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Research Article

The Role of Virtual Platforms in Shaping Contemporary Islamic Education

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Abstract. Islamic education developed through educational practices which included madrasas together with personal mentorship as traditional learning methods. The swift technological progress has dramatically reshaped Islamic learning because it created extensive educational accessibility through digital platform usage together with remote Video classes and Artificial Intelligence educational resources. The research investigates how digital education affects Islamic learning while reviewing its present state along with its future perspective and associated hurdles. Research data collection relies heavily on qualitative techniques that utilize literature reviews combined with studies of prominent digital Islamic learning platforms which include Bayyinah Institute, Al-Maghrib Institute, Seekers Guidance and Islamic Online University. The research analyses the levels of credibility and accessibility while also evaluating engagement factors between digital learning in Islam versus traditional classroom techniques. The existing body of research about Islamic education still leaves a

huge space to understand how digital learning affects students in multiple dimensions including their commitment and scholar authenticity when paired with their access to technology in disadvantaged communities. The research on conventional learning structures prevails over studies investigating the impact of online education in the existing academic field. The research establishes a bridge by performing an extensive evaluation of digital Islamic education benefits and weaknesses. Research takes place because digital education platforms have become essential for religious instruction particularly when used by Muslim minorities residing outside Muslim countries and self-directed learners who need flexible learning options. Investing knowledge into the effects these digital tools possess on religious education and scholarly communication will determine upcoming educational guidelines. The research demonstrates that virtual platforms bring many benefits to students, yet students must contend with issues of authenticity and insufficient mentorship along with ideological problems. Combining traditional madrasa education with digital methods creates the best learning system to preserve academic depth of traditional Islamic education through new technological resources. Research adds to academic knowledge by demonstrating the necessity to develop better authentication systems alongside increased digital education skills and joint ventures between traditional Islamic centres and virtual learning environments. Experts should research how digital Islamic education affects individuals psychologically and socially throughout time and how AI technology impacts the customization of Islamic religious content.

Keywords : Islamic teaching, digital education, online platforms, hybrid learning, academic authenticity

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education defines the organized procedure through which students gain knowledge about Islamic faith through its religious elements together with legal aspects and ethical teachings plus historical study. Islamic education consists of official and real-world training to develop comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'an and Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence as well as Islamic ethics (Hefner, 2010)^[1]. The process of Islamic education shapes all three aspects of Muslim individuals and communities including spirituality along with intellectual and social growth. The traditional purpose of Islamic education built religious scholars and fostered cultural unity through faith development and spiritual education.

Islam traditionally delivers its educational material through madrasas together with halaqas in addition to mentoring relationships. Islamic educational institutions known as Madrasas have operated as formal centres of academic learning which structurally deliver classes about Islamic theology and law and Arabic language education. Halaqas function as flexible educational sessions through which scholars and trainees exchange learning material during mosque or residence-based meetings. Islamic traditional education includes personal mentorship as a fundamental element because students participate directly with scholars to receive deep knowledge of Islamic studies (Zaman, 2010)^[2]. The learning approaches rely on face-to-face contact between students and teachers and build strong relationships through traditional methods of spoken learning.

Modern digital technologies have allowed Islamic education to expand into new digital platforms which include virtual classrooms and mobile applications in addition to internet-based learning systems. Modern digital technology allows Islamic knowledge to spread over cultural barriers thus making itself available to people around the world. Bayyinah Institute together with Al-Maghrib Institute and Seekers Guidance and Islamic Online University offer conventional Islamic courses but YouTube channels and podcasts offer alternative informal Islamic learning channels. Muslims now adopt religious education through digital platforms which provide flexible learning options together with accessible scholars of various Islamic schools. The evaluation of online Islamic education allows us to grasp both its strengths and weaknesses within the system. Digital platforms deliver better access and flexibility and cost-effective learning, but people have doubts about validity of content alongside a loss of individual mentorship and unequal opportunities related to digital access within disadvantaged areas. Researchers evaluate the transformation of Islamic education through online learning while identifying the essential obstacles to create synergy between digital and traditional learning methods. The evaluation of online Islamic education will establish the most efficient way to merge advanced technology with established Islamic scholarship. Research about Islamic education mostly examines classical learning traditions comprising madrasas and halaqas as well as mentoring despite the history spanning numerous generations of Muslim civilizations. The studies discuss Islamic educational structures from the past, but they lack extensive analysis of digital platforms for Islamic learning. The fast growth of digital education calls for investigations about how technologies influence both the distribution and acquisition of Islamic knowledge.

The studies lack systematic evaluation of essential features in online Islamic education because they do not analyse student retention rates along with academic integrity standards and persistent digital learning outcomes. Digital learning platforms provide student flexibility and worldwide learning abilities, but educators need proper evaluation of their expertise and students may not grasp material as deeply as traditional classrooms and researchers question the strength of virtual encounters when comparing them to actual classroom experiences^[3]. Limited academic studies exist to show digital education's capability to substitute historically important mentorship between teachers and students in Islamic education. The availability of Internet education in developing countries along with the digital divide receive minimal attention in current literature about Islamic education. The limited access to technology combined with restricted Internet presence and low digital literacy in Muslim-majority countries and marginalized communities restricts their participation in electronic Islamic learning^[4]. Research on this topic infrequently examines the connection between economic and social conditions and their influence on student online learning experiences in Islamic education.

The research seeks to bridge existing knowledge gaps by analysing the performance and implementation obstacles together with forecasted effects of digital education for Islamic learning. The research investigates the effects of online platforms on Islamic scholarship while evaluating the benefits and challenges followed by methods to increase accessibility and reliability of these platforms. This investigation explores previously ignored topics to describe Islamic education development patterns within digital platforms.

METHODOLOGY

Through a qualitative research methodology, the study performs a literature review that combines with a case study evaluation of current digital Islamic learning platforms. A qualitative method fits well for evaluating online Islamic education by studying scholarly debates along with institutional standards and user feedback and assessment. Various data collection sources serve the purpose of delivering a complete and balanced analysis for this research. Academic journals about Islamic education and digital learning serve as fundamental sources for understanding the theoretical and experimental insights regarding Islamic education development within digital era frameworks. The analysis studies course frameworks along with website structures from four leading Islamic educational institutions including Bayyinah Institute, Al-Maghrib Institute, Seekers Guidance and Islamic Online University. The assessment of digital learning effects on online Islamic education depends on student survey data and research reports focusing on student involvement and learning results and system accessibility.

The analysis of digital learning in Islamic education adopts two essential methods of examination throughout this study. The research conducts an assessment between traditional Islamic educational structures (madrasas, halaqas, mentor-based learning) and digital platforms regarding their instructional approaches and student interaction and memory retention systems. The evaluation analyses the beneficial aspects as well as constraints within each learning approach of traditional and online education. The examination of digital Islamic education focuses on its reliability as well as its availability and performance standards. Online scholars' authenticity and learning accessibility assessment throughout developing nations and platform effectiveness evaluation for religious improvement and practice as well as examinations of online learning fees will all be part of this analysis. The study gathers information from scholarly research, platform evaluation and audience reports to evaluate digital Islamic education while discussing its promising potential and existing problems.

Progress of Islamic Education in the Digital Age

Through history Islamic education has served as a fundamental element for developing Muslims intellectual, moral and spiritual capabilities in their societies.

Traditional Islamic learning happening in madrasas with halaqas and personal mentorship relied completely on scholar-student face-to-face interactions until modern times. Through their status as formal educational organizations madrasas enable students to receive structured content in four main areas including Qur'anic study and Hadith and Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) together with Arabic language (Zaman 2010)^[5].

The communal education and religious knowledge transmission became possible through both private study circles and mosque gatherings. Islamic education now experiences dramatic change under current globalization and technological development patterns which transform traditional physical education settings into Internet-based learning platforms that advance worldwide reach (Hefner, 2010)^[6].

Digital technology created a radical transformation of Islamic education thus providing people with unprecedented access to religious knowledge. Internet-based learning systems together with virtual classrooms and mobile apps allow people anywhere to connect with Islamic teachings at their convenience. The digital realm expands learning possibilities through YouTube lectures and Islamic e-books combined with podcasts according to Mir (2024)^[7].

Through their combination of technology Bayyinah Institute together with Al-Maghrib Institute and Seekers Guidance deliver standardized Islamic learning at superior quality to students from multiple cultures and linguistic groups. The COVID-19 pandemic created an urgent need for digital education adoption which caused traditional madrasas to begin exploring online learning tools to maintain Islamic studies (Suleiman & Almomani2024)^[8].

Digital platforms assist religious education as an additional resource, yet they function independently from traditional madrasas. Students gain access to scholar interactions which break geographical limitations while watching recorded lectures at their convenience and using discussion platforms to resolve religious questions (Abd Rahman, 2025)^[9]. The digital education environment provides lifelong learning possibilities which help scholars along with ordinary individuals to pursue religious studies after leaving formal madrasa classes. The benefits of online Islamic education depend on proper management of three key challenges which involve ensuring credible scholars and preserving deep Islamic teachings and bridging the digital gap in deprived areas. Using traditional learning methods with digital education will allow Islamic education to adapt to contemporary needs while keeping its scholarly standards and true Islamic authentic approach.

Famous Online Platforms for Islamic Education

The expansion of Islamic education has happened thanks to digital technology which established online platforms to offer structured religious learning experiences to students across the globe. Main internet platforms act as the leading

providers of Islamic education services through their formal course structures and degree programs and informal learning frameworks. The list below presents strong and weak points of the leading digital learning platforms.

1. Bayyinah Institute

The Bayyinah Institute under leadership of Nouman Ali Khan provides specialized training in Qur'anic and Arabic language knowledge. Through its systematic learning system this platform provides modern students with structured education about Qur'anic grammar as well as tafsir (interpretation) and linguistic analysis. Bayyinah's core value derives from its excellent video materials alongside its step-by-step teaching structure that explains advanced language concepts for novice learners. The main drawback of Bayyinah's subscription service creates barriers to study for students who belong to low-income families.

2. Al-Maghrib Institute

Al-Maghrib Institute delivers organized Islamic educational programs which extend through Fiqh Islamic jurisprudence studies along with Hadith analysis, Aqedah Islamic creed teachings and personal growth subsections. Students enrolled at this institute benefit from a blended learning method that integrates virtual studies with classroom seminars thus giving them access to teachers both remotely and through direct contact. The institution stands out through its competent teaching staff who teach relevant material that suits students pursuing balanced Islamic education. The restricted number of free courses alongside Western-oriented audience education decreases student access to students outside Western European regions.

3. Seekers Guidance

Seekers Guidance operates as a charitable organization which provides cost-free online Islamic instruction that reaches all learners seeking religious education. The organization delivers instruction through well-qualified scholars about Islamic sciences alongside spirituality and present-life topics. The main strong point of Seekers Guidance is its dedication to delivering free and genuine Islamic educational resources globally. Despite being a completely digital platform Seekers Guidance struggles to provide personal communication between students and educators because the students learn through digital-only channels which may dissatisfy students who need traditional classroom experience.

4. Islamic Online University (IOU)

Islamic Online University (IOU) was established by Dr. Bilal Philips to deliver degree-based Islamic educational programs through diplomas and undergraduate levels and postgraduate degrees in Islamic Studies and Arabic together with Islamic

Banking. The platform adopts an academic structure combined with a global affordable system for Islamic knowledge delivery. Internet-based degree programs earn standardized recognition that enables institutions like IOU to enhance professional Islamic education delivery within virtual learning domains (Bunt, 2018)^[10].

IOU achieves its main strength through established academic programs that grant students accredited Islamic qualifications. IOU faces several obstacles in its operations such as technological restrictions along with accreditation problems that persist in certain areas and maintaining student engagement during fully online classes.

5. YouTube and Podcasts

YouTube channels together with Islamic podcasts operate as influential platforms that distribute religious knowledge. During YouTube streams along with podcasts Mufti Menk Yasir Qadhi and Omar Suleiman discuss Muslim teachings along with information about modern issues and deliver motivational materials. These platforms achieve their maximum benefit through their broad reach and uncharged content which allows users to study the Islamic religion when they want and however, they wish. A significant issue arises because Islamic content has no required oversight so any person can post material which generates both deceptive information and contradictory opinions.

Comparison of Platforms: Strengths and Limitations

Platforms	Strengths	Limitations
Bayyinah Institute	High-quality Arabic and Qur'anic studies' courses	limited access depends on its paid membership payment system
Al-Maghrib Institute	Qualified instructors, hybrid learning model	Limited free content, focus on Western audience
Seekers Guidance	Free courses, access to authentic scholars	Lack of direct student-teacher interaction
Islamic Online University (IOU)	Degree-based Islamic studies	Some courses lack accreditation, challenges in fully online learning
YouTube & Podcasts	Free, widely available content	Risk of misinformation and lack of scholarly verification

Benefits of Online Islamic Education

Digital educational platforms have revolutionized how Muslim students can retrieve religious knowledge through modern methods of transmission. Religious

knowledge benefits from online Islamic learning because modern educational models through this method permit a broader audience access to flexible curriculum in a more inclusive manner. The essential benefits of distance learning within Islamic education can be found in the following list.

1. Global Accessibility

The flexibility of online Islamic education marks one of its most important advantages because it enables educational access to students from every part of the world. Muslim communities in countries that do not represent Islam along with inhabitants in distant locations now receive genuine Islamic instruction because of modern technology (Bunt, 2018)^[11]. Digital learning through online platforms enables Muslim students from different regional backgrounds to access Islamic scholarship globally by using only an internet connection.

2. Flexibility & Convenience

Traditional Islamic educational institutions maintain standard operating hours, but online Islamic education lets learners decide when to learn. Digital learning accommodates working adults and students and housewives who find it hard to participate in classroom education. Students can finish courses at Seekers Guidance or Bayyinah TV through self-paced study which lets them study according to unique time constraints and personal responsibilities. The process of controlling one's learning speed through online education produces better knowledge absorption rates coupled with superior student involvement results than traditional classroom instruction according to Hefner (2010)^[12].

3. Diversity of Scholars

The openness of traditional Islamic education receives restricted influence from local scholars who follow their own exclusive schools of thought and their established interpretations. Students who participate in online education can overcome spatial boundaries to study with eminent scholars who come from different Islamic traditions. The educational trio of Al-Maghrib Institute as well as Islamic Online University and educational lectures found on YouTube showcase a diverse range of experts representing Islamic scholarship from different subject areas theological schools and cultural origins thus delivering broader knowledge about Islamic disciplines to students. Through digital learning students develop better language acquisition skills particularly in Arabic studies because educational content includes designed programs with interactive methods to enhance learning effectiveness (Ryding 2014)^[13].

4. Cost-effectiveness

Many students refrain from formal Islamic education because of financial obstacles that limit their access. The cost for studying Islamic courses online proves to be lower than traditional physical institution attendance. The internet provides free learning choices through Seekers Guidance combined with highly affordable education from Islamic Online University which costs less than typical university costs. Through cost-effective measures Islamic knowledge grows accessible to lower-income individuals who can study high-quality religious education without paying expenses (Bunt, 2018)^[14].

5. Digital Archiving & Conservation

The long-term advantage of online Islamic education consists of maintaining digital collections of classical and contemporary Islamic teachings. Through digital platforms vast collections of Islamic lectures articles and courses remain stored indefinitely because traditional oral transmission can become lost with time. The permanent digital repositories of Islamic teachings exist through platforms like Bayyinah TV together with YouTube along with online Islamic libraries which ensure perpetual accessibility of Islamic content. Through this feature learners can make academic research and transfer learning across generations easier because they have ease of access to revisit lectures and reference past discussions (Hefner 2010)^[15].

Challenges and Limitations

Online Islamic education provides broader access to religious education although multiple obstacles affect its educational performance and genuine delivery of content. Students confront three main problems in their online Islamic education due to untrained instructors and restricted scholar-student exchanges in addition to the digital gap and traditional teaching vs modern interpretation integration.

1. Authenticity & Reliability

The critical issue today involves confirming the credibility of online Islamic educational resources. The modern digital environment enables persons who lack proper qualification to share content which might result in misinterpreted or incorrect Islamic teachings. Online educators and their educational content need strict verification procedures because of the importance this aspect holds (HRMARS, 2021). The absence of regulatory oversight within certain online platforms creates conditions for delivering unreliable teachings (Saleh, Sari, & Pujiarti, 2023)^[16].

2. Lack of Student-Scholar Interaction

Traditional Islamic education works through personal interactions between learners and their scholars which allows students to receive immediate explanations for difficult concepts. The absence of real-time student-scholar interaction on online

learning platforms reduces student understanding and blocks their ability to develop critical thinking competence (Nofrianti & Arifmiboy, 2021)^[17]. However, some digital Islamic learning platforms include Q&A sessions with live experts along with discussion forums, yet Zamroni (2021) states these methods do not substitute for direct in-person interactions^[18].

3. Digital Divide

A universal access to steady internet connectivity and digital equipment remains out of reach thus creating an unequal divide between communities which prevents them from receiving complete virtual Islamic education benefits. Students residing in rural regions along with students from disadvantaged areas experience significant challenges when trying to access digital learning channels. Solving this problem demands strategies to enhance digital infrastructure and supply inexpensive technology access to population regions without sufficient resources (Nofrianti & Arifmiboy, 2021)^[19].

4. Traditional & Philosophical Concerns

Online education technique reveals multiple interpretations of Islamic doctrine that students encounter through its international scope of study. Enriched learning stems from this practice but conflicts with the need to maintain unity in cultural values and ideological beliefs. Students meet opposing opinions in their studies, so they need proper guidance to understand these contrasting viewpoints while building a fair understanding (Zamroni, 2021). Academic experts suggest that online studies need to strengthen traditional Islamic educational methods to preserve religious content (Saleh, Sari, & Pujiarti, 2023). The important benefits of online Islamic education require that educators handle the challenges which emerge from authentic content evaluation while improving social interaction along with expanding accessibility and cultural compatibility. The future development of online Islamic education depends on strategies to verify teachers and build interactive platforms alongside cultural integration because these steps build educational quality and maintain academic consistency.

DISCUSSION

How Virtual Education is Remodelling Islamic Learning

Higher education through interactive e-learning made the transition from traditional face-to-face education possible which brought substantial change to Islamic education. Historically Islamic academic knowledge spread through madrasas and halaqas as well as the instruction of qualified scholars to their students. Modern digital platforms create advanced learning approaches which bring both flexibility and accessibility features into Islamic education systems. Through the provision of both mobile applications and online courses along with

virtual classrooms Islamic scholars can share their knowledge with students regardless of their geographic location. The major progress in distance Islamic learning became possible through virtual classrooms together with AI-driven educational resources and social media programs for spreading Islamic knowledge. Computer-generated classrooms enable the immediate connection of students to scholars and AI-learning tools generate personalized educational plans through students' scholarly advancement^[20]. Modern users of YouTube and Facebook and Instagram can now discover Islamic teachings through educational videos and video-based Q&A sessions and interactive content. The modern technological landscape enables Islamic scholarship to merge religion with contemporary problems including ethical technology concerns and bioethical and social justice questions from an Islamic standpoint (Rafsanjani, 2024)^[21].

Debate: Is Virtual Islamic Learning an Effective Substitute for Traditional Education?

The question persists about whether distance education through the internet stands as an acceptable replacement for conventional Islamic teaching methods. Digital platforms help democratize knowledge according to supporters because they enable students to reach diverse scholars of different Islamic traditions leading to a comprehensive understanding of the religion (Chawki, M. 2010)^[22]. Online learning provides convenience to students who need flexibility since it helps them reach Islamic instruction even though they lack nearby Islamic institutions and demanding personal obligations. The shortcomings of online learning as a method of Islamic education mainly stem from its insufficient provision of personal mentorship that traditional education systems deliver according to critics. Traditional madrasas maintain student-teacher bonds for guiding proper interpretation of religious texts and Islamic principal implementations in daily life according to Aini (S. N. 2025)^[23].

The absence of adequate mentoring represents a threat for students to understand complex theological ideas properly as they can easily mistake their meanings. One effective solution to reduce this challenge involves blending physical madrasas with online educational platforms. When principals use these two educational methodologies together their students receive the best of in-person mentoring experiences alongside digital learning opportunities.

The Role of Virtual Fatwas and Islamic Jurisprudence

Online technology has revolutionized the process of Islamic ruling generation together with their distribution methods. Before modern technology Muslims obtained their religious advice from local scholars but now, they can receive rulings from worldwide scholars through websites and mobile apps as well as social media networks. Thanks to websites such as Islam QA together with AskImam users can

obtain religious guidance about diverse contemporary issues whenever they need it. Social media scholars established themselves as important figures in creating contemporary Islamic thought. YouTube and Instagram serve as online platforms where scholars now address contemporary matters and present theological viewpoints as well as address public problems. Digital accessibility via this shift expanded access to religious guidance but it simultaneously produces doubts regarding online fatwas since not all website scholars possess formal religious training. The implementation of digital learning in Islamic education offers various advantages that help students gain religious knowledge through convenient academic solutions compatible with present-day ways of life. The integration of digital learning in Islamic education faces important barriers because of the absence of mentoring programs and the need for genuine information assessment and cultural changes that need attention. A combination of traditional in-person learning and access to online digital resources presents itself as the best solution to protect genuine Islamic education and benefit from technological learning methods. The enforcement of specific measures needs to establish that online fatwas and e-learning platforms maintain scholar-approved Islamic teaching standards.

Prospects and Recommendations

Online Islamic education will thrive by solving its main obstacles through technological advancement to boost student learning success. The development of digital literacy among students and scholars requires priority because it leads to efficient engagement with virtual resources alongside assessment abilities for authenticity. The authentication tools provided for digital religious content alongside the credentialing of scholars promotes the delivery of truth-based religious knowledge while diminishing misguidance in online learning platforms.

The alliance of traditional Islamic institutions with digital platforms will develop a balanced educational approach that upholds mentorship support from traditional learning and implements digital education accessibility. Islamic educational technologies with AI capability should develop personalized features which include adaptable lesson speeds and remarks directed at students and curriculum recommendation systems for academic progression. Online Islamic education will transform into a better system for modern Muslim learners through the incorporation of these learning approaches to create credibility and accessibility as well as strong effectiveness while staying true to traditional scholarship.

CONCLUSION

Modern Islamic education has become accessible and student-oriented through connecting technological resources with traditional learning principles. Worldwide students now have unmatched opportunities to study Islam because online platforms implement virtual classrooms with AI-based tools which erase

geographic barriers and time-related obstacles. The digital transformation in Islamic education brings important obstacles that involve doubtful content authenticity and brief student-tutor relationships together with digital access inequalities across disadvantaged regions. The full advantages of digital Islamic education require strong authentication systems and digital education promotion for scholars and students also require institutional cooperation between traditional Islamic entities and modern digital channels. A combination of traditional and digital learning methods approach will protect scholarly integrity while effectively delivering Islamic teachings to students. Future research will need to assess the permanent effects digital learning has on religious education together with identity development and academic discussions in the Muslim community.

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