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Transformation of Pesantren Education in the Digital Era: AI Innovation and Adaptation for Technology-Based Learning

Tutik Lestari[1*], Audia Rahmayana[1], Fina Agustiana[1]

[1] *University of Darunnajah, Jl. Ulujami No.1 South Jakarta,* Indonesia.

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ABSTRACT

Pesantren as a traditional Islamic educational institution faces challenges in navigating the digital era. Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers significant opportunities to enhance learning effectiveness, administrative systems, and educational management in pesantren. This article examines how AI can be adapted in pesantren education, covering implementation, benefits, and challenges. Using a qualitative approach and literature review, this study finds that AI can support curriculum management, personalize learning, and improve access to broader educational resources. However, AI adaptation also faces obstacles such as infrastructure limitations, human resources, and ethical considerations in applying technology within the pesantren environment. Therefore, an appropriate AI implementation strategy must be designed to align with pesantren values without eliminating its traditional characteristics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren is an Islamic educational institution that plays a crucial role in shaping the character, morals, and knowledge of its students. With the rapid advancement of technology, pesantren faces challenges in adapting its teaching methods to remain relevant in the digital era. Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as an innovative solution with the potential to enhance the effectiveness of learning and educational management within pesantren [1]. By implementing AI, pesantren can develop technology-based learning systems that are more interactive, personalized, and efficient, such as utilizing chatbots for academic guidance, data analytics for student potential mapping, and structured academic management systems [2][3].

However, the integration of AI in pesantren cannot be carried out indiscriminately. Strategies must be carefully designed to align with the values and traditions of pesantren, ensuring that technological advancements do not compromise Islamic principles and local cultural norms. One of the significant challenges faced by many pesantren in Jakarta is the lack of AI literacy among educators and administrators, making it difficult to adopt and maximize the benefits of AI-based learning. Additionally, the shortage of qualified human resources to continuously update and manage new technological operations further hinders the effective implementation of AI innovations.

A similar situation is observed at Pesantren Darunnajah, where the lack of preparedness in adapting to AI-driven technological advancements poses a major challenge. The limited availability of competent human resources, particularly among administrators and lecturers, hampers the integration of technology into the pesantren's educational system. This results in delays in adopting AI-based learning methods and an underutilization of technology to enhance educational management efficiency. Therefore, collaboration between religious scholars, educators, and technology experts is essential to integrate AI seamlessly while preserving the core essence of pesantren education, which is deeply rooted in morality and spirituality. With the right approach, AI can serve as a powerful tool to strengthen pesantren education, improve learning quality, and expand access to knowledge for students in the digital age.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The digital transformation of traditional education refers to the application of digital technologies to change the way education is delivered and experienced. This includes the adoption of tools such as online learning platforms, AI-powered educational applications, and other kinds of edtech [2][3]. The goal of this transformation is to improve the accessibility, efficiency, and effectiveness of education while making learning more engaging and individualized for students [4].

The development of digital technology, particularly in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), has reshaped education worldwide. This transformation does not only occur in general education but has also begun to permeate religious-based educational institutions, such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). The following literature review discusses various perspectives and research findings on the implementation of AI, digitization and the role of AI in education, ethics, and responsible innovation in education, especially in the context of Islamic boarding schools [5][6][7][8][9][10].

*Corresponding Author Email: tutiklestari89@gmail.com

Although numerous studies have highlighted the importance of digitization and AI in education, there is still a gap when it comes to Islamic boarding schools. First, few empirical studies discuss the long-term effectiveness of AI in traditional institutions such as pesantren. Second, there is limited research on the sociocultural impacts, including changes in teacher-student relationships (kiai, ustaz, and santri). Third, more in-depth studies are needed to design AI-based curricula aligned with Islamic values. Studies highlight the potential of AI to enhance personalized learning and streamline assessments [11][12][13][14][15][16][17][18]. However, successful implementation requires infrastructure readiness, teacher training, and ethical considerations to prevent cultural misalignment. Moving forward, researchers can focus on [19][20][21][22][23][24]:

1. Developing AI-Based Learning Models aligned with the teaching methodologies of Islamic boarding schools.
2. Evaluating Sociocultural Impacts of technology integration, including shifts in interaction patterns among kiai, ustaz, and students.
3. Establishing Policies and Regulations for AI implementation in Islamic educational institutions, ensuring responsible innovation that avoids creating new disparities.

Table 1. Table Literature Review of Transforming Digital on Pesantren

Digitization and the Role of AI in Education	Transforming Islamic Boarding Schools in the Digital Era	Integrating Traditional Values and Technology
Ahmad [1] highlights the importance of AI in modern education. He explains that AI can enhance learning efficiency through material personalization and automated assessment. The implementation of AI can also shift the conventional teaching paradigm to become more interactive and collaborative.	**Yusuf [25]** introduces the concept of "Pesantren 4.0," emphasizing the importance of technological adaptation without abandoning Islamic values. He argues that collaboration among stakeholders (government, private sector, and community) needs to be strengthened so that digitization in Islamic boarding schools can proceed smoothly.	**Dewi [7]** points out the need for "curriculum adjustment" that maintains deep Islamic studies yet incorporates sufficient digital literacy.

The literature shows that digitization and AI offer significant opportunities to improve learning effectiveness and efficiency, including within Islamic boarding schools [25]. However, successful implementation depends largely on infrastructure readiness, human resource competence, and compatibility with traditional values. Ethics and a responsible innovation approach are also key to ensuring that digital transformation does not erode the identity of Islamic boarding schools as centers of Islamic learning. With synergy among government, academia, and practitioners, AI development in Islamic boarding schools is expected to proceed optimally, consistent with Islamic values and contemporary demands.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a mixed methods approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pesantren education. This approach is chosen to explore the preparedness, challenges, and adaptation strategies of pesantren in responding to AI-driven technological advancements. In the quantitative phase, this study utilizes surveys as the primary instrument to collect data from pesantren administrators, lecturers, and students. The survey aims to measure AI literacy levels, technological infrastructure readiness, and the availability of human resources capable of managing new technologies. The collected data is then analyzed statistically to identify trends and patterns in pesantren's preparedness for AI adoption.

Meanwhile, the qualitative phase is conducted through in-depth interviews and observations at specific pesantren, such as Pesantren Darunnajah, to gain deeper insights into the challenges faced and strategies implemented in integrating AI into the learning system and educational management. Thematic analysis is employed to explore stakeholders' perspectives on AI adoption, emerging barriers, and potential opportunities for leveraging AI in the digital transformation of pesantren education.

By employing a mixed methods approach, this study aims to provide a holistic perspective on pesantren's readiness to adopt AI while offering strategic recommendations aligned with the unique characteristics of pesantren-based education. This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, following a series of systematic steps to ensure comprehensive results. The research process consists of the following stages:

1. Planning and Problem Identification
    - Conducting a literature review on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education, with a particular focus on its application in pesantren.
    - Identifying key challenges such as technological preparedness, AI literacy, and human resource limitations within pesantren, particularly in Pesantren Darunnajah and other pesantren in Jakarta.
    - Establishing research objectives and formulating questions that will be addressed through both quantitative and qualitative methods.
2. Data Collection

a. Quantitative Approach
- Developing a structured survey questionnaire to evaluate pesantren readiness for AI adoption, focusing on AI literacy, technological infrastructure, and the number of educators and administrators with AI knowledge.
- Selecting a research sample from pesantren in Jakarta with potential or interest in adopting AI-driven technology.
- Distributing questionnaires to key respondents, including pesantren administrators, lecturers, and students.
- Gathering and processing quantitative data for statistical evaluation.

b. Qualitative Approach
- Conducting in-depth interviews with pesantren stakeholders, including leaders, educators, and students, to gain insights into the challenges and potential of AI integration.
- Performing direct observations of the technological infrastructure and AI-based learning systems in the selected pesantren.
- Collecting and reviewing relevant policy documents and materials on technology integration in pesantren for further analysis.

3. Data Analysis

a. Quantitative Analysis
- Utilizing descriptive statistical methods to analyze survey data and identify trends in pesantren preparedness for AI adoption.
- Applying correlation analysis to explore relationships between AI literacy, infrastructure readiness, and human resource capacity.

b. Qualitative Analysis
- Implementing thematic analysis to identify emerging patterns from interviews and observations.
- Assessing stakeholder perspectives on AI implementation and the obstacles faced.
- Evaluating policies and existing strategies related to pesantren digitalization.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations
- Integrating the findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses to develop a comprehensive understanding of pesantren readiness for AI adoption.
- Proposing strategic recommendations for pesantren to implement AI while preserving their traditional values and Islamic educational identity.
- Identifying potential areas for future research on pesantren digitalization to enhance AI-driven educational advancements.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results and Discussion is a section challenges and barriers in AI Adaptation at Pesantren: Although AI has many benefits, its implementation in pesantren faces several challenges, including: a)*Limited technology infrastructure:* Many pesantren still lack access to the internet and adequate devices; b)*Lack of digital literacy among educators:* Teachers and ustaz need training in using AI-based technologies; c)*Ethical aspects and pesantren values:* It is important to preserve Islamic values in the application of technology to ensure it aligns with the principles of pesantren education.

Issues in Technological Innovation including: a)*Principles and Data Security:* The growing use of technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and smart sensors, raises ethical questions about the collection, use, and protection of individuals' personal data. The need to ensure that data use is carried out ethically and that individual privacy is respected. As technology advances, cyber security threats also grow. Cyberattacks can damage information systems, steal sensitive data, or even cause physical damage through attacks on critical infrastructure. The need to protect information systems and technology infrastructure from potentially damaging cyber attacks; b)*Mental and Social Health:* Technology use, especially social media and video games, has been linked to mental health problems such as stress, depression and addiction. Apart from that, technology can also influence social dynamics and human interactions, both positively and negatively. There is a need to understand the mental and social health impacts of technology and find ways to manage and minimize the associated risks; c)*Environmental Impact:* The development and use of technology can have a significant impact on the environment, either through high energy consumption, pollution, or excessive use of natural resources. There is a need to consider how technology can be developed and implemented taking into account its impact on the environment and promoting sustainable practices.

Value-Based Approach in Technological Innovation including: The Importance of Human Values including: a)*Respect for Human Rights:* Technological innovation must consider its impact on human rights, such as the right to privacy, freedom of expression and social justice. It is necessary to ensure that technology is not used to violate human rights or reinforce inequalities; b)*Transparency and Accountability:* Companies and technology developers must be transparent about how their products and services work, as well as their impact on users and society. The need to ensure that technology-related decisions and actions can be accounted for and can be understood by the public; c)*Fairness and Inclusivity:* Technological innovation must be directed at creating equal opportunities for all people, without reinforcing social inequalities or discrimination. It is important to ensure that technology can be easily accessed and used by various groups in society, including those who are vulnerable or marginalized; d)*Sustainable and Environmentally Friendly:* Technology must be developed taking into account its impact on the environment and encouraging sustainable practices. This includes reducing energy consumption, reducing e-waste, and integrating technology

solutions to support sustainable development goals; e)Prioritizing Human Welfare: Technological innovation must aim to improve overall human welfare, both physically, mentally and socially. It is necessary to ensure that technology not only provides economic benefits, but also improves the quality of life and happiness of individuals and society in general; f)*Influence of Culture and Environment:* It is important to pay attention to local culture and values in the technology development environment. This includes understanding the needs and preferences of local communities and ensuring that technology does not conflict with cultural or religious values held by the community.

A value-based approach to technological innovation emphasizes the importance of prioritizing human interests and societal welfare in the development and implementation of new technologies. This requires active engagement from a wide range of stakeholders, including technology companies, governments, academia, and civil society, to ensure that technology continues to provide positive benefits for humans while strengthening the values that society at large deems important.

Following are some of the key stakeholders typically involved in technological innovation: a)*The Role of Scientists and Technology Developers;* b)*Educational and Research Institutions:* Educational and research institutions have a role in producing the knowledge and skills needed to support technological innovation. They can also be partners for technology companies in the development of new products and innovative solutions; c)*Technology Companies and Developers:* Technology companies are key stakeholders in technological innovation. They are responsible for developing new products and services and ensuring that the technology they develop meets high standards of quality and safety; d)The Role of Government: The government plays an important role in regulating and supervising technological innovation to ensure that the technology developed complies with applicable regulations and does not violate the law. They can also provide financial and policy support to encourage sustainable and inclusive technological innovation; e)*The Role of Society Civil Society and Advocacy Groups:* Civil society and advocacy groups are often the voice for the general public's interests in technological innovation. They can raise concerns about the social, environmental or ethical impacts of new technologies, and encourage companies and governments to act responsibly. This mind map displays the relationships between future of AI in Education with Evaluation of AI-driven Education Transformation.

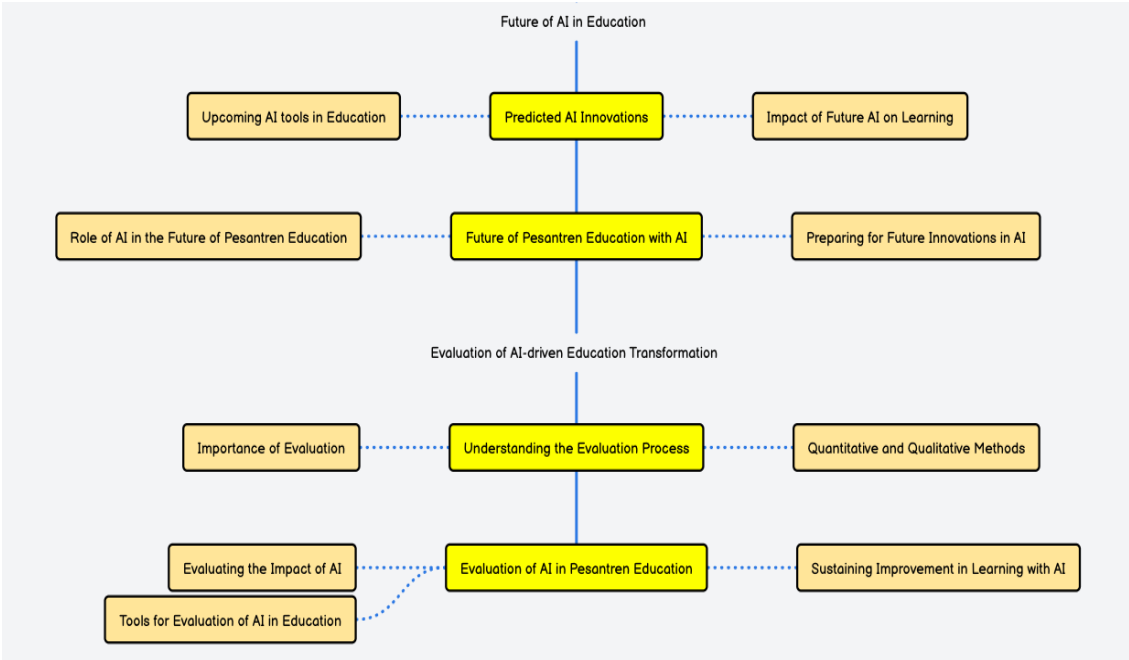

Figure 1. Evaluation of AI – Driven Education Transformation

5. CONCLUSION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in pesantren education, including at Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School, represents an innovative approach to enhancing learning quality and improving educational management efficiency. Although challenges such as limited technological infrastructure and low digital literacy among administrators and educators persist, AI holds significant potential in supporting the transformation of pesantren education. With well-structured strategies, AI adoption can be implemented without compromising the traditional values of pesantren, thereby creating a more effective and relevant educational system in the digital era.

In the future, AI implementation at Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School is expected to introduce more personalized and effective learning methods, improving students' comprehension and overall educational experience. AI will play a crucial role in transforming teaching methodologies by providing tailored educational resources, enabling real-time assessments, and fostering more interactive learning between teachers and students. Overall, AI presents a transformative opportunity for pesantren education by enhancing both learning processes and institutional management. While challenges such as infrastructure limitations and a lack

of AI-trained educators remain, a well-structured AI adoption strategy can help Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School embrace digital transformation without losing its core Islamic values. Through responsible innovation and collaboration with various stakeholders, pesantren can evolve into tech-driven educational institutions that equip students with essential skills for the digital age while preserving their rich Islamic heritage and traditions. Future research on AI integration in pesantren education can explore the following areas: 1)AI-Driven Curriculum Development: Investigating how AI can be used to design personalized learning pathways for pesantren students while aligning with Islamic educational values; 2)Teacher and Administrator Readiness for AI Adoption: Analyzing the level of digital literacy among pesantren educators and developing training models to enhance their AI competencies; 3)Ethical and Religious Implications of AI in Islamic Education: Examining the ethical challenges and religious considerations of AI implementation in pesantren, ensuring it aligns with Islamic teachings; 5)Hybrid Learning Models for Pesantren Education: Exploring the effectiveness of AI-powered hybrid learning models that combine traditional pesantren teaching with modern digital tools; 5) Comparative Studies of AI Implementation in Islamic and Conventional Education: Comparing the AI adoption process in pesantren with mainstream educational institutions to identify best practices and adaptation strategies. These research directions will contribute to a deeper understanding of AI's role in Islamic education and facilitate a smooth transition towards a technology-enhanced learning environment in pesantren.

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