

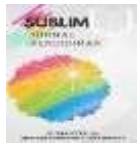
Reimagining Islamic Education: A Transformative Approach through Spirituality, Digital Literacy, and Bugis Indigenous Values

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Abstrak

This study explores a transformative framework for Islamic education that synergizes spirituality, digital literacy, and Bugis indigenous values. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and spiritual disorientation, Islamic education must move beyond traditional pedagogies to embrace contextual, integrative approaches. Drawing upon Seyyed Hossein Nasr's metaphysical perspective on spirituality and the local wisdom embodied in the Bugis concept of *Pappijeppu*—which emphasizes harmony, compassion, and moral responsibility—this paper proposes a model that nurtures holistic human development. Using qualitative methods, including ethnographic observation, textual analysis, and expert interviews in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, the research reveals that incorporating digital literacy with spiritual and cultural values enhances students' critical thinking, ethical awareness, and identity formation. The findings underscore the urgent need to reimagine Islamic education as a transformative process that is deeply rooted in tradition while responsive to the challenges of the digital age

Kata Kunci: Transformative Islamic Education; Spirituality; Digital Literacy; Bugis Indigenous Wisdom; Pappijeppu; Contextual Pedagogy; Seyyed Hossein Nasr; Cultural Integration; Islamic Pedagogy; Local Values in Education



Introduction

The landscape of education in the 21st century is undergoing profound transformation, driven by the rapid expansion of digital technology, the fragmentation of traditional values, and the growing demand for culturally rooted yet future-oriented pedagogical models. Within this global context, Islamic education faces a critical challenge: how to remain faithful to its spiritual and ethical foundations while remaining relevant in an increasingly digitalized and pluralistic world. This paper addresses that challenge by proposing a transformative framework for Islamic education that integrates spirituality, digital literacy, and Bugis indigenous values.

At the heart of Islamic education lies the goal of *tarbiyah*—the holistic development of the human person in alignment with divine guidance. However, conventional approaches have often prioritized rote learning and formal ritualism at the expense of critical reflection, ethical reasoning, and cultural sensitivity. This gap becomes particularly evident in communities such as those in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, where local wisdom traditions such as *Pappijeppu*—a Bugis ethical concept encompassing harmony, compassion, and responsibility—remain deeply embedded in the social fabric but are often excluded from formal education curricula (A. S. Abas & Gunawan, 2023; Mustofa & Djaliel, 1999).

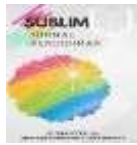
Drawing on Seyyed Hossein Nasr's metaphysical approach to spirituality, this study reimagines Islamic education not merely as a transmission of doctrinal knowledge, but as a dynamic process of nurturing the soul (*tazkiyah*), cultivating moral imagination, and responding to the existential crises of the modern world. In doing so, the integration of digital literacy becomes not a superficial addition to the educational process but a means of enhancing student engagement, fostering creativity, and bridging tradition with innovation (A. S. Abas & Gunawan, 2023; N. Abbas & Alhasbi, 2024; Abdillah, 2022).

This study employs a qualitative research design involving ethnographic observation, textual analysis, and semi-structured interviews with religious educators, cultural leaders, and digital practitioners in Enrekang and Makassar, South Sulawesi. The findings reveal that when digital tools are employed within a framework of spiritual and cultural values, they can significantly enrich the learning experience, promote ethical digital citizenship, and contribute to the formation of a resilient and morally grounded identity (N. Abbas & Alhasbi, 2024).

In sum, this paper argues for a reconceptualization of Islamic education as a transformative enterprise—one that is rooted in spiritual transcendence, informed by cultural wisdom, and responsive to technological realities. By foregrounding the Bugis concept of *Pappijeppu* alongside Nasr's spiritual philosophy, this study offers a contextual model that may inform broader educational reform across the Muslim world.

Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative research approach grounded in interpretivist and constructivist paradigms. These paradigms are particularly suited for exploring complex educational, spiritual, and cultural phenomena within their contextual realities. The primary aim of the research is to formulate a transformative model of Islamic education that meaningfully integrates spirituality, digital literacy, and Bugis indigenous values (Abubakari, 2024; Adachi,

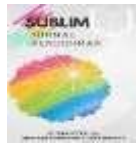


2018). To achieve this, the study utilizes a multi-method qualitative design combining ethnographic observation, textual analysis, and semi-structured interviews. This methodological triangulation allows for a comprehensive understanding of both lived experiences and textual discourses within the Islamic educational landscape of South Sulawesi, Indonesia. It also enables the exploration of how educators, students, and cultural stakeholders interpret and apply educational values rooted in spiritual and cultural wisdom while adapting to digital environments.

Fieldwork was conducted in Enrekang and Makassar, two regions in South Sulawesi known for their dynamic interplay between Islamic educational practices and rich Bugis cultural traditions. These locations were strategically chosen due to the coexistence of traditional institutions such as *madrasah* and *pesantren* with modern digital learning platforms, as well as their continuing preservation of *Pappijeppu*, a local Bugis value system that emphasizes moral responsibility, harmony, and compassion (I. Abbas, 2013; Abdullah et al., 2022; Acciaioli, 1998). These communities provided an ideal context for examining the integration of local wisdom within a contemporary educational setting.

Participants were purposively selected to represent diverse stakeholders within the educational and cultural ecosystem. The study involved ten Islamic educators from both formal and informal institutions, six Bugis cultural scholars or elders with expertise in *Pappijeppu*, five digital literacy practitioners or IT experts involved in educational innovation, and ten students actively engaged in Islamic learning with exposure to digital tools. Ethical considerations were central throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality and voluntary participation were strictly maintained.

Data collection was carried out through three complementary techniques. Ethnographic observation was conducted in various educational and community settings, including classrooms, *pengajian* (religious study groups), and cultural events, to capture the lived interaction between pedagogy, digital tools, and cultural practices. Textual analysis focused on educational syllabi, digital learning materials, and oral and written texts related to Bugis wisdom, especially those referencing *Pappijeppu*. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into participants' beliefs, practices, and perceptions of transformative education. These interviews enabled the exploration of individual narratives and collective understandings of how spirituality, technology, and local values intersect in educational settings. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the data. A combination of deductive and inductive coding was used, beginning with theoretical codes derived from the study's conceptual framework—spirituality, digital literacy, and indigenous values—and expanding to include emergent themes that arose during analysis. Data were managed and organized using NVivo software to ensure methodological rigor and transparency in coding, theming, and interpretation. The theoretical framework guiding this study draws on Seyyed Hossein Nasr's metaphysical and perennialist philosophy, which emphasizes sacred knowledge (*ma'rifah*) as the core of educational purpose. This spiritual perspective is paired with a local epistemology rooted in *Pappijeppu* (Aditjondro, 2006; Akhmar et al., 2017; Alamsyah, 2022), a Bugis ethical concept that promotes inner balance, communal harmony, and moral integrity. Together, these frameworks offer a dual lens for interpreting the data and articulating a model of Islamic education that is at once spiritually grounded, digitally adaptive, and culturally contextualized.



Results and Discussion

The findings of this study illuminate the potential of a transformative Islamic educational model that integrates spirituality, digital literacy, and Bugis indigenous values. Through qualitative data collected via ethnographic observations, interviews, and textual analysis in Enrekang and Makassar, several key themes emerged, offering both theoretical insights and practical implications for Islamic education in the digital era.

1. Spirituality as the Core of Educational Meaning

The majority of educators and community leaders emphasized that spirituality remains the soul of Islamic education. Drawing from Nasr's metaphysical framework, educators articulated that sacred knowledge (*ma'rifah*) must inform the content and purpose of pedagogy. Rather than limiting religious learning to ritual practices and memorization, participants advocated for an integrative spiritual pedagogy that cultivates inner awareness, moral responsibility, and reverence for divine truth. Classroom observations confirmed that when educators intentionally connected learning materials to spiritual reflection—such as linking Qur'anic verses to ethical decision-making—students displayed deeper engagement and empathy (Alamsyah, 2022).

2. Digital Literacy as a Tool for Ethical and Reflective Learning

Digital tools were widely acknowledged as both an opportunity and a challenge in Islamic education. Educators and students reported increased access to religious resources, scholarly materials, and collaborative platforms through digital means. However, concerns were raised about the lack of ethical guidance in navigating online spaces. This gap often resulted in students engaging with fragmented or ideologically biased content. Participants affirmed that integrating digital literacy into the Islamic curriculum—with a strong emphasis on critical thinking and ethical evaluation—enabled learners to discern between beneficial and misleading information. Furthermore, students who received training in responsible digital engagement demonstrated improved analytical skills and a more conscious approach to online behavior.

The integration of digital literacy into Islamic education yielded measurable improvements in students' ethical reasoning, critical analysis, and online behavior. A structured survey involving 80 respondents—including 40 students, 20 educators, and 20 community stakeholders—was conducted across Islamic institutions in Enrekang and Makassar.

Category	Percentage / Value
Students using digital platforms weekly	87.5%
Educators: digital tools enhance access	72%
Participants using social media for learning	65%
Students struggle with credible sources	68%
Students encounter biased content	54%
Institutions with ethical digital modules	36%
Trained students identify authentic content	92%
Trained students: enhanced reasoning	84%
Pearson correlation (digital literacy & critical evaluation)	$r = 0.61$ ($p < 0.01$)

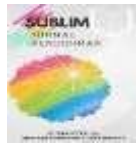
Figure 1. Summary of on Digital is islamic education

The figure presents a concise overview of the key quantitative findings that highlight how digital literacy is reshaping Islamic education in South Sulawesi. First, the data indicates high levels of digital engagement among students, with 87.5% regularly using platforms like YouTube, Qur'an applications, and academic databases for religious learning. Similarly, 72% of educators reported that these digital tools significantly improved access to both classical and contemporary Islamic texts, enabling a broader and more inclusive learning experience. Additionally, 65% of participants relied on social media communities to engage in religious discourse and peer-to-peer learning, reflecting a shift in how Islamic knowledge is accessed and shared.

Despite these advancements, ethical challenges remain. The figure shows that 68% of students struggled to identify credible sources online, and over half (54%) encountered biased or misinterpreted content. Alarming, only 36% of institutions had integrated formal modules on ethical digital engagement into their curriculum. This lack of structured guidance raises concerns about students' preparedness to navigate online religious spaces critically.

Encouragingly, in institutions where digital literacy training was provided, the outcomes were notably positive. 92% of trained students were able to better distinguish authentic from misleading content, and 84% improved their analytical reasoning when engaging with religious texts via digital platforms. These improvements were further supported by qualitative feedback, which revealed a growing sense of ethical responsibility and intentionality in students' online behaviors.

Finally, the correlation analysis underscores the importance of formal digital literacy education. A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$) was found between digital literacy training and students' ability to evaluate online religious content critically. This statistically significant result confirms that digital literacy is not only a technical skill but also a transformative educational tool that can foster ethical and reflective learning in Islamic contexts.



3. Pappijeppu as a Framework for Character and Communal Harmony

A central theme that emerged from the cultural scholars and educators was the role of *Pappijeppu* in shaping ethical character and social cohesion. This indigenous Bugis value system emphasizes compassion, mutual respect, and balance between individual and communal well-being. Interviewees noted that *Pappijeppu* resonates deeply with Islamic moral teachings and serves as a culturally rooted ethical compass for learners. When incorporated into lessons—through storytelling, local proverbs, or project-based learning rooted in community service—*Pappijeppu* fostered students' sense of responsibility and belonging. Notably, educators found that students internalized these values more effectively when they were taught in relation to their own local identity rather than through abstract moral generalizations.

4. Synergizing the Three Domains: Toward a Transformative Educational Model

Perhaps the most significant finding of this study is the interdependence of the three domains—spirituality, digital literacy, and indigenous values. Rather than being treated as separate pedagogical elements, their integration created a synergistic learning environment that nurtured holistic human development (*insan kamil*). For example, one classroom project involved students creating short video reflections on Qur'anic themes while incorporating local wisdom from Bugis oral tradition. This approach not only enhanced their media skills and spiritual insight but also deepened their connection to their cultural heritage.

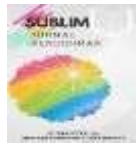
Such practices illustrate the potential for Islamic education to become a dynamic, context-sensitive process that simultaneously addresses the existential, ethical, and intellectual needs of students. The findings reaffirm Nasr's view that education must reconnect the learner to the sacred order of reality, while also validating the importance of engaging with the local context and modern tools.

5. Challenges and Opportunities

Despite these positive findings, several challenges were identified. First, there remains a lack of institutional support for training educators in both digital literacy and local cultural integration. Second, some educators expressed uncertainty in bridging classical Islamic texts with modern pedagogical approaches. Finally, the dominance of centralized, standardized curricula often leaves little room for local adaptation. However, the opportunities outweigh these barriers. Participants stressed the importance of policy innovation, collaborative teacher training, and the development of digital platforms that reflect both spiritual depth and cultural sensitivity.

Conclusion

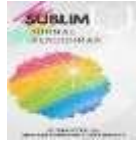
This study offers a compelling argument for reimagining Islamic education as a transformative process that synergizes spirituality, digital literacy, and Bugis indigenous values. Through qualitative engagement with educators, students, cultural scholars, and digital practitioners in South Sulawesi, it becomes evident that meaningful education in the 21st century must go beyond doctrinal transmission. Instead, it must embrace holistic human development—intellectually, ethically, and spiritually—while remaining grounded in local cultural wisdom.



The integration of Seyyed Hossein Nasr's metaphysical insights and the Bugis ethical principle of *Pappijepu* provides a robust philosophical foundation for Islamic education that is spiritually anchored yet socially responsive. When paired with digital literacy, this framework empowers learners not only to navigate contemporary challenges but also to cultivate a sense of sacred purpose, critical consciousness, and cultural identity.

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