based on the above concept and focus of religious literacy, it is considered to play an important role in

shaping the social order in the modern era, which is full of social complexities. Religious literacy, both in a sociological and sociopolitical context, can contribute positively by: (a) developing multicultural awareness that acknowledges religious diversity as a social reality involving both similarities and differences, (b) reducing absolute truth claims, fanaticism, and religious-based social prejudice, (c) encouraging the expression and practice of religious teachings in a rational, objective, and tolerant manner, and (d) minimizing theological and social conflicts within society.

### **Islamic Education in the Digital Era**

Islam, as a universal religion, has fundamental concepts in education, with religious values that remain relevant across different places, times, and individuals. The applicability of these values is not only proven throughout history but can also be observed in current and future educational perspectives. One form of education that embodies these values is digital-based education, where factors such as place, time, and individual characteristics differ significantly from conventional education (Dr. Abu Yasid, LL.M 2004).

Although online education has become an essential part of the learning process in this digital era, conventional face-to-face education is still required to provide elaboration and validation of what students have learned through online media. Independent reading alone during the learning growth phase is not sufficient, as there is a potential for misunderstanding the intended meaning of the material. Therefore, guidance from teachers is necessary to clarify concepts and enhance students' understanding.

The goal of Islamic education, especially in the digital era, is to create a generation of Muslims with strong knowledge and skills so they can lead their lives in a safe, prosperous, and harmonious manner. The formulation of Islamic education is designed to train and guide every Muslim individual to develop expertise in Islamic knowledge, practice it in daily life, and acquire practical skills based on resource management to meet daily needs. Through this education, students are nurtured in both spiritual aspects, which closely related to faith and character, and physical aspects, which involve practical skills for earning a livelihood as a personal responsibility to fulfill their own basic needs, support their families, and assist those in need within the community.

### **METHOD**

This study utilized a literature study approach in the form of qualitative approach, where various sources such as books and literature served as data sources. These sources were then read, recorded, and analyzed. According to Zed (2014), a literature study involves activities such as collecting literature data, reading, taking notes, and processing research materials.

The researchers gathered various sources, including books and journals relevant to the topics of development strategies, religious literacy, and Islamic education in the digital era. In this study, the analytical technique used was content analysis, which is a scientific approach for analyzing the content of messages found in data or literature (Supadmini, Wijaya, & Larashanti, 2020)

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this digital era, religious literacy plays an essential role in Islamic education. Indonesia, as a nation rich in diversity, complexity, and pluralism, has a significant foundation for shaping strong social, cultural, and political relations to build a united and resilient country. Therefore, systematic efforts are needed to strengthen religious literacy through strategic development in Islamic education in Indonesia.

To achieve optimal effectiveness in enhancing religious literacy, various integrative approaches need to be developed. Regardless of the approach chosen and implemented, the principles of multiculturalism, which emphasize respect for differences, equality of human rights and obligations, non-discrimination, humanity, and exemplary behavior, must remain the primary focus and be carefully considered.

As the largest demographic group in Indonesia, millennials in today's digital era are seen as the generation that will carry on the nation's progress. From a demographic perspective, their presence can be considered a valuable asset for advancing the country's future, particularly through strengthening religious literacy.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the effort to enhance Islamic education in a sustainable digital era, the development of religious literacy plays a crucial role. This makes religious literacy a priority agenda that must be considered by all stakeholders involved in education. Therefore, this conclusion presents strategies aimed at developing

religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital age.

First, in developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era, this strategy emphasizes the importance of strengthening religious values such as harmony, peace, unity, brotherhood, compassion, and other universal values. Second, the development of religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era must be carried out in a holistic and comprehensive manner. This means involving all stakeholders, including the government, society, and families, through various approaches such as formal, non-formal, and family-based religious education. The approach used should be humane and non-indoctrinate. Third, in religious education, the focus of literacy should be directed towards moderate religious teachings. This means emphasizing shared universal values rather than reinforcing differences that could lead to conflict. Religious literacy competence should not only focus on cognitive understanding by increasing religious knowledge but should also aim to apply religious teachings in broader social life. Fourth, to develop religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era, a key strategy is to utilize youth religious organizations, both within and outside campuses, as functional platforms.

Beyond these four strategies, there are additional key points to consider. In facing the challenges of the digital era, it is important to develop effective strategies to enhance religious literacy in the context of Islamic education. The digital era has significantly changed how we access, process, and share information, which also impacts the religious domain.

A successful strategy for developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era should include the appropriate use of technology to provide easy access to authentic and reliable religious sources. Additionally, this strategy should adopt a holistic approach, incorporating interactive and inclusive teaching methods to strengthen students' understanding and internalization of religious teachings.

Islamic education in the digital era should also encourage the use of relevant educational platforms and applications to facilitate interactive and technology-based learning. This approach can increase student engagement and motivation in studying religious teachings while enriching their learning experiences. Furthermore, strategies for developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era must also consider digital security and ethical aspects. Students need to develop a strong awareness of responsible technology and social media usage, as well as an understanding of the risks of misinformation and online radicalization.

By implementing these development strategies, it is expected that religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era can effectively contribute to national development goals, including protecting all citizens, enhancing well-being, enriching national knowledge, and actively contributing to global peace.

## RECOMMENDATION

This study can be further developed in future studies that explore the same variable, namely the strategy for developing religious literacy in Islamic education in the digital era. Given the significant influence of digitalization on the development of religious literacy today, further study is encouraged to provide deeper insights and adaptations regarding religious literacy studies in Islamic education for the future. This study is expected to benefit all stakeholders involved in religious literacy, particularly in the digital era, offering valuable input and adjustments for future discussions and studies on religious literacy in Islamic education.

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