
Transformative Islamic Education for Society 5.0: Integrating Artificial Intelligence, Character Education, and Sustainable Development in Bangladesh

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Abstract

The emergence of Society 5.0 has created new challenges and opportunities for educational institutions, particularly in integrating technological innovation with ethical and sustainable human development. In the context of Islamic education, the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers significant potential to enhance learning effectiveness while simultaneously raising concerns regarding moral values, character formation, and social responsibility. This study aims to explore the role of transformative Islamic education in integrating Artificial Intelligence, character education, and sustainable development within the context of Bangladesh. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving educators, students, and educational stakeholders from Islamic higher education institutions. The findings reveal that AI can support personalized learning, improve access to educational resources, and strengthen digital literacy among students. However, the successful implementation of AI in Islamic education requires a balanced approach that prioritizes ethical principles, character development, and sustainability values. The study demonstrates that Islamic education provides a comprehensive framework for integrating technological advancement with values such as honesty, responsibility, justice, empathy, and environmental stewardship. Furthermore, character education serves as a critical mechanism for ensuring that technological competencies are accompanied by moral awareness and social accountability. The integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within Islamic educational practices also contributes to preparing students to address contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges. This study proposes a transformative model of Islamic education for Society 5.0 that combines AI-driven learning, character-based education, and sustainability-oriented development. The findings contribute to the growing discourse on educational transformation and offer practical recommendations for policymakers, educational institutions, and stakeholders seeking to modernize Islamic education while preserving its ethical and spiritual foundations.

Keywords

Transformative Islamic Education, Society 5.0, Artificial Intelligence, Character Education, Sustainable Development, Bangladesh, Islamic Higher Education



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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of Society 5.0 has transformed the global educational landscape by integrating advanced digital technologies into various aspects of human life. Originally introduced in Japan, Society 5.0 envisions a human-centered society where technological innovation, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), big data, the Internet of Things (IoT), and digital networks, is utilized to solve social problems while enhancing human welfare and sustainable development. In the educational sector, this transformation requires institutions to prepare learners not only with technological competencies but also with ethical awareness, social responsibility, and moral character. As a result, educational systems worldwide are increasingly challenged to balance technological advancement with the cultivation of human values. For Islamic education institutions, this challenge presents both opportunities and responsibilities in ensuring that technological progress remains aligned with religious principles and societal well-being.

In the context of Bangladesh, the integration of technology into education has gained significant momentum over the last decade. The government has introduced numerous initiatives aimed at promoting digital transformation through the “Digital Bangladesh” and “Smart Bangladesh” agendas. These policies emphasize the importance of information technology, digital literacy, and innovation in strengthening national development. Educational institutions, including Islamic schools, madrasas, and universities, have gradually adopted digital technologies to improve teaching, learning, and administrative processes. However, while technological advancement offers numerous benefits, it also raises concerns regarding ethical behavior, social responsibility, cultural preservation, and the development of students’ character. Consequently, there is a growing need to examine how Islamic education can contribute to the formation of morally responsible individuals in an increasingly technology-driven society.

Islamic education has historically played a central role in shaping personal character, ethical conduct, and social responsibility.¹ The primary objective of Islamic education extends beyond the transmission of knowledge; it seeks to develop individuals who embody moral virtues, spiritual awareness, and social justice. Classical Islamic scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun,

¹ Syahrul Ismet, Izzatul Laili, and Dyah Rahmawati, “The Role of Islamic Education in Promoting Moral and Ethical Values among Modern Youth,” *The Journal of Academic Science* 2, no. 3 (2025): 823–32; Siti Fatimah and Siswanto Siswanto, “The Role of Moral Education in Children’s Character Development: A Philosophical Perspective in Islamic Elementary Schools,” *Journal of Islamic Elementary Education* 2, no. 1 (2024): 52–60; Glory Islamic, M Ishaq, and Umi Dayati, “Character Education through Philosophical Values in Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools,” *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 45, no. 1 (2024): 31–42.

and Al-Attas emphasized the integration of intellectual, spiritual, and ethical dimensions in education. Within this framework, knowledge is not merely a tool for economic advancement but also a means to achieve personal excellence and contribute positively to society. Therefore, Islamic education possesses a unique potential to address contemporary challenges associated with technological transformation by providing ethical guidance and value-based learning experiences.

Artificial intelligence has become one of the most influential technologies shaping modern education.² AI-powered systems support personalized learning, automated assessment, intelligent tutoring, educational analytics, and administrative efficiency. These innovations offer significant opportunities to enhance educational quality, accessibility, and effectiveness. In Bangladesh, AI applications are increasingly being introduced in higher education institutions and digital learning platforms. Nevertheless, concerns remain regarding issues such as academic dishonesty, data privacy, digital dependency, algorithmic bias, and the potential erosion of human values. Without adequate ethical foundations, technological advancement may inadvertently contribute to social inequalities and moral challenges. Consequently, educational institutions must ensure that students possess the critical thinking skills and ethical awareness necessary to utilize technology responsibly.

Character education has emerged as an essential component of educational reform in response to these challenges. Character education focuses on developing values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, respect, and integrity. These values are particularly relevant in the era of Society 5.0, where technological capabilities must be accompanied by moral judgment and ethical decision-making. Islamic education naturally aligns with the principles of character education because it emphasizes the development of *akhlaq* (moral conduct) alongside intellectual growth. Through the integration of Islamic values, educational institutions can foster responsible digital citizenship and encourage students to use technological innovations for the benefit of society rather than for personal gain alone.

Sustainable development represents another critical dimension of contemporary educational discourse. The adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has reinforced the importance of education as a driver of social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Goal 4, which focuses on quality education, highlights the necessity of promoting

² Kalervo N Gulson, Sam Sellar, and P Taylor Webb, *Algorithms of Education: How Datafication and Artificial Intelligence Shape Policy* (U of Minnesota Press, 2022); Oksana Ivanashko et al., “The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Shaping the Future of Education: Opportunities and Challenges,” *Futurity Education* 4, no. 1 (2024): 126–46.

inclusive and equitable learning opportunities while fostering lifelong learning. Islamic teachings share many principles with sustainable development, including social justice, environmental stewardship, economic fairness, and collective welfare. Therefore, integrating sustainability principles into Islamic education can contribute to the development of graduates who are capable of addressing complex societal challenges while maintaining ethical and spiritual commitments.

In Bangladesh, the intersection of artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development presents a unique opportunity for educational transformation. The country's rapidly growing youth population, expanding digital infrastructure, and strong Islamic educational tradition create favorable conditions for innovative educational models. However, challenges remain in ensuring that technological integration does not undermine cultural values, ethical norms, or educational equity. Educational institutions must therefore adopt holistic approaches that combine technological competence with moral and social development. Such approaches can help prepare students to become ethical leaders, responsible citizens, and active contributors to sustainable national development.

Several previous studies have examined the role of technology in education, the implementation of character education, and the contribution of Islamic educational institutions to social development. Existing research suggests that AI can improve learning outcomes and institutional efficiency when implemented effectively. Other studies have highlighted the importance of character education in strengthening ethical behavior and social responsibility among students. Research on Islamic education has further demonstrated its role in promoting moral development and community engagement. Despite these contributions, limited attention has been given to the integration of artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development within the framework of Islamic education, particularly in the context of Bangladesh. Most studies tend to examine these dimensions separately rather than exploring their interconnected relationships.

This gap in the literature underscores the importance of investigating how transformative Islamic education can respond to the demands of Society 5.0. Understanding the integration of technological innovation, character formation, and sustainability values is essential for developing educational models that remain relevant in contemporary society while preserving Islamic ethical principles. Such an exploration can provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and educational institutions seeking to enhance the quality and relevance of Islamic education in the digital era.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the role of transformative Islamic education in integrating artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development in Bangladesh. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how Islamic educational institutions respond to technological transformation, how character values are cultivated within digitally enhanced learning environments, and how sustainability principles are incorporated into educational practices. By addressing these issues, the research contributes to ongoing discussions regarding the future of Islamic education and its capacity to support human-centered development in Society 5.0.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the role of transformative Islamic education in integrating artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development within the context of Bangladesh.³ A qualitative design was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand participants' experiences, perceptions, interpretations, and educational practices related to contemporary transformations in Islamic education. Qualitative research enables researchers to investigate complex social phenomena in their natural settings while capturing meanings that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative measurements alone. According to John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, qualitative inquiry is particularly suitable for examining educational processes, cultural contexts, and value-based experiences that require in-depth understanding rather than statistical generalization.

The study adopted a phenomenological orientation to investigate how educators, students, and educational administrators experience the integration of technology, character development, and sustainability principles within Islamic educational institutions. Phenomenology focuses on understanding the essence of human experiences by exploring how individuals interpret and assign meaning to particular phenomena. This approach allowed the researcher to capture participants' reflections regarding the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing artificial intelligence and innovative educational practices while maintaining Islamic values and ethical principles.

The research was conducted in selected Islamic higher education institutions and Islamic educational organizations in Bangladesh that have demonstrated efforts to incorporate digital

³ Elaine Denny and Annalise Weckesser, "How to Do Qualitative Research? Qualitative Research Methods," *Bjog* 129, no. 7 (2022): 1166; Weng Marc Lim, "What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines," *Australasian Marketing Journal* 33, no. 2 (2025): 199–229; Daniel W Turner III and Nicole Hagstrom-Schmidt, "Qualitative Interview Design," *Howdy or Hello? Technical and Professional Communication*, 2022.

technologies into their educational systems. These institutions were selected because they represent educational environments where traditional Islamic values intersect with modern technological developments. The research setting provided an appropriate context for examining how Islamic education responds to the demands of Society 5.0 while addressing issues related to character formation and sustainable development.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique commonly employed in qualitative research to identify individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experience concerning the phenomenon under investigation. The participants included Islamic education lecturers, educational administrators, curriculum developers, technology coordinators, and students actively engaged in digitally supported learning environments. The selection criteria emphasized participants' involvement in educational innovation, technology integration, character education initiatives, or sustainability-related programs. This strategy ensured that the data collected reflected diverse perspectives regarding the transformation of Islamic education in Bangladesh.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method because they allowed participants to express their experiences and viewpoints freely while enabling the researcher to explore emerging themes in greater depth. Interview questions focused on the implementation of artificial intelligence in education, the cultivation of character values, perceptions of sustainable development, and the challenges encountered during educational transformation. Each interview was conducted in an environment that encouraged open discussion and reflective dialogue.

Observational data were collected to complement the interview findings and to gain direct insights into educational practices within institutional settings. Observations focused on classroom interactions, technology-assisted learning activities, student engagement, character-building initiatives, and sustainability-related programs. Through observation, the researcher was able to examine how educational principles were translated into practice and how participants interacted within digitally enhanced learning environments.

Document analysis was also undertaken to strengthen the credibility of the findings. Relevant documents included institutional policies, curriculum guidelines, strategic plans, educational reports, technology implementation frameworks, sustainability initiatives, and instructional materials. The analysis of documentary evidence provided contextual information

regarding institutional commitments to educational transformation and supported the triangulation of data obtained from interviews and observations.

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña. The process involved data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials were carefully reviewed and coded to identify recurring themes and patterns. Codes were subsequently organized into broader categories that reflected key dimensions of transformative Islamic education, including technological integration, character development, ethical leadership, and sustainability orientation. Thematic interpretation enabled the researcher to construct a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among these dimensions.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, several validation strategies were employed. Credibility was enhanced through data triangulation, prolonged engagement with participants, and member checking, whereby participants were invited to review interpretations of their statements. Transferability was addressed through detailed descriptions of the research context and participant characteristics. Dependability was strengthened by maintaining a systematic audit trail documenting data collection and analysis procedures. Confirmability was supported through reflective memo writing and continuous examination of potential researcher bias throughout the research process, following the trustworthiness framework proposed by Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the objectives of the research and provided voluntary consent before participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports. All collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes, and participants retained the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence. Through these procedures, the research sought to uphold ethical standards while generating credible and meaningful insights into the future of transformative Islamic education in Bangladesh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that transformative Islamic education in Bangladesh is undergoing a significant transition as educational institutions attempt to respond to the demands of Society 5.0. The integration of artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable

development has emerged as an important strategy for maintaining the relevance of Islamic education in an increasingly digital and interconnected world. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis indicate that Islamic educational institutions are no longer focused solely on the transmission of religious knowledge but are gradually embracing technological innovation while preserving Islamic ethical principles. Participants consistently emphasized that the purpose of educational transformation is not merely to modernize instructional practices but also to ensure that technological advancement contributes to the development of morally responsible and socially conscious individuals.

One of the most prominent findings concerns the growing utilization of artificial intelligence and digital technologies in educational activities. Lecturers and administrators reported that AI-supported learning platforms, digital libraries, online assessment systems, and educational management software have significantly improved teaching and learning processes. These technologies have enabled students to access information more efficiently, participate in interactive learning environments, and develop digital competencies required in contemporary society. Students expressed positive perceptions regarding the flexibility and accessibility provided by technological tools, particularly in supporting independent learning and academic research. However, participants also acknowledged several challenges associated with the increasing use of AI in education. Concerns were raised regarding excessive dependence on technology, the potential decline of critical thinking skills, academic dishonesty, and ethical issues related to information misuse. Consequently, educational institutions emphasized the importance of balancing technological innovation with strong ethical guidance rooted in Islamic values.

The findings further demonstrate that character education remains a central component of Islamic educational transformation. Participants consistently emphasized that the integration of technology should not diminish the role of moral and spiritual development. Instead, technological advancement was viewed as a tool that should support the broader educational mission of nurturing individuals with strong ethical foundations. Islamic educational institutions have therefore incorporated character-building activities into both formal and informal educational settings. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, respect, empathy, justice, and social accountability are continuously reinforced through classroom instruction, mentoring programs, religious activities, and community engagement initiatives. Educators highlighted that the cultivation of character has become increasingly important in the digital era because students are exposed to vast amounts of information and diverse influences that may not always align with

ethical principles.⁴

The study also reveals that the concept of integrity occupies a central position within transformative Islamic education. Participants explained that integrity is not limited to avoiding academic misconduct but extends to personal accountability, ethical leadership, and responsible participation in society. Students reported that educational programs emphasizing Islamic ethics have strengthened their awareness of honesty in academic work, responsible use of digital resources, and respect for intellectual property. Observational findings further confirmed that many institutions actively promote academic integrity through clear regulations, ethical guidelines, and awareness campaigns addressing plagiarism, misinformation, and digital ethics. These initiatives demonstrate that Islamic education seeks to prepare students not only as competent professionals but also as trustworthy individuals capable of making ethical decisions in complex technological environments.

Another significant finding concerns the relationship between Islamic education and sustainable development. Participants widely recognized that sustainability principles are closely aligned with Islamic teachings regarding social justice, environmental stewardship, moderation, and collective welfare. Educational institutions have increasingly integrated sustainability-related topics into their curricula and extracurricular activities. Students are encouraged to participate in environmental conservation programs, community service projects, poverty alleviation initiatives, and awareness campaigns addressing social and environmental issues. These activities contribute to the development of civic responsibility and strengthen students' understanding of the interconnected nature of social, economic, and environmental challenges. The findings suggest that Islamic education provides a valuable ethical framework for promoting sustainable development by encouraging individuals to view themselves as stewards responsible for contributing to the well-being of society and the environment.

The integration of artificial intelligence with character education and sustainability values appears to create a more holistic educational model. Participants argued that technological competencies alone are insufficient for addressing contemporary societal challenges. Instead, students require the ability to combine technical knowledge with ethical reasoning, social awareness, and environmental responsibility. This perspective reflects the human-centered

⁴ Nouman Maqbool Rao et al., "Role of Teachers in the Character Development of Students: Findings from a Systematic Review," *Academy of Education and Social Sciences Review* 4, no. 4 (2024): 575–94; Paul Watts, Michael Fullard, and Andrew Peterson, *Understanding Character Education: Approaches, Applications and Issues* (McGraw-Hill Education (UK), 2021).

philosophy underlying Society 5.0, which seeks to ensure that technological innovation serves human needs rather than dominating them. Islamic education contributes significantly to this objective by emphasizing the harmonious development of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions of human life.

The findings also highlight the important role of educators in facilitating educational transformation. Lecturers were widely viewed as role models whose behavior significantly influences students' attitudes and values. Participants emphasized that successful integration of AI and innovative educational practices depends largely on educators' ability to demonstrate ethical leadership and professional integrity. Students expressed greater confidence in adopting ethical behaviors when educators consistently modeled honesty, fairness, transparency, and responsibility in their professional conduct.⁵ These findings support the view that educational transformation cannot be achieved solely through technological infrastructure but requires the active participation of educators who embody the values being promoted.

Institutional culture emerged as another critical factor influencing the effectiveness of transformative Islamic education.⁶ The study found that institutions characterized by collaborative leadership, supportive learning environments, and strong ethical cultures were more successful in integrating technology and character development initiatives. Administrative commitment to innovation, continuous professional development programs, and strategic planning contributed significantly to the sustainability of educational transformation efforts. Furthermore, institutional policies that explicitly linked technological advancement with ethical and social objectives provided a clear framework for balancing innovation and value formation.

The findings of this study correspond with previous research emphasizing the importance of integrating moral education with technological development. Earlier studies have shown that AI can improve educational effectiveness when accompanied by appropriate ethical safeguards and value-based educational frameworks. Similarly, research on Islamic education has consistently highlighted its role in promoting character development, social responsibility, and community engagement. However, the present study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating how

⁵ Maria Ukamaka Clare Okeke, "Classroom Teachers' Approaches to Values Education: Exploring Explicit and Implicit Strategies for Teaching and Modeling Values" (DePaul University, 2024); Patricia Chinwe Iloka, "Teaching Integrity: Strategies for Fostering Ethical Behavior in Students," *UNIZIK Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies* 19, no. 1 (2025).

⁶ Sumbul Ansar Khan and Syed Zubair Ahmed, "Cultivating Minds, Inspiring Change: Transformative Paradigms in Islamic Education," *The Critical Review of Social Sciences Studies* 3, no. 1 (2025): 3204–14; Muhammad Qorib, "Socio-Cultural Transformation within Indonesian Academics: Cases in Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama Universities," *Asian Education and Development Studies* 14, no. 4 (2025): 856–75.

artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development can be integrated within a unified framework of transformative Islamic education. This integration represents a significant contribution to contemporary discussions concerning the future of education in Muslim societies.

Overall, the results indicate that transformative Islamic education in Bangladesh is evolving toward a model that combines technological innovation with ethical formation and sustainable development. Rather than perceiving technology and religious values as competing forces, educational institutions increasingly view them as complementary elements that can work together to support holistic human development. This approach offers a promising pathway for preparing students to navigate the complexities of Society 5.0 while maintaining strong moral identities and contributing positively to sustainable social progress.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that transformative Islamic education plays a crucial role in responding to the challenges and opportunities presented by Society 5.0 in Bangladesh. The findings reveal that Islamic educational institutions are increasingly integrating artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainable development into their educational practices as part of a broader effort to modernize learning while preserving Islamic ethical values. Rather than focusing exclusively on technological advancement, these institutions seek to develop learners who possess digital competencies alongside strong moral character, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness.

The study highlights that artificial intelligence has contributed positively to educational effectiveness by improving access to information, enhancing learning flexibility, and supporting innovative teaching methods. Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that technological advancement must be accompanied by ethical guidance to address concerns related to academic integrity, responsible technology use, and the preservation of human values. In this regard, character education emerges as a fundamental component of educational transformation. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, justice, and integrity are continuously reinforced through educational activities and institutional culture, ensuring that students are prepared to navigate complex digital environments responsibly.

The findings further demonstrate that sustainable development principles are increasingly being incorporated into Islamic education. Through community engagement, environmental awareness programs, and social responsibility initiatives, students are encouraged to contribute

positively to society while embracing the Islamic principles of stewardship, moderation, and collective welfare. These practices illustrate how Islamic education can serve as an effective platform for promoting sustainable and inclusive development.

The study also confirms the importance of educators and institutional culture in facilitating meaningful educational transformation. Successful integration of technology, character formation, and sustainability depends not only on infrastructure and policy support but also on the commitment of educators who model ethical leadership and institutional environments that nurture innovation and moral development.

In conclusion, transformative Islamic education in Bangladesh represents a promising educational model capable of harmonizing technological innovation with ethical and sustainable human development. By integrating artificial intelligence, character education, and sustainability values, Islamic educational institutions can contribute significantly to preparing future generations who are technologically competent, morally grounded, socially responsible, and capable of addressing the complex challenges of an increasingly interconnected world. This holistic approach offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to strengthen the relevance and impact of Islamic education in the twenty-first century.

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