

DIGITAL LEARNING EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS MODERN ISLAMIC CULTURE: A STRENGTHENING “MERDEKA BELAJAR” STRATEGY

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Abstract

Technological progress has a significant force in competition in all areas of life. Indonesian human resources achieve a demographic bonus with millennials who are adapting to today's popular digital culture. Increasingly providing real value to every millennial activity, especially in education, will provide more innovative additions. Islamic teachings teach every Muslim to adapt to cultural and educational developments to compete in all fields. Everyday using digital learning and the rigid understanding of Islamic culture's modernization causes Islamic education's quality and competition to be less than optimal. The Covid-19 pandemic creates a learning adaptation gap that prioritizes social distancing guards so that the government needs to formulate policies with 'Merdeka Belajar' that aim to achieve learning effectiveness. This research aims to examine digital learning's role in Muslim culture and school readiness for digital education development. This research uses quantitative methods with a descriptive analysis approach with secondary data as the data source. The research results in informal education have become the focus of effective learning supported by modern Islamic culture, where Islamic schools in Indonesia can adapt to current technological advances. Schools and educational institutions are ready with infrastructure in school learning using computers and internet networks and educational technology companies to implement digital education. The implication of 'Merdeka Belajar' of government policy is strengthening strategy through collaboration adaptive of digital learning education and modern Islamic culture with schools readiness and industries supporting to realize a learning system through digital technology.

Keywords: *digital education; modern Islamic; culture; Merdeka belajar*

INTRODUCTION

Building a world civilization is always associated with care and attention to education based on science and technology, based on the human character's value. Improving the quality of resources is essential as the main requirement for reaching a whole human being to prepare the next generation of people who can adapt to culture and progress in all fields.

Technology is a crucial instrument in accelerating education's equity and quality to provide ease and speed of access to learning and provide academic freedom to explore and experiment according to their respective expertise. It requires the world order to become global digitization that puts forward role and effectiveness as its goals.

In early 2020 the whole world experienced a global pandemic. The authors see that the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic impacts education with many limitations, especially in Indonesia. The policy for various countries exposed to this disease with lockdown or quarantine is carried out to reduce the interaction of many people who can provide access to the spread of Covid-19.¹ It pandemic has disrupted learning; therefore, the offline study has shifted to an online learning system. However, unfortunately, online learning does not help students to learn. Constraints that occur are students and teachers who are not used to teaching online students often have difficulty understanding the concept of learning materials offered by the teacher.² Their education demands sources on learning process are able providing fairly good effectiveness.

Educational institutions need government policies in dealing with circumstances, and situations due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which leaves them with no choice but to take online application-based learning on the global approach has directed all educational institutions to carry out learning with an online system.³ This fact shows the importance of strengthening educational institutions as an effort to maintain the quality of learning that is carried out. It has resulted in school closings, so we estimate that students have missed an average of about one to two semesters of education. These losses of study time are using their reading, math, and science knowledge and skills.⁴ These conditions making our strategy in education development must be adaptable and applicated in a new normal situation.

Indonesia is a developing country with a Muslim majority population with existing resources to face world competition.⁵ Indonesia also gets a demographic bonus where the number of a productive community exceeds the number of people who are not of formative age with a positive trend

regarding the arrival of the demographic prize, which will continue in 2020-2030.⁶ Both are opportunities and challenges in the global future competition.

The central statistics bureau (BPS)⁷ shows that the millennial generation reaches 33.75 percent of people. It contributing to the millennial generation is shaping the structure of the people of productive age is relatively high is 67.02 percent of the people of formative is 50.36 percent of them are millennial generation. For this reason, the use of technology as an essential instrument becomes a habit in all its activities. The learning technology development making digital culture in Indonesian education, where students use smartphones as a means and purpose of learning for more than 6 to 7 hours a day, can provide benefits in supporting their learning activities in the students' psychological and cultural dimensions themselves.⁸

The emergence of problems in the digitalization of learning, especially at this time, is due to, among others, the low level of digital literacy among teachers and students in adopting digital technology, which is the school of the main obstacles to growth. It has created a lack of qualified teachers willing to accept the new digital technology.⁹ Suppose schools are not aware of e-learning concepts. Its case, making learning methods an advantage of the learning management system in their schools and e-learning design approaches in their learning methods or using traditional learning method to know the rules of use e-learning are in place.¹⁰ Rembangy¹¹ said that the problems of Islamic education and culture are influenced by educational orientation and multicultural-globalization.

Modern culture makes it easier for Muslims to do anything. It also contributes to developing religious preaching through modern media, namely through the internet network. It can be accessed by anyone who wants it. They do not need to be busy looking for information directly through meetings; just using today's technology can help everyone.¹² Some modernist groups want to make religion a foundation in facing modernity so that religion does not conflict with modern times and want to interpret religious teachings according to current needs. For three decades, modern Islamic education in Indonesia is fully integrating Islamic education institutions into the national education run and financed by the government and standardizing Islamic education following national standards while retaining ownership and administration, mostly managed by Muslim organizations and communities.¹³

The facts that happen to modern culture with technology are shown by the increasing use of digital educational technology by students with high smartphones and an increased use duration that makes students very familiar with the digital world. Nevertheless, when it comes to education, they still do not understand the role of digital technology in education. The problems that arise are where students tend to be more skeptical and less accepting of digitization in learning.¹⁴ Then the central statistics bureau.¹⁵ revealed only 25.87 percent of using the internet to do school work.

The readiness of schools in Indonesia in realizing the digitalization of education can be seen from the number of public and private schools in Indonesia, where public schools are 166,576 units (75.53 percent) and private schools are 75,938 units (24.46 percent).¹⁶ In contrast, schools that use computers in learning activities, state schools as much as 78.41 percent and private schools as much as 93.17 percent. In learning using internet access, state schools reach 69.93 percent, and private schools get 88.48 percent.¹⁷ There is a gap between private and public schools using computers and internet facilities as a medium or learning technology. In other said, how the schools are preparing for the challenges of digital education?

To improving education quality, the 'Independent Campus/Kampus Merdeka' policy was issued to liberate an education system that is more pro-students and lecturers/teachers in achieving meaningful quality learning to face the disruption of the current era. It aims to encourage the learning process in schools to be more autonomous and flexible and create a learning culture that is innovative, unlimited, and following students' needs.¹⁸ Through the 'Independent Campus/Kampus Merdeka' program, it is hoped that it can answer educational challenges to produce graduates with the development of science and technology and the business world's demands and the industrial world.¹⁹

The problems are making awareness using digital learning essential to become the focus of the world of education as a strengthening of government policy. As a majority Muslim with several human resources and Islamic educational institutions accompanied by Islamic culture adaptation, Indonesia has a big responsibility in facing challenges ahead. This study aims to examine the role of digital learning in modern Muslim culture and find out how alert schools are to digital education development.

METHOD

The method used in this research is quantitative descriptive method with secondary data analysis (ADS) that emphasizes the analysis of actual problems with data in the form of numbers, which is data obtained from a previously available annual report source from Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and World Bank group.

The understanding of the quantitative descriptive-analytical process, according to Sugiyono²⁰, is a method that functions to describe or give an overview of the object under study through data or information collected as they are without analyzing and making general conclusions. In other words, the quantitative descriptive analysis takes problems or focuses on the issues as they are when the analysis is carried out. The results of the study are then processed and analyzed to conclude by tabulation and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) said that there had been a significant increase in the percentage of people accessing the internet in the last five years. The 2018 National Socio-Economic Survey data explains that 50.92 percent of people in urban areas and 26.56 percent in rural areas aged five years and over have accessed the internet in the last three months. Most of the active internet users are the millennial generation.²¹

From the Indonesian Telecommunication Statistics, BPS explained that using the internet for internet use is dominated by social media and getting information or news with a percentage of around 79.13 percent and 65.97 percent, respectively.²²

In the 2018 Millennial Generation Profile, BPS²³ stated that the millennial generation reached 33.75 percent of the total population. It means that the millennial generation's contribution to shaping the structure of the people of productive age is relatively high, where from 67.02 percent of the formative period population, around 50.36 percent are millennials. This condition indicates a demographic bonus.

Currently, 19 percent of education units have difficulty getting internet access or number, 42,159 schools do not have internet access. Meanwhile, 81 percent or 175,356 schools have an internet connection.²⁴ This fact provides a strengthening of digital-based education with equal access to the internet network, which is, of course, supported by the electricity network so that the learning ability for "Merdeka belajar" is getting better.

Table 1. Percentage of Schools that Use Computers by Education Level and School Status in 2018

Education Levels	School Status		
	Public	Private	Public & Private
Elementary School/Equivalent	75,87	88,79	78,05
Middle High School/Equivalent	84,46	93,06	89,61
Higher School/Equivalent	98,62	97,22	97,58
Total	78,41	93,17	83,44

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), 2018b

Table 1 illustrates the gap in using computers as a means of learning between public and private schools of 14.75 percent. Private schools dominate the use of computers as media and learning technology in schools.

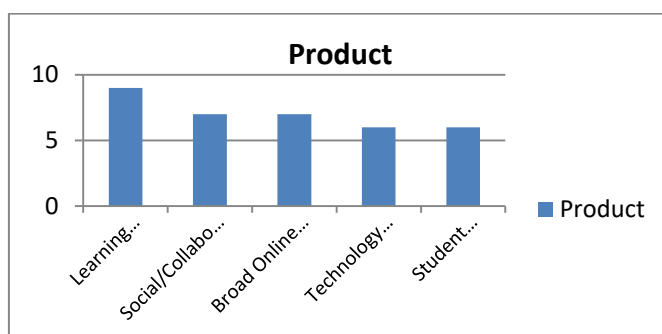
Table 2. Percentage of Schools that Internet Facilities by Education Level and School Status in 2018

Education Levels	School Status		
	Public	Private	Public & Private
Elementary School/Equivalent	67,69	84,25	70,57
Middle High School/Equivalent	71,63	88,01	81,12
Higher School/Equivalent	94,24	92,72	93,11
Total	69,93	88,48	76,25

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), 2018b

Table 2 illustrates the gap in internet facilities use in schools as digitalization of learning between public and private schools by 18.55 percent. Private schools dominate the use of internet facilities as media and learning technology in schools.

Figure 1. Diversity of Products and Services by EdTech Companies in Indonesia (2020)



Source: World Bank Survey, 2020

Figure 1 shows that the product services sector offered by companies in Indonesia in providing digital education, widely used in various schools as a first learning management system. It is a program supporting the Indonesian government as a learning information system service spread throughout all regions and education levels. The second order is the social form of learning collaboration; the third is used for online learning; the fourth is learning technology; and the fifth is student information systems.

DISCUSSION

The Role of Digital Learning Education in Islamic Modern Culture

Learning technology development framework of digital education, the data above illustrates that more educational institutions in Indonesia are founding by foundations or private companies, which are mostly in the form of Islamic schools or madrasas. It provides a significant role and responsibility with current technological advances to adapt and compete with global digital education. It means that private educational institutions in Islamic schools can provide a learning process using computers and internet networks that are well spread.

Digital technology has made significant contributions to various levels of society, including education, which has multiple roles as objects of study, as a 'tool,' as a tool for documenting, communicating and conducting research, as a teaching-learning medium, and as an organizational aid and management at school.²⁵ The forming e-learning development in Indonesia pays more attention to educational factors that must pay attention to

academic readiness (the ability of an organization to compile, analyze, design, implement and evaluate an educational program) and environmental factors (entrepreneurial enthusiasm, culture, and leadership).

The importance of educational technology or 'Ed-Tech' is becoming a technology ecosystem because it is an ancient attitude towards education that places importance on memorization and vague notions of 'ethics.' Where is a pragmatic approach to teaching and considers that Indonesian educational institutions are first and foremost responsible for helping students grow into well-adapted contributors in society?²⁶ In implementing an e-learning program, assessments and requirements need to include objectives (macro organizational goals and micro-target student population goals), e-learning readiness scores, a list of advantages and potential barriers to e-learning adoption, and a list of possible e-learning configurations.

Another improving e-learning system, according to Saraswati et al.,²⁷ Ubiquitous learning (u-learning) is a new paradigm of education that can be done anywhere, anytime, and with anything such as using a mobile device or device that provides information, all marked fields. Gutierrez et al.,²⁸ states' opinion that education's potential comes from the integration of the u-learning approach in the acquisition of "soft skills" by students related to self-development capacity, including the use of transformations of means and resources generated by broader learning. Then u-learning is a form of virtual learning which is developing so rapidly in today's world. The learning media in the form of u-learning is a media-based on multi studio-based education.²⁹ It has shown that e-learning and u-learning approaches combine to develop fun learning methods and techniques.

The digital technology application in Islamic education learning by technology applied provides space and opportunity for students to suspect, test the correctness of their assumptions, and use these assumptions in the broader context of Islamic education to develop a conceptual understanding and intuition of Islamic student education.³⁰ Religious culture has been integrated into educational institutions by binding human actualization occurs covertly and openly. The religious culture between inner and outer does not show the difference between internal realization and externalization. Overt perpetrators are always straight and to the point.³¹ Religious culture aims to develop students' and teachers' potential to be faithful and devoted to the Almighty, virtuous, healthy, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and responsible.³² The existence of digital technology and culture is a blend that can adapt to lead to the paradigm of Islamic cultural opening to educational modernity.

Islamic education has so far transformed at the level of paradigms, methods, and strategies for developing Islamic education to become current and relevant to global situations and conditions. For this reason, the importance of modernizing Islamic education is required to adapt to the existence of an era of technological advancement, technology integration to create knowledge that is following the needs of the millennial generation.³³ This shows the principles of Islamic culture, which are very flexible to developments that occur today and in the future.

In modern Islamic education often raises more positive values. These experiences affect young children as the core of attention and parents, teachers, education managers, and the wider community.³⁴ The philosophy of the term modernization comes from the principle of creating an independent human being. Among the various creatures of God, with the facilities of reason, humans are creatures who are free to choose their path, both good and evil.³⁵ Modernity is a necessity in the development of human life on earth. Allah has created humans with the gift of reason to enable humans to develop with the ability to think about managing the world and its contents.³⁶ Building modernity cannot be separated from building culture, where the focus is on how humans can better appreciate the ongoing civilization.

Islamic culture can explain this dichotomy of culture and civilization in a modern social context. Its essence is described as the most comprehensive and liberal that humankind's norms have a good plan for human life by emphasizing science as a source other than truth and knowledge.³⁷ The dichotomy in the Islamic education system, wherein fact, education should be a means to unite Muslims and provide them with a unified cultural perspective, to direct them towards progress and construction. It must create harmony and provide common goals, thereby leading all efforts to develop a devout Muslim individual, whose mind and soul, culture and behavior, and the forces of initiative and reason of the individual are vigorous and productive.

The collaboration of education and culture can be forming modern Islamic education formulating as a systemic pattern of educational processes that integrates all components and subcomponents of education (objectives, human dimensions, subject matter, methods, educational facilities, academic actors, environment, and evaluation systems) in harmony, and eliminates conflict. Based on religious norms and awareness, in the process, foster students towards self-actualization of Islam based on spiritual knowledge and general knowledge.³⁸

School Readiness for Digital Education Development.

The Indonesian government has developed an innovative education system relating to industrial revolution 4.0 like globalization and digital education, strategy, and structure organization, including creativity, innovation, multidisciplinary, entrepreneurship, and bringing new stimuli to the education system with a giant leap or educational transformation.³⁹ By connecting the data above, schools' readiness in implementing digital education is perfect, which is indicated by the infrastructure that is evenly distributed even though some are still not reached.

Based on the data above, where 83.44 percent of schools in Indonesia have used computers as a means of learning, 76.25 percent of schools have used internet access, and the information technology industry sector has provided access and facilities to the world of education with the largest use in the learning management system, social learning collaboration, online learning, learning technology, and student information systems.

An urgent need has replaced the initial reluctance to adopt technology among educational institutions, teachers, and parents, with many students now depending on online and distance education. It means that the Covid-19 crisis could be an opportunity to accelerate the application of effective online learning methods and to encourage educational institutions to adopt distance learning methods to increase resilience to future problems. This crisis will also provide an opportunity for the EdTech sector to prove its value in sustaining and enhancing student learning and in supporting traditional educational institutions in delivering online education.

Digitalization has a real impact on the world of education. Suropto et al. said that positive effects of the digital education world, including mass media availability for obtaining and publishing, creating the newest learning methods, making learning, and fulfilling educational facilities could be filled quickly and in learning activities using attractive.⁴⁰ Another side global digital exchange is an innovative approach that connects students directly with peers around the world online. The point is to click students across national borders to learn from each other to gain global competence. By leveraging student interest in digital technology and peer communication, international digital exchanges also support general academic learning. As internet technology and connectivity become cheaper and more widely available in schools, digital businesses can make global education more inclusive for students from low-income and isolated communities.⁴¹

Digital education globally exchanges as an innovative approach to connecting students directly with learning online. It points to get students across national borders to learn from each other to gain global competence. The student was interested in digital education and contemporary communication, and global digital exchanges also supported general academic learning. As internet technology and connectivity become cheaper and more widely available in schools, digital learning worldwide can make digital education more inclusive for learners in low-income and isolated communities.

To strengthen the "Kampus Merdeka" strategy by maximizing digital infrastructure, the expansion of digital infrastructure is significant so that all schools and educational institutions throughout Indonesia have access to electricity and the internet. This digital infrastructure equity program is substantial, which needs to be continuously improved in terms of reach and quality; global vision in digital transformation. Our education should not be confined to a thin shell of insight. The young generation of Indonesia today is the child of the age, a global generation connected internationally with technological devices. Thus, the global vision of Indonesian education is essential. Every policy, program, and education system refresh is related to international dynamic developments and digitization of the national learning system. This digital transformation enables system interconnection from finance, education, health, smart city, and governance. Of course, there is a long process in bringing about this stage. However, like it or not, Indonesia must move towards that stage by preparing a system while educating the public to go hand in hand with the same vision and mission.

The picture above shows how the industry in Indonesia has helped prepare the digital education infrastructure. Five components can explain where digital education in Indonesia has been. The facts show that the learning management system is the dominant program that is implemented. It cannot be denied that the learning management system still has many weaknesses, so it needs intervention. It supports the Indonesian government as a learning information system service spread throughout all regions and education levels. The focused on the form of the social form of learning collaboration by promoting collaboration with inter-school collaboration learning so that this study can make it easier for students to more easily understand learning material; the third is used for online learning, as it is known at a time like this online learning is the majority that is carried out in Indonesia and even in the world, although there are less effective aspects; the fourth is learning technology, the ease of using technology infrastructure in

learning provides open access in optimizing all types of learning approaches, and the fifth is student information systems, this is important related to evaluation and learning portfolios where teachers and schools can monitor or improve student learning achievement.

The analysis above shows that Indonesia, like most other countries globally, is ill-equipped to manage the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is already having a significant negative impact on student learning outcomes. Some children have returned to school and would benefit from a quick fix for learning loss. Most schools are still closed, and these students will benefit from better distance education to avoid additional costs of learning and potential future income; these investments can increase the long-term resilience and quality of the education system. Indonesia needs strengthening of 'Merdeka belajar' strategy to support better face-to-face teaching and improved quality of distance learning, to restore and enhance its human resources.

With the demographic bonus in Indonesia, there is a potential for developing Islamic education with a digital education approach, where the level of mastery of information technology is between the ages of 15-50 years. This is what makes education in Indonesia a productive market in the development of digital education. As it is known that private schools managed by Islamic foundations dominate private schools in Indonesia, the importance of transforming Islamic culture through digital learning will accelerate education itself, especially in a pandemic situation like this.

Thus the role of digital education that is currently developing can adapt well to Islamic culture itself, where modernity provides space in developing human capabilities as a form of civilization. The modern Islamic cultural paradigm is inseparable from human nature as an object of education. Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia can adapt to the learning process that prioritizes educational technology. Is the program's implication to strengthen learning freedom through efforts to pay attention to quality and justice? Equitable access to education, primary education services, and fiscal are the driving forces for the optimal implementation of the independent learning policy.

The transformation of educational institutions in Indonesia towards digital education has requirements in distribution term is using computers and internet networks. It supported company supporting by facilitating five of them as a form of learning and digital education and strengthening the 'Merdeka belajar' needs curriculum components focused on literacy content.

It is easy to access, and infrastructure can improving education quality.

In general, the readiness of education in Indonesia in the development of digital education has shown encouraging things where more than 75 percent of every school has adequate facilities and infrastructure accompanied by supporting facilities from the industrial sector, namely the information technology system, which is an absolute requirement for future educational development. Besides, the importance of teacher competence in increasing their ability to information technology will accelerate the support of Indonesian students in innovative learning models and more skills.

In this condition, education development will transform into all accesses so that students' learning will be more attractive and provide higher motivation in the students and teachers. The implications of digital education transformation are still based on the education system's goals, namely to produce intelligent and faithful resources and to fear Allah SWT.

CONCLUSION

Developing education through digital technology becomes a global competition that focuses on cooperation between the government, educational institutions, and industry. Digital learning in Indonesia, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, is doing well. The developing digital education application can adapt to modern Islamic culture following technological advances; most Islamic education institutions, as private schools, provide responsibility for implementing learning in schools using computers and internet networks.

The digital education transformation shows schools' readiness to implementing digital education with industry support as a form of strengthening government programs, namely 'Merdeka belajar' with a strategy oriented towards justice and quality of education and a literacy-intensive curriculum that leading to education quality.

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