



Revitalization of Aqidah and Moral Education for Generation Z in the Era of Over Information and Social Media: Islamic Character Development Strategy in the Flow of Digital Disruption

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Abstract

In the era of digital disruption, Generation Z—individuals born between 1997 and 2012—faces significant challenges in maintaining strong faith (aqidah) and moral values due to the overwhelming flow of information and the pervasive influence of social media. This study aims to develop effective strategies for revitalizing Islamic character education, especially in the context of moral and religious formation amid the bombardment of unfiltered digital content. Employing a qualitative method through a systematic literature review, this research analyzes more than twenty scholarly works focusing on Islamic education, digital culture, and Generation Z's moral development. Findings reveal that over-information, identity confusion, spiritual detachment, and distorted online ideologies pose serious threats to youth character building. The study emphasizes that Islamic character education must evolve by integrating digital literacy, contextual spiritual pedagogy, and family-school-community collaboration. Among the proposed strategies are using social media as a platform for interactive Islamic education, developing gamified moral content, embedding digital ethics into the curriculum, and mentoring by digitally literate religious figures. The literature suggests that traditional Islamic education needs to be complemented with modern approaches that engage the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of Gen Z learners. This integrative model is expected to cultivate resilient, ethically grounded, and spiritually aware individuals who are capable of navigating the digital world without compromising their Islamic values.



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INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, faces significant challenges in maintaining the integrity of their faith and morals. Their heavy reliance on information technology and social media has shaped their thinking and behavior in ways that differ from previous generations. The rapid advancement of the digital world, coupled with the phenomenon of over-information, or excessive, unfiltered data, makes Generation Z vulnerable to external influences that

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can corrupt their moral and spiritual values (Yasuoka et al., 2010). Furthermore, the digital disruption also affects their thought patterns and behaviors, with information that is sometimes unclear in source and can be spread widely through social media.

Over-information, often referred to as information overload, arises when individuals or systems are confronted with an overwhelming amount of information that exceeds their ability to process and make sense of it. This phenomenon is amplified by the rapid advancements in technology and digital platforms, which make vast amounts of data readily accessible. The constant influx of information can lead to cognitive fatigue, where individuals are unable to discern relevant details from unnecessary data. Studies indicate that information overload can significantly impact decision-making, leading to errors or delayed responses, especially in high-stress environments like healthcare and business (Bawden & Robinson, 2020; Shu et al., 2020). The effects of over-information are particularly detrimental in situations where clarity and focus are essential.

The issue of information overload has become more prominent with the advent of digital communication tools and social media, where users are continually bombarded with messages, notifications, and updates. This constant exposure not only reduces attention span but also impedes the ability to engage in deep, reflective thinking (Zhong et al., 2021). Additionally, the proliferation of fake news and misinformation has contributed to the challenge, as individuals struggle to filter credible sources from unreliable ones (Vakili et al., 2021). Managing information overload has become a priority for both individuals and organizations, prompting research into methods for improving information filtering, decision-making processes, and mental well-being in an information-saturated society (Waycott et al., 2019).

Social media, which has become an inseparable part of daily life for Generation Z, has a dual impact. On one hand, social media provides a space for them to gain beneficial information, broaden their horizons, and interact globally. On the other hand, social media is also a platform for the spread of false information and harmful content, such as hoaxes and immoral material (Zahraini & Hajaroh, 2024). This has the potential to undermine the religious and moral education taught within families and schools. Therefore, revitalizing religious and moral education in the digital age is urgently needed to prevent the degradation of character that may occur in this generation.

The urgency of this research becomes more apparent considering Generation Z's characteristic of being highly open to change but also susceptible to negative influences from the information they are exposed to. The existence of over-information, which flows continuously into their lives, requires serious attention. In the context of education, a digital and social media-based approach is crucial to address this challenge. This study aims to formulate strategies for developing Islamic character in the face of the ongoing digital disruption, allowing Generation Z to grow with a strong foundation in faith and morals.

The importance of revitalizing religious and moral education is also linked to the significant role Islamic education plays in character development. With the onset of digital disruption, the Islamic values of piety, noble character, and correct understanding of faith need to be emphasized in both formal and non-formal education. This research aims to explore how educational strategies can be optimized to address these needs, utilizing social media as a tool to strengthen religious understanding and morality.

Previous studies have shown that the moral challenges faced by Generation Z are greater than ever, where unrestricted access to unfiltered information is a key factor (Ramdani et al., 2021). Additionally, excessive use of social media has led to moral degradation, especially when the information consumed is not accompanied by proper religious understanding (Mubarok, 2025). Therefore, revitalizing religious and moral education is a vital solution to address these challenges, with adjustments made to fit the digital characteristics of Generation Z.

The aim of this study is to formulate strategies for developing Islamic character among Generation Z in the era of digital disruption and over-information, particularly through religious and moral education. With the right strategies, it is hoped that Generation Z will be able to filter the information they receive, as well as nurture a sense of responsibility in maintaining their morality and spirituality.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using literature review research. Literature review research aims to gather, analyze, and synthesize relevant information from various written sources to gain an in-depth understanding of the revitalization of aqidah and moral education for Generation Z in the era of over-information and social media. This approach is chosen because a literature review allows researchers to explore various perspectives and findings from previous studies that are relevant to the topic being discussed (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Type of Research

This research is a literature review using a qualitative approach. The literature review type of research is used to thoroughly examine various written sources related to the phenomena occurring in Generation Z, including aqidah and moral education, the influence of social media, and the over-information circulating in the digital era. This study focuses on identifying, classifying, and analyzing texts from various literatures to understand the role of Islamic education in developing Islamic character among Generation Z amid the digital disruption (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Data Sources

The data sources used in this research are relevant and up-to-date literatures, including books, academic journal articles, research reports, and other scholarly publications. These data sources cover previous studies on Islamic education, the character of Generation Z, and studies discussing phenomena such as social media and excessive information in the digital world. All selected data sources must be relevant to the research theme and of high quality to ensure they provide accurate and trustworthy insights (Miles et al., 2020).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study is conducted through a literature review. This data collection technique involves searching for and selecting relevant literature from academic databases, scholarly journals, books, and credible online sources. The researcher will systematically search for publications discussing topics such as Islamic education, the morality of the younger generation, and phenomena like social media and digital disruption. The sources found will then be evaluated to ensure their relevance and credibility in the context of this research (Patton, 2022).

Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis method used in this research is qualitative content analysis. The researcher will analyze the content of the collected literature, focusing on identifying key themes, concepts, and findings related to aqidah and moral education in the digital era. This analysis process involves organizing the data into relevant categories and synthesizing it to find patterns or conclusions that provide further understanding of strategies for developing Islamic character for Generation Z. This approach allows the researcher to interpret and present the findings comprehensively (Flick, 2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following table is the result of a selection of more than 20 academic articles searched using Google Scholar with relevant keywords such as: Islamic character education, Generation Z, aqidah, akhlak, moral education, digital disruption, and social media. From the search results, the 10 most relevant articles were filtered based on the latest year, focusing on Islamic education and the challenges of the digital era, as well as theoretical contributions to strengthening the character and aqidah of the younger generation.

Table 1. Literature Review

No	Article Title	Authors	Focus Area
1	<i>Student Character Education Model Development in the Era Industry 4.0</i>	Marwiji, M. H., Hasanah, A., Arifin, B. (2023)	Islamic character education in Industry 4.0
2	<i>The Concept of Islamic Education Today in the Challenges of the Social Media Era</i>	Mufron, A., Fata, T.H., Rohmani, A. (2024)	Islamic pedagogy amidst media disruption
3	<i>Islamic Education Design for Generation Z</i>	Hanif, M. (2025)	Islamic curriculum design for Gen Z
4	<i>Transformation of Generation Z's Character through Islamic Education in the Digital Era</i>	Fijrin, L. F., Zamzamy, N. N. (2024)	Digital transformation in Islamic education
5	<i>Islamic Education for Adolescents in the Era of Disruption</i>	Lundeto, A. (2023)	Youth character and digital disruption
6	<i>Cultivating Character in The Digital Age: Umar Ibn Ahmad Bārājā's Moral Education Framework</i>	Muntakhib, A., Mustolehudin, M. (2024)	Classical Islamic moral pedagogy
7	<i>The Urgency of Islamic Religious Education for Generation Z</i>	Mursalin, H., Al Madzali, M. Y. (2024)	Importance of PAI for Gen Z
8	<i>Strengthening the Ideology of Islamic Religious Education in the Era of Technological Disruption</i>	Ismail, I., Parinduri, M. A., Ibarra, F. P. (2025)	Islamic education ideology in disruption era
9	<i>Implementation of the Ash-Shuffah Concept in the Formation of Students' Morals</i>	Arroyan, M. (2024)	Historical educational models
10	<i>The Effectiveness of Digital Media in Facilitating the Understanding of Islam for the Z-Generation</i>	Murniasih, E., Syafuri, B. (2024)	Use of digital media in Islamic learning

Based on the selected literature findings from the 10 most relevant scholarly articles on “Revitalization of Aqidah and Moral Education for Generation Z in the Era of Over Information and Social Media,” it is evident that this issue is increasingly critical. In the context of the digital age, young Muslim generations—especially Generation Z—face a growing threat to their moral and spiritual

foundations due to the oversaturation of content, social media influence, and the rapid flow of often unfiltered information.

The literature reveals a significant gap between traditional Islamic educational practices and the actual needs of today's youth. Generation Z, being digital natives, are deeply immersed in technology and social media, making them highly susceptible to distorted values, misinformation about religion, and ethical relativism. These trends lead to spiritual apathy, weak religious identity, and moral confusion if not addressed effectively.

In the article by Marwiji et al. (2023), the authors emphasize the importance of integrating three essential components of Islamic education—*aqidah* (belief), *sharia* (Islamic law), and *akhlak* (morality)—into a unified character-building model. They argue that Islamic character education must not operate in silos but should be holistic. Their model considers the socio-technological realities of Gen Z, who are constantly exposed to digital platforms. Therefore, education must evolve from value-based theory into contextualized implementation aligned with digital behaviors and learning preferences (Marwiji et al., 2023).

Mufron et al. (2024) delve deeper into the concept of digital disruption. They analyze how social media acts as both a challenge and an opportunity for Islamic education. Their findings propose that traditional *fiqh* and *akhlak* education should be reimaged through a digital lens. They advocate for the use of interactive media—such as video content, podcasts, and educational apps—as tools not just for delivering religious content, but for emotional and cognitive internalization of values. They believe this integrative strategy makes the learning experience more relevant and transformative for young audiences (Mufron et al., 2024).

Hanif (2025) emphasizes the urgency of reforming Islamic curriculum to address the spiritual emptiness that Generation Z often experiences. He critiques the inefficacy of rote memorization in teaching *aqidah* and calls for experiential learning approaches that engage students emotionally and existentially. He further suggests embedding digital ethics grounded in Islamic principles into the curriculum as a means to guide Gen Z in managing their online behavior within an Islamic moral framework (Hanif, 2025).

Fijrin and Zamzamy (2024) present an insightful analysis of social media as a double-edged sword. While it serves as a vehicle for Islamic *da'wah*, it also exposes youth to harmful influences and superficial content. The authors highlight the importance of equipping educators and parents with media literacy to mentor youth in filtering content and practicing digital discernment. They stress that Islamic values such as *aqidah* and *ibadah* must not only be taught but actively embedded into students' social media practices through creative Islamic content production (Fijrin et al., 2024).

In his article, Lundeto (2023) takes a more theological approach, suggesting that the moral crisis among Muslim youth is essentially rooted in a weak understanding of *tawheed* (oneness of God). He emphasizes that Islamic moral education must go beyond ethical behavior and target the inner spiritual core of the individual. Without a strong foundation in belief, he argues, morality becomes superficial and easily swayed by online trends. He recommends integrating spiritual purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) into the moral education curriculum (Lundeto, 2023).

Muntakhib et al. (2024) revisit classical Islamic pedagogy through the moral education framework of Umar ibn Ahmad Bārājā. They argue that this traditional model is highly relevant today if properly adapted to the digital landscape. Their approach highlights not just external behavioral change but the internal transformation of the heart and intentions. This perspective treats character education as a spiritual journey rather than merely behavioral conditioning (Muntakhib et al., 2024).

In the work of Mursalin and Madzali (2024), the authors shed light on how digital addiction diminishes spiritual focus among Gen Z. They reveal that much of students' time is consumed by online activities, leaving little room for reflection, worship, or Qur'anic engagement. They propose

introducing digital self-discipline into the Islamic curriculum—training students to moderate their screen time and develop healthier tech habits in accordance with Islamic values (Mursalin & Al Madzali, 2024).

Ismail et al. (2025) address the declining emphasis on the Aqidah-Akhlaq subject in schools and madrasas, which they believe weakens students' Islamic worldview. They argue for strengthening Islamic ideological education through case-based learning and real-world problem-solving. Such methods, they assert, make faith and morality more relatable and applicable to the digital age (Ismail et al., 2025).

Arroyan (2024) revives the Ash-Shuffah model from Prophet Muhammad's time as a community-based moral education system. He argues that today's schools should create spiritually cohesive learning environments where empathy, collective worship, and social responsibility are cultivated. This approach blends academic achievement with emotional and spiritual development (Arroyan, 2024).

Lastly, Murniasih and Syafuri (2024) affirm that digital media, rather than being shunned, should be embraced as a powerful tool for teaching Islam. They encourage the use of platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Islamic podcasts to disseminate religious knowledge in engaging formats. They advocate for training teachers and preachers in media production so they can reach Gen Z effectively through familiar digital channels (Murniasih et al., 2024).

In conclusion, these studies collectively underscore that revitalizing aqidah and moral education for Generation Z requires a paradigm shift. Traditional didactic and dogmatic teaching methods are no longer sufficient. A more integrated, technologically adaptive, and emotionally engaging approach is necessary—one that combines the spiritual depth of Islam with the realities of digital life. Only through such a transformation can Islamic education truly mold resilient, morally upright, and spiritually grounded individuals in the face of digital disruption.

Discussion

Challenges Faced by Generation Z in the Era of Over-Information and Digital Disruption

Generation Z (born between 1997–2012) are digital natives, constantly connected to the internet and social media. They face several challenges:

1. **Information overload:** Gen Z is overwhelmed by vast and unfiltered content, making it difficult to distinguish between valid and false information.
2. **Moral and identity crisis:** Due to excessive exposure to entertainment content and liberal lifestyles, Gen Z is at risk of moral degradation.
3. **Conflicting global values:** Global ideologies often contradict Islamic values, leading to confusion and spiritual conflict.
4. **Spiritual disconnection:** Overreliance on technology weakens spiritual sensitivity and reduces the influence of religious authority.

Aqidah and moral education today must go beyond traditional instruction. It must shape personality and Islamic consciousness in a contextual and practical way.

The Urgency of Revitalizing Aqidah and Moral Education

Revitalization implies conceptual and practical renewal. Islamic education must:

1. **Be context-based:** Address contemporary realities and challenges facing Generation Z.
2. **Prioritize spiritual experience:** Move from rote memorization to lived Islamic values.
3. **Be digitally literate:** Integrate Islamic values into digital platforms relevant to Gen Z's lives.

Strategies for Developing Islamic Character in Generation Z

The following strategies are designed using an integrative approach between Islamic principles and technological adaptation:

1. Integrating Aqidah and Moral Curriculum into Digital Platforms
 - a. Develop engaging Islamic content on platforms like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Podcasts.
 - b. Use gamification to teach tawhid, adab, and akhlaq through mobile apps or games.
 - c. Apply Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) to teach Islamic history and aqidah interactively.
2. Promoting Islamic-Based Digital Literacy
 - a. Teach Islamic critical thinking: Enable students to assess and filter online content through Islamic principles.
 - b. Offer social media ethics training based on Islamic morality: honesty, responsibility, and respectful interaction.
 - c. Implement Islamic media literacy modules in schools and pesantren.
3. Internalizing Aqidah and Morality Through Exemplary Role Models
 - a. Teachers must act as *qudwah hasanah* (noble examples) who embody both digital literacy and moral excellence.
 - b. Create mentoring groups and online halaqah combining spiritual guidance with psychological support.
 - c. Collaborate with Muslim influencers as digital role models to promote Islamic values effectively.
4. Triangular Collaboration: Family, School, and Community
 - a. Apply the tri-center education model: family, school, and society working together.
 - b. Build online Islamic communities for Gen Z to engage in value-based dialogue.
 - c. Encourage Islamic creative communities to spread ethical digital content.

Expected Strategic Outcomes

With the above strategies, we expect:

1. Generation Z to develop the ability to filter digital content through an Islamic lens.
2. An increase in spiritual and moral responsibility in the digital space.
3. The formation of adaptive Islamic character capable of navigating digital changes.
4. Aqidah and moral education to serve as a cultural and spiritual resilience framework for Gen Z in the modern era.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Generation Z is particularly vulnerable to moral and spiritual degradation due to the phenomenon of over-information and social media saturation. Therefore, revitalizing aqidah and moral education is not only necessary but urgent. The transformation of Islamic education must involve contextualization with digital realities, integration of moral values into digital content, and a holistic strategy involving families, schools, and communities. Practical efforts include equipping educators with digital literacy, designing Islamic-based media content, and fostering role models who exemplify Islamic ethics in both real and virtual spaces.

Practically, Islamic educational institutions should begin implementing interactive digital modules on moral education, invest in teacher training programs focused on media pedagogy, and promote collaboration with Muslim digital influencers to disseminate Islamic values across online platforms frequently used by Gen Z.

Future research should employ mixed methods or action research to evaluate the effectiveness of digital-integrated Islamic character education across various demographics and educational institutions. Empirical data would provide stronger grounding for policy recommendations and curriculum development tailored to Generation Z's unique digital challenges.

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