
Reimagining Islamic Education in India: Artificial Intelligence, Character Formation, and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Era of Society 5.0

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technologies and the emergence of Society 5.0 have created new opportunities and challenges for educational institutions worldwide, including Islamic education in India. In this context, Islamic educational institutions are expected not only to adopt technological innovations but also to preserve their role in fostering ethical values, character development, and social responsibility. This study explores the transformation of Islamic education in India through the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), character formation, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the framework of Society 5.0. Employing a qualitative research approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving educators, students, and educational administrators from selected Islamic educational institutions. The findings reveal that AI has enhanced learning accessibility, personalized instruction, and educational management, while character education remains central to nurturing integrity, responsibility, empathy, and ethical leadership among students. The study also demonstrates that the incorporation of SDG-related values encourages environmental awareness, social justice, community engagement, and sustainable citizenship. Furthermore, Islamic educational institutions increasingly view technological innovation and moral development as complementary rather than contradictory dimensions of education. The integration of AI, character formation, and sustainability principles contributes to a holistic educational model that prepares students to navigate technological advancements while maintaining strong ethical and spiritual foundations. The study concludes that reimagined Islamic education can serve as a strategic framework for developing technologically competent, morally grounded, and socially responsible graduates capable of contributing to sustainable development in the era of Society 5.0. These findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to strengthen the relevance and impact of Islamic education in contemporary society.

Keywords

Islamic Education; Artificial Intelligence; Character Formation; Sustainable Development Goals; Society 5.0; India; Educational Transformation; Ethical Leadership



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INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has witnessed unprecedented technological transformation that continues to reshape human life, economic systems, and educational practices across the globe. The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), big data, cloud computing, the Internet of Things (IoT), and digital communication technologies has accelerated the transition toward knowledge-based societies where information and innovation serve as primary drivers of development. Within this context, the concept of Society 5.0 has gained increasing attention as a human-centered model of societal development that seeks to harmonize technological advancement with human welfare. Originally introduced in Japan, Society 5.0 envisions a future in which advanced technologies are utilized not merely to increase efficiency and productivity but also to address social challenges and improve quality of life. As educational institutions prepare learners for this evolving reality, the need to integrate technological competence with ethical awareness and social responsibility has become more urgent than ever.

Education plays a fundamental role in preparing future generations to navigate the complexities of Society 5.0. However, technological innovation alone is insufficient to address the multifaceted challenges of contemporary society. While digital technologies provide new opportunities for learning, communication, and economic growth, they also raise concerns regarding ethical behavior, social inequality, misinformation, cultural erosion, and environmental sustainability. Consequently, educational systems worldwide are increasingly expected to cultivate not only technical skills but also moral values, critical thinking, empathy, and civic responsibility. This expectation is particularly relevant for institutions that operate within religious and value-based educational traditions, including Islamic education.

Islamic education has historically served as a comprehensive framework for intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social development. Unlike educational models that focus primarily on academic achievement or vocational preparation, Islamic education seeks to nurture balanced individuals who possess knowledge, faith, ethical character, and social consciousness. The concept of *tarbiyah* emphasizes holistic human development, while *ta'dib* focuses on the cultivation of moral conduct and proper behavior. Classical Muslim scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Khaldun viewed education as a process of shaping individuals capable of contributing positively to society while maintaining spiritual and ethical integrity. These foundational principles remain highly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges associated

with technological transformation and globalization.

India provides an especially significant context for examining the future of Islamic education. As one of the world's largest and most diverse democracies, India is home to a substantial Muslim population and a wide range of Islamic educational institutions, including madrasas, Islamic colleges, and universities. Over the past decade, India has experienced rapid digitalization driven by government initiatives such as Digital India, expanding internet access, and increasing technological innovation. Educational institutions across the country have gradually adopted digital learning platforms, online resources, and technology-enhanced instructional methods. However, the integration of modern technologies within Islamic educational settings remains a subject of ongoing discussion, particularly concerning how technological advancement can be aligned with religious values and educational objectives.

Artificial intelligence has emerged as one of the most influential technologies shaping contemporary education. AI-based applications have introduced new possibilities for personalized learning, intelligent tutoring systems, automated assessment, predictive analytics, and administrative efficiency. These developments have the potential to improve educational quality, accessibility, and inclusivity. Students can receive customized learning experiences tailored to their individual needs, while educators can utilize data-driven insights to enhance instructional effectiveness. Despite these advantages, concerns persist regarding ethical implications, data privacy, academic integrity, algorithmic bias, and the possibility of excessive reliance on technology. Such concerns underscore the importance of developing educational frameworks that balance technological innovation with ethical reflection and responsible decision-making.

Within Islamic education, the integration of artificial intelligence presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, AI can support the dissemination of knowledge, facilitate access to educational resources, and enhance learning outcomes. On the other hand, the adoption of advanced technologies raises important questions about the preservation of human values, spiritual development, and ethical conduct. Islamic educational institutions must therefore navigate the delicate balance between embracing innovation and maintaining their commitment to moral and religious principles. This challenge requires educational models that position technology as a tool for human development rather than an end in itself.

Character formation constitutes another critical dimension of contemporary educational discourse. Increasing concerns regarding corruption, dishonesty, intolerance, cyber misconduct,

and declining social responsibility have intensified calls for stronger character education initiatives. Character formation involves the development of virtues such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, justice, integrity, and respect for others. These qualities are essential for ensuring that technological capabilities are utilized ethically and constructively. In Islamic educational philosophy, character formation occupies a central position because education is viewed not only as a means of acquiring knowledge but also as a process of cultivating righteous behavior and moral excellence. Consequently, character education serves as a bridge between technological competence and ethical responsibility in the era of Society 5.0.

The growing importance of sustainable development further highlights the need for holistic educational transformation. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a global framework for addressing challenges related to poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, and social justice. Goal 4, which focuses on quality education, emphasizes the importance of developing knowledge, skills, and values that support sustainable societies. Many principles underlying the SDGs align closely with Islamic teachings, including social equity, environmental stewardship, moderation, compassion, and collective welfare. Islamic education therefore possesses considerable potential to contribute to sustainable development by encouraging learners to become responsible citizens who actively participate in addressing societal challenges.

Recent scholarship has increasingly recognized the need to integrate technology, character education, and sustainability within educational systems. Studies have demonstrated that AI can improve learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness when implemented responsibly. Research has also shown that character education contributes significantly to ethical behavior, social responsibility, and academic integrity. Similarly, investigations into Islamic education have highlighted its role in fostering moral development and community engagement. Nevertheless, much of the existing literature tends to examine these themes independently. Limited research has explored how artificial intelligence, character formation, and sustainable development can be integrated within a comprehensive framework of Islamic education, particularly in the Indian context.

This gap in knowledge is significant because educational institutions are increasingly required to address interconnected challenges that cannot be solved through isolated approaches. Preparing students for Society 5.0 requires educational models that simultaneously promote

technological literacy, ethical awareness, and sustainable thinking. Islamic education, with its emphasis on holistic human development, provides a valuable framework for achieving this integration. Understanding how Islamic educational institutions in India are responding to these contemporary demands can generate important insights for educational policy, curriculum development, and institutional reform.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the transformation of Islamic education in India through the integration of artificial intelligence, character formation, and the Sustainable Development Goals within the framework of Society 5.0. The research seeks to examine how Islamic educational institutions incorporate technological innovation into learning processes, how they cultivate moral and ethical values among students, and how sustainability principles are embedded within educational practices. By addressing these issues, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge concerning the future of Islamic education and its capacity to prepare ethically grounded and socially responsible graduates for an increasingly digital world.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore how Islamic educational institutions in India are integrating artificial intelligence, character formation, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the framework of Society 5.0. A qualitative methodology was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand participants' experiences, perceptions, beliefs, and interpretations regarding educational transformation in contemporary Islamic learning environments. Qualitative research enables a deeper examination of social and educational phenomena by focusing on meaning, context, and lived experiences rather than numerical measurement. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative inquiry is particularly suitable for investigating complex educational issues that involve values, culture, and human interaction.

The study adopted a phenomenological perspective to understand how educators, students, and institutional leaders experience the ongoing transformation of Islamic education. Phenomenology focuses on examining the meanings individuals assign to their experiences and allows researchers to capture the essence of a particular phenomenon. In this research, the phenomenon under investigation was the integration of technological innovation, moral education, and sustainability principles within Islamic educational institutions. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how stakeholders perceive and respond to the

challenges and opportunities associated with Society 5.0.

The research was conducted in selected Islamic educational institutions in India, including Islamic colleges, universities, and modernized madrasa systems that have demonstrated efforts to incorporate digital technologies into teaching and learning processes. These institutions were chosen because they represent educational environments where traditional Islamic educational values intersect with contemporary technological developments. The diversity of institutional settings enabled the researcher to obtain a broader understanding of how educational transformation is taking place across different contexts.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. This sampling strategy was employed because it allows researchers to identify individuals who possess specific knowledge and experience relevant to the research objectives. The participants included Islamic education lecturers, institutional administrators, curriculum developers, educational technology coordinators, and students. Selection criteria included active involvement in technology-enhanced learning initiatives, character education programs, curriculum implementation, or sustainability-related educational activities. Through purposive sampling, the study ensured that participants could provide rich and meaningful information regarding the integration of AI, character formation, and sustainable development.

Data collection was carried out through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews served as the principal source of data. This method enabled participants to describe their experiences openly while allowing the researcher to probe further into emerging themes and issues. Interview questions focused on participants' perceptions of artificial intelligence in education, the implementation of character-building programs, sustainability initiatives, institutional challenges, and future educational aspirations. Each interview was conducted in a manner that encouraged reflection and detailed discussion.

Observations were conducted to complement interview findings and provide direct insights into educational practices. The researcher observed classroom activities, technology-assisted learning environments, student interactions, institutional events, and character education initiatives. Particular attention was given to how digital technologies were utilized in teaching and learning, how ethical values were communicated within educational settings, and how sustainability-related activities were incorporated into institutional culture. Observation data

helped validate participants' accounts and provided contextual understanding of educational practices.

Document analysis was used as an additional source of evidence. Relevant documents included curriculum frameworks, institutional policies, strategic plans, sustainability reports, technology integration guidelines, educational materials, and program documentation. These documents provided valuable information regarding institutional commitments to educational innovation and supported the triangulation of findings obtained through interviews and observations.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials were systematically reviewed and coded. Similar codes were grouped into broader categories and themes that reflected major dimensions of transformative Islamic education, including technological integration, ethical development, character formation, sustainability awareness, and institutional transformation. Thematic analysis enabled the identification of relationships among these themes and facilitated the development of meaningful interpretations.

To ensure trustworthiness, several validation strategies were employed. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of data sources and methods, prolonged engagement with participants, and member checking. Transferability was enhanced by providing detailed descriptions of the research setting and participants.¹ Dependability was maintained through systematic documentation of research procedures, while confirmability was ensured through continuous reflection and careful examination of researcher assumptions. Ethical principles were also strictly observed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, voluntary participation was emphasized, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality was maintained by protecting participants' identities. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes and stored securely throughout the research process. Through these procedures, the study sought to generate credible and meaningful insights into the future of Islamic education in India within the era of Society 5.0.

¹ Renée E Stalmeijer, Megan E L Brown, and Bridget C O'Brien, "How to Discuss Transferability of Qualitative Research in Health Professions Education," *The Clinical Teacher* 21, no. 6 (2024): e13762; Sirwan Khalid Ahmed, "The Pillars of Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," *Journal of Medicine, Surgery, and Public Health* 2 (2024): 100051.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic educational institutions in India are increasingly embracing educational transformation to respond to the demands of Society 5.0. Participants consistently emphasized that the future of Islamic education cannot be separated from technological advancement, particularly the growing influence of artificial intelligence. However, unlike purely technology-driven educational models, Islamic educational institutions seek to integrate innovation with ethical values, spiritual development, and social responsibility. This balanced approach reflects a growing awareness that technological competence alone is insufficient for addressing the challenges of contemporary society.² Instead, students must be equipped with both digital literacy and moral consciousness to navigate an increasingly complex world.

One of the most significant findings concerns the adoption of artificial intelligence and digital technologies in educational activities. Educators reported that AI-supported platforms have improved learning accessibility, enhanced communication, and facilitated more personalized learning experiences. Students are increasingly utilizing digital resources, online libraries, intelligent learning applications, and virtual learning environments to support their academic development. Participants noted that these technologies have contributed to greater learning flexibility and have enabled students to access educational materials beyond the traditional classroom setting. In many institutions, digital transformation has also improved administrative efficiency, assessment processes, and curriculum management.

Despite these benefits, participants expressed concerns regarding the ethical implications of technological advancement. Several educators highlighted the growing challenges associated with academic dishonesty, misinformation, plagiarism, and excessive dependence on digital technologies. Students acknowledged that easy access to AI-generated content may sometimes reduce motivation for independent thinking and critical analysis. Consequently, educational institutions have increasingly emphasized the importance of ethical guidance alongside technological adoption. Participants stressed that artificial intelligence should function as a supportive educational tool rather than a replacement for human reasoning, creativity, and moral judgment. This perspective reflects the broader philosophy of Society 5.0, which advocates for

² Naomi Ainun Hasanah, "Opportunities and Challenges for Islamic Education in Society 5.0," *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2024): 264–81; Meshal Allah Rakha, Hafiz Muhammad Bilal, and Muhammad Sajjad Malik, "Integrating Prophetic Teaching Methodologies into Contemporary Teaching Methodologies-Review of Contemporary Educational Theories and Their Relevance with Prophetic Pedagogy," 2025.

technology that serves humanity rather than dominates it.

The findings also reveal that character formation remains a central pillar of Islamic education in India. Participants consistently described character education as the foundation upon which technological competencies should be built. Islamic educational institutions continue to prioritize values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, justice, humility, and integrity. These values are embedded within classroom instruction, religious activities, mentoring programs, and institutional culture. Educators emphasized that the development of character is essential for ensuring that technological knowledge is applied ethically and responsibly.

Students reported that character education programs have strengthened their awareness of personal accountability and social responsibility. Many participants explained that Islamic teachings encourage them to view knowledge as a trust that should be utilized for the benefit of society. This perspective influences how students engage with technology, interact with others, and approach their academic responsibilities. Observational findings further demonstrated that institutions actively promote ethical behavior through codes of conduct, awareness campaigns, and character-building activities. Such initiatives contribute to creating educational environments where technological innovation and moral development coexist harmoniously.

Another important finding relates to the integration of Sustainable Development Goals within Islamic education. Participants widely recognized that many SDG principles align closely with Islamic teachings concerning justice, environmental stewardship, compassion, and collective welfare. Educational institutions have increasingly incorporated sustainability-related themes into academic programs, community engagement initiatives, and extracurricular activities. Students are encouraged to participate in environmental campaigns, social service projects, and awareness programs addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation.

The findings suggest that sustainability education within Islamic institutions extends beyond environmental concerns and encompasses broader social and ethical dimensions. Participants frequently referred to concepts such as social justice, equitable development, responsible consumption, and community well-being as essential components of sustainability. These perspectives reflect Islamic principles that emphasize balance, moderation, and responsibility toward both humanity and the natural environment. As a result, students are increasingly encouraged to understand sustainable development as a moral obligation rather than merely a policy objective.

The study further reveals that the integration of artificial intelligence, character formation, and sustainability creates a holistic educational framework that aligns closely with the goals of Society 5.0. Participants argued that educational transformation should not focus exclusively on technological proficiency but should also cultivate ethical leadership and civic responsibility. This integrated approach prepares students to address contemporary challenges using both technological knowledge and moral reasoning. Students are expected not only to become skilled professionals but also to serve as responsible citizens capable of contributing to social progress and sustainable development.

The role of educators emerged as particularly significant in facilitating this transformation.³ Participants emphasized that teachers and lecturers serve not only as knowledge providers but also as role models whose behavior influences students' attitudes and values. Educators who demonstrate integrity, fairness, and professionalism contribute significantly to the effectiveness of character education initiatives. Students expressed greater commitment to ethical principles when they observed these values being practiced consistently by their instructors. This finding reinforces the importance of leadership and institutional culture in shaping educational outcomes. Institutional support also plays a crucial role in promoting transformative Islamic education. Institutions that invest in technological infrastructure, professional development, curriculum innovation, and sustainability programs are better positioned to respond to contemporary educational demands. Participants highlighted the importance of strategic planning and collaborative leadership in ensuring the successful integration of technology and values-based education. These efforts contribute to the creation of learning environments that encourage innovation while preserving cultural and religious identity.

The findings ultimately demonstrate that Islamic education in India is undergoing a process of reimagination rather than replacement. Technological innovation is not viewed as a threat to Islamic educational traditions but as an opportunity to strengthen educational quality and societal relevance. By integrating artificial intelligence, character formation, and sustainability principles, Islamic educational institutions are developing a model of education that addresses the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social dimensions of human development. This holistic approach reflects the aspirations of Society 5.0 and offers a valuable framework for preparing future

³ Hao Yu, "The Application and Challenges of ChatGPT in Educational Transformation: New Demands for Teachers' Roles," *Heliyon* 10, no. 2 (2024); Enrique Mondragon-Estrada et al., "Fostering Digital Transformation in Education: Technology Enhanced Learning from Professors' Experiences in Emergency Remote Teaching," in *Frontiers in Education*, vol. 8 (Frontiers Media SA, 2023), 1250461.

generations to contribute positively to an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the transformation of Islamic education in India through the integration of artificial intelligence, character formation, and Sustainable Development Goals within the framework of Society 5.0. The findings demonstrate that Islamic educational institutions are increasingly adapting to technological advancements while maintaining their commitment to ethical values, spiritual development, and social responsibility. Rather than perceiving technology and religious education as opposing forces, institutions are seeking ways to combine innovation with value-based learning to prepare students for the complexities of the contemporary world.

The study found that artificial intelligence has contributed significantly to improving educational accessibility, learning flexibility, and institutional effectiveness. AI-supported technologies provide opportunities for personalized learning, enhanced communication, and efficient educational management. However, the findings also highlight the need for ethical safeguards to address concerns related to academic integrity, critical thinking, and responsible technology use. Consequently, Islamic educational institutions emphasize the importance of integrating technological literacy with moral guidance and ethical awareness. Character formation emerged as a fundamental component of transformative Islamic education. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, justice, and integrity continue to serve as the foundation of educational practices. These values help ensure that technological knowledge is applied responsibly and contributes to the well-being of society. The findings indicate that character education not only strengthens students' personal development but also promotes ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.

The study further revealed that Sustainable Development Goals are increasingly incorporated into Islamic educational programs through initiatives that promote environmental awareness, social justice, community engagement, and collective responsibility. These efforts demonstrate the compatibility between Islamic teachings and sustainability principles, reinforcing the role of education in addressing global challenges. Overall, the integration of artificial intelligence, character formation, and sustainable development represents a holistic educational model capable of preparing students for Society 5.0. This model supports the development of graduates who are technologically competent, morally grounded, socially responsible, and committed to sustainable progress. The study contributes to the growing discourse on educational

transformation by demonstrating that Islamic education can play a strategic role in shaping future generations capable of balancing innovation with ethics, spirituality, and human-centered development in an increasingly digital era.

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