



THE HOLISTIC EDUCATION MODEL AS A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE LEARNING IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

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Abstract: This study aimed to analyze and explain the holistic education paradigm at Islamic Boarding School, with a focus on the implementation of a sustainable modern education model based on spiritual values. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach involving Al-Bahjah lecturers as informants, as well as collecting data through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman technique, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification, accompanied by source triangulation to test data validity. The results showed that Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School implements an educational pattern that balances religious knowledge mastery, academic competency development, and selective technology utilization based on morals. This strategy was realized through internal empowerment, the involvement of external experts, and the application of student-centered learning that fosters the independence of students. This study concluded that Islamic boarding schools had the capacity to serve as holistic education models that were able to adapt to modernity while maintaining their spiritual values as the main foundation of Islamic education. These findings indicated that the holistic education model applied at Al-Bahjah provided a meaningful framework for integrating tradition and modernity in Islamic education. Practically, this study highlighted the importance of character-based technology integration and continuous teacher development as key strategies to ensure the sustainability and relevance of Islamic education in the digital era.

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of Islamic education in Indonesia faces serious challenges in the context of modernization and the digital age, especially for Islamic boarding schools, which are known as the basis of Islamic scholarship (Hambali & Mardiyah, 2023; Rijal, 2023). In recent decades, the penetration of

digital technology has changed almost all aspects of life, including how students obtain information, build social relationships, and develop 21st-century skills (Barorah et al., 2025; Kusuma et al., 2025; Rani et al., 2025). This situation has prompted Islamic boarding schools to not only maintain their role as centers for teaching classical Islamic texts, but also to adapt to educational patterns that are more responsive to technological developments (Kazanskaia, 2025; Mahmudov, 2025). The shift in behavior among the younger generation, who are increasingly digital natives, requires Islamic boarding schools to transform so that they do not fall behind in producing graduates who are relevant to the needs of the times (Reimers, 2024a; Yuan & Yu, 2024).

However, in reality, many Islamic boarding schools still face structural and cultural obstacles in adapting to technology. On the one hand, modernization is seen as an opportunity to expand the reach of Islamic preaching and education, but on the other hand, it is also perceived as a threat to traditional values that have been deeply rooted for centuries (John et al., 2023; Reimers, 2024a; Yuan & Yu, 2024). For example, limited internet access, uneven technological infrastructure, and the lack of digital competence among educators are real obstacles to the digital transformation of Islamic boarding schools (Mensah et al., 2024; Saini et al., 2023; Vaio et al., 2024). In addition, resistance from some Islamic boarding schools to technology-based innovations has slowed down the modernization process, creating a gap between the idealism of Islamic education and the realities of the needs of the digital generation (Raman et al., 2024; Reimers, 2024b; Strielkowski et al., 2025).

Initial observations at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School revealed a significant gap between the preservation of profound spiritual traditions and the escalating demands for 21st-century competencies. This disparity was primarily caused by the rapid influx of digital transformation, which created a tension between the students' traditional routine and the unavoidable necessity for digital literacy and collaborative creativity. The field findings indicated that if this gap remains unaddressed, the consequence will be a decline in the institution's competitive relevance compared to more technologically adaptive formal schools. Furthermore, the researchers identified a major challenge in maintaining moral integrity and *adab* while attempting to integrate modern digital tools. Consequently, this study identified an urgent need for a systemic innovation that harmonizes Al-Bahjah's core Islamic values with the practical requirements of the modern era.

To address the aforementioned challenges, this study proposed the implementation of a holistic education paradigm as a strategic solution to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic values and modern digital requirements at Al-Bahjah. This model is theoretically grounded in the concept of 'integrated education,' which emphasizes the synergy between spiritual depth and cognitive development. Previous studies by Aprilianata et al., (2025) and Sailin et al. (2024) have demonstrated that such a holistic approach effectively fosters student resilience and adaptability in the face of global moral degradation and rapid technological shifts. By prioritizing *adab qabla' ilm* (manners before knowledge)

within a modern curriculum framework, Al-Bahjah's approach ensured that digital transformation serves as an instrument for character building and *da'wah* rather than a threat to institutional identity.

Various studies support the importance of a holistic educational approach in Islamic boarding schools in order to respond to the challenges of the digital age. The concept of holistic education, which combines intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and social development, is expected to produce students who are not only religious but also adaptive in facing the needs of the 21st century (Jaedun et al., 2024; Nuis et al., 2023; Syamsuni et al., 2025). However, some literature also showed that traditional Islamic education theory is currently still unable to systematically absorb and apply digital element (Feriyanto & Anjariyah, 2024; Nasution et al., 2025; Rubtsova et al., 2023)s. For example, although technologies such as e-learning and digital media are expected to support pesantren education, many institutions experience obstacles such as limited infrastructure and a lack of training for educators. Furthermore, research in the domain of curriculum reveals that Islamic boarding schools have the potential to optimize their management through digital integration and value-based curriculum development; however, to date, these applications remain predominantly theoretical and have not been evenly distributed across all Islamic boarding schools (B & Zourmpakis, 2023; Pandita & Kiran, 2023). This literacy indicated a gap between modern Islamic education theory and actual practice, where the digital holistic education paradigm still requires a stronger and more structured conceptual framework and implementation in the context of Islamic boarding schools.

Building upon these limitations, scholarly discourse on digital transformation in education has expanded considerably in recent years, yet empirically grounded investigations into how *pesantren* (boarding school) navigate the intersection of spiritual formation, ethical guidance, and responsible technology adoption in their day-to-day teaching practices remain scarce. This gap leaves institutional leaders without clear direction on how to pursue modernization while keeping the foundational religious character of their schools intact. Broader regional and global reviews consistently highlight recurring difficulties around governance structures, institutional preparedness, and the challenge of preserving core values during periods of digital change. It is against this backdrop that the present case study at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School was undertaken, with the intention of generating an evidence-based model that concretely connects spiritual pedagogy with technology governance grounded in ethical principles. What distinguishes this study is its empirical orientation toward a holistic framework that simultaneously addresses spiritual, moral, and technological dimensions within a single institutional setting; a configuration that remains notably underexplored in recent pesantren-focused scholarship.

Based on this evidence, the hypothesis proposed in this study is that a holistic education paradigm that consciously aligns the integration of technology, moral values, and spiritual learning can serve as a strategic

framework for Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School in facing the challenges and opportunities of the digital era sustainably. The main objective of this study was to analyze and explain the holistic education paradigm applied at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School in Cirebon as a model of sustainable modern Islamic education. The focus of the study was on efforts to integrate Islamic values with 21st-century skills through a balanced approach between the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in the Islamic boarding school education system. Thus, this study sought to affirm the position of Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School as a representative of Islamic educational institutions capable of combining tradition with innovation, making it relevant as a model for sustainable modern education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze the transformation of holistic education at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School. As a researcher, the author acted as the primary instrument who maintains an objective yet analytical stance to gain an in-depth understanding of how the *pesantren* integrates spiritual values with digital literacy. Primary data were collected through purposive sampling involving 8 key informants, consisting of the boarding school supervisors, *ustadz/ustadzah* (teachers), and senior *santri* (students). To ensure the validity of the context, this research accounts for a total population of 1,441 *santri* and 95 teachers within the institution. Data collection techniques included structured in-depth interviews to explore pedagogical philosophy, participatory observation of teaching-learning activities, and documentation related to the integrated curriculum and *pesantren* activities.

The data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes four concurrent stages: data reduction (selecting and focusing on relevant data), data display (presenting findings in descriptive narratives), conclusion drawing, and continuous verification. To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, the researcher applied source triangulation techniques by cross-referencing information obtained from different informant levels and comparing interview results with field observations and institutional documents. This systematic process ensured that the resulting framework for sustainable modern education at Al-Bahjah is both objective and academically rigorous.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The implementation of holistic education at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School is built upon a systemic framework that harmonizes traditional Islamic values with modern educational demands. This conceptual structure is visualized in Figure 1, which illustrates the core pillars of the holistic paradigm, ranging from spiritual integration to adaptive technology utilization that served as the foundation for the institution's sustainable development.

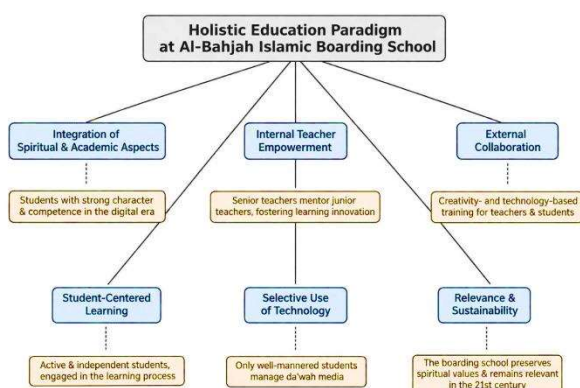


Figure 1. Holistic Education Paradigm at Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School

To provide more in-depth empirical details on how these paradigm pillars are operationalized in the field, Figure 1 summarizes the key research findings categorized by specific holistic aspects and their corresponding data sources.

Table 1. Application of the Holistic Education Model in Sustainable Modern Education

No	Type of Documentation	Data Form	Data Source	Purpose
1	Curriculum & Planning	Syllabus, teaching modules, lesson plans	Curriculum coordinator/teachers	To identify holistic-based learning planning
2	Vision, Mission, and School Values	Written documents	Principal/school archives	To identify the philosophical foundation of holistic education
3	Learning Process	Photos, videos, observation notes	Classroom activities	To observe student-centered learning implementation
4	Spiritual Character Integration	& Documentation of religious activities, routines	Teachers/school documentation	To prove the integration of spiritual and academic aspects
5	Extracurricular Activities	Photos, videos, activity reports	Extracurricular supervisors	To show the development of students' non-academic aspects
6	Teacher Empowerment	Training certificates, workshop documentation	Teachers/school	To identify the improvement of teacher competencies
7	External Collaboration	MoUs, activity documentation	School & partners	To demonstrate collaboration for sustainable education
8	Evaluation & Learning Outcomes	Report cards, student portfolios	Teachers/homeroom teachers	To measure the impact of the educational model implementation
9	Digital Media	Website, social media, LMS	School administrators	To show adaptation to modern education
10	Testimonials	Interviews with students, teachers, or parents	Research informants	To strengthen data with subjective perspectives

The table presented a comprehensive overview of the types of documentation used to examine the application of the Holistic Education Model within the framework of sustainable modern education. It encompasses various data sources, ranging from curriculum planning documents and institutional values to classroom practices, extracurricular activities, and digital media utilization. Each type of documentation is aligned with specific purposes, such as identifying the philosophical foundation of holistic education, observing its practical implementation, and evaluating its outcomes. Additionally, the table highlights the importance of teacher empowerment and external collaboration as key components in ensuring sustainability. Overall, this documentation framework enabled researchers to systematically capture planning, implementation, and evaluation processes, thereby providing robust and triangulated evidence of how holistic education is effectively applied in a modern educational context. Based on data analysis, the holistic education model at Al-Bahjah was implemented through a systemic transformation that merges *pesantren* traditions with modern educational requirements. These findings were classified into three primary frameworks below to achieve educational sustainability.

Integrated Curriculum Framework: Operational Synergy and SDG 4 Values

Al-Bahjah implemented a holistic curriculum that did not separate intellectual (cognitive) and spiritual (affective) dimensions. Operationally, this integration was realized through the *Tafaqquh* program, where students delve into "worldly" sciences (physical/manifest knowledge or *ilmu katon*) such as *Fiqh*, *Nahwu*, and Arabic, balanced with spiritual sciences through *Tasawuf* and moral studies. The operational strength of this model lies in the application of a hidden curriculum. Every learning process began with spiritual rituals such as the recitation of *shalawat*, *tawasul*, and collective prayers for teachers and scholars, aimed at internalizing the values of sincerity and respect for knowledge. This strategy directly supported SDG 4 (Quality Education) by providing an inclusive and character-based learning environment. By upholding the principle of *adab qablal 'ilm* (manners before knowledge), Al-Bahjah offered a solution to the challenges of moral degradation in the globalization era, ensuring that education produces graduates who were not only intellectually brilliant but also morally noble.

The informant explicitly framed the curriculum as dual-oriented: substantive religious scholarship plus deliberate cultivation of *adab* (manners) and social-ethical dispositions. Across interview transcripts, this dual orientation appears repeatedly: curricular units on *fiqh/nahwu* are accompanied by daily practices and teacher modelling that emphasize humility, respect, and social responsibility. Such teacher-led modelling and habitual practice likely operate via social referencing and imitation processes described in recent empirical work on teacher role modelling, and students adopt prosocial attitudes in part through sustained observation of trusted adults.

When linked to the current reality of education, Al-Bahjah's holistic education concept provides an answer to the challenge of moral degradation amid the tide of globalization. An educational model that combines the worldly and the spiritual, and places morals and manners at its center, demonstrates an effort to maintain balance in shaping individuals who are both knowledgeable and noble in character. Thus, the holistic education practiced by Al-Bahjah represents a contemporary Islamic educational strategy that is relevant in responding to the needs of the times without abandoning the basic principles of Islam.

Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School combined the strengthening of religious knowledge with the development of modern academic competencies. So that, students were not only spiritually strong but also relevant to the demands of the digital age. The institution consistently combined the strengthening of religious knowledge with the development of modern academic competencies. This integration ensured that students are not only spiritually grounded but also capable of responding to the demands of the digital era. Field data from interviews and classroom observations confirmed that this dual emphasis is systematically embedded in the learning process and was supported by recent studies.

HR Development Framework: Pedagogical Leadership and Mentor Effectiveness

The development of teacher quality at Al-Bahjah is conducted through a multi-layered system that combines internal strength and external flexibility. The institution applied the Professional Learning Community (PLC) concept through internal empowerment strategies, where senior teachers act as mentors for junior teachers regarding learning innovation and dawah management. If specific competency needs cannot be met internally, Al-Bahjah invites external experts to provide technical and creative training. PLC was a process in which people work together to discover and share learning practices and act in accordance with their learning objectives to improve their professional performance, which aims to benefit students.

Furthermore, if there are no internal *stakeholders* relevant to competency development needs, seek external experts. This reflects the flexibility and responsiveness of the Al-Bahjah Foundation to the needs of its employees. Inviting external experts is also a good thing that can bring innovation in social and technological development for teachers and educational staff in the Al-Bahjah environment. This method can be used to meet the demand for curriculum innovation, especially in dealing with social and technological changes. Creativity and technology-based training are very important in the era of Industry 4.0 to maintain the relevance of learning.

The core pillar of this framework is the teacher's role as an *uswah* or a role model. Through the *Manhajiyah Al-Bahjah* system, every educator is required to provide tangible examples in worship, such as arriving early at the mosque and performing *qiyamul lail* (night prayers) alongside students. This creates a

spiritual bond that transcends formal academic interaction. To ensure the effectiveness of character supervision, Al-Bahjah maintains an ideal educational ratio. With 95 educators supporting 1,441 students, a ratio of approximately 1:15 is established. This ratio allowed every teacher to perform their function as a personal mentor (*murobbi*). This figure significantly supported curriculum effectiveness, as interaction between teachers and students is not limited to formal classrooms but includes 24-hour spiritual assistance.

Adaptive Learning Framework: Controlled Digitalization and Student Focus

Al-Bahjah demonstrates a transformation toward student-centered learning by selectively adopting digital technology. The use of media such as Zoom and Google Meet allowed the learning process to remain interactive across various Al-Bahjah branches, shifting the teacher's role into an active facilitator of discussion. Although traditional methods remain dominant, flexibility in classroom settings, whether indoors, outdoors, or integrated with nature, provides broader space for student participation. The utilization of technology at Al-Bahjah is based on the principle of "Moral Inclusivity." Access to digital devices like laptops and the internet is not granted freely but through a priority scale based on the student's education level and moral track record. Students with a strong record of integrity are given opportunities to manage computer laboratories and dawah media (radio, television, social media) as part of developing 21st-century skills. This strict yet educative control approach serves as an alternative model to prevent addiction to negative content while ensuring technology is used as a sustainable and moral digital literacy tool.

The available facilities include laptops, the internet, websites, and broadcast media such as radio and television, which are used for preaching. Advanced students, especially those in the fields of sharia and multimedia, are given wider access while still under strict supervision.

"Technology is currently highly empowered in various disciplines with varying levels of priority ... As for the Sharia class, there are certain classes that will receive technological facilities, especially in the higher classes, because they depend on scientific concerns that are more focused on Sharia first for the lower classes ... Devices such as laptops, the internet, websites, application-based program development, multimedia radio and television ... Priority is given to students who have proven themselves in terms of morals, manners, and good habits ... social jealousy certainly exists, but it is overcome by strengthening morals ..." (Informant A, Al-Bahjah).

Al-Bahjah utilized technology based on the principle of inclusivity rooted in moral values. Educational technology is indeed available, but access is granted gradually according to educational level, academic needs, and the students' track record of manners and moral conduct. The available facilities include laptops, the internet, websites, and broadcast media such as radio and television, which are used for preaching. Advanced students, especially those in the fields of sharia and multimedia, are given broader access while still under strict supervision.

Based on the interview results, the use of technology at Al-Bahjah for students is based on moral inclusivity. The technology provided to students is regulated by various strict rules and priority scales that aim to maintain the students' morals and manners. The use of technological tools applied in both formal and non-formal education is tailored to the needs with great care. This is in line with research at the Shirotul Fuqoha Islamic Boarding School, which adopts strict regulations and digital literacy to maintain the purity of the students' image amid the use of technology.

For students, the use of technology in learning is restricted except at the higher education level within Al-Bahjah. In addition, the use of technology is still strictly supervised by teachers. There is a unique feature at Al-Bahjah: if a student shows potential in the field of multimedia, such as radio or television, and has a good track record without any violations related to this, they are allowed to gain greater access to participate in *da'wah* (proselytizing) on Al-Bahjah's radio, television, or social media. Students who have greater access to technology than their peers are those who have received good assessments in terms of character, manners, and habits. The management of pesantren social media as a medium for *da'wah* is also strictly carried out by the Muhtarul Huda *Pesantren* in the study, where students at the Muhtarul Huda *Pesantren* manage the organization's social media with clear rules, content that is in line with pesantren values, and supervised creativity. This helps to increase digital awareness and the integrity of *da'wah*.

The study found that while Al-Bahjah strongly emphasized the *kitab kuning* (classical texts), *adab*, and *akhlak*, the pesantren also adopts student-centered learning principles conditionally. This model is applied through the use of technological media to support learning in both central lectures and regular classes. Further explanation shows that the application of student-centered learning is conducted flexibly, adapting to the classroom context, whether closed, open, or in nature like *Sorogan* or *Bandongan*. This demonstrated Al-Bahjah's emphasis on balancing tradition and modernity. In the modern context, despite the dominance of traditional methods, the integration of student-centered learning remains relevant to 21st-century educational demands that prioritize active participation, collaborative skills, and technological utilization. The adoption of this model in pesantren is still limited, but Al-Bahjah's steps reflect a transformation toward more adaptive learning.

Students are given the space to actively participate in learning, including managing the pesantren's media with a selection process based on morals and manners. Students are not only participants but are also entrusted with responsibilities, including managing the pesantren's media platforms. However, this participation is regulated through a moral selection process, ensuring that engagement is aligned with ethical and character-based considerations. Technology is used selectively: only santri with good moral character and who are trusted are allowed to manage the *pesantren's* media, so that technology becomes a means of *da'wah*, not a moral threat. Technology is not treated as a neutral tool but as a medium that must be aligned with moral integrity. Only

students who demonstrate strong character and responsibility are given access to manage digital media, positioning technology as an instrument of *da'wah* rather than a potential moral risk.

If development needs cannot be met internally, Al-Bahjah invites external experts for creativity and technology-based training. The *pesantren* actively involved external experts, particularly in areas related to creativity and technology-based training. Observations of training programs and institutional documentation demonstrate that such collaborations strengthen institutional adaptability and innovation. The holistic education model implemented proves that Islamic boarding schools are capable of maintaining spiritual values while remaining relevant to the challenges of the 21st century. The synthesis of field data indicates that Al-Bahjah Islamic Boarding School is able to maintain its spiritual identity while simultaneously adapting to contemporary challenges. This demonstrates that Islamic boarding schools can remain relevant in the 21st century without compromising their core values.

Discussion

The following discussion evaluates the research findings regarding the holistic education model at Al-Bahjah by integrating field observations, interview data, and a review of relevant literature. This analysis aims to dissect how the *pesantren* institution performs a systemic transformation to harmonize Islamic traditions with 21st-century competency demands. Through three primary framework integrated curriculum, exemplary-based HR development, and adaptive learning. This discussion presents causal arguments regarding the effectiveness of the Al-Bahjah model and its contribution to the sustainability of Islamic education in the global era.

Integrated Curriculum: Synergizing Spiritual and Academic Excellence

The integration of *Fiqh*, *Nahwu*, and Arabic with spiritual Sufism at Al-Bahjah aligned with the concept of science integration in Islamic educational philosophy, which emphasizes a holistic learning experience by combining spiritual, intellectual, and practical aspects. Compared to previous studies (Pan et al., 2023; Yanti, 2025) that often remain in the conceptual realm, this finding demonstrates a practical implementation through a "hidden curriculum" (*shalawat* and *tawasul*) that internalizes values naturally. The integration between *nahwu* and philosophy is implemented through a contextual and analytical learning approach that connects grammatical structures with logical reasoning. This synergy occurred because Al-Bahjah prioritizes *adab qablal 'ilm* (manners before knowledge), creating a foundational mindset where students view academic mastery as a form of spiritual devotion (Abdul-Jabbar & Makki, 2024; Suraijiah et al., 2023). Consequently, the curriculum does not merely transfer information but transforms character, addressing the global challenge of moral degradation. This study contributes a practical model for Islamic institutions to achieve SDG 4 (Quality Education) by proving that traditional pedagogy can effectively coexist with modern academic standards to produce morally resilient

graduates. Through this approach, students learn to understand how meaning is systematically constructed, which parallels the way arguments are developed in philosophical reasoning (Anwar et al., 2025; Aulia et al., 2024; Jenuri et al., 2025).

In addition, discussion-based learning is used as a strategy to strengthen this integration. After conducting grammatical analysis, students are encouraged to engage in guided discussions that connect linguistic structures with philosophical questions. This created a learning environment where language functions not only as a communication tool but also as an instrument for developing reasoning and critical thinking. The results of this integrative approach showed that students demonstrate a deeper understanding of both nahwu and philosophy. They were able to construct more coherent arguments, interpret texts more critically, and relate linguistic forms to broader intellectual contexts. This indicates that the integration of nahwu and philosophy is not only conceptually possible but also empirically effective in enhancing students' analytical and reflective capacities.

Human Resource Development: Pedagogical Leadership and the "Uswah" Model

In the context of the modernization of Islamic education, the main argument driving the urgency of this research is the need to formulate an educational model that is not only responsive to digital developments but also strongly rooted in authentic Islamic values. Research by Putri et al. (2024) and Salamuddin et al. (2024) stated that successful curriculum reform in the digital age requires a holistic approach, namely the integration of technology with Islamic spiritual and ethical teachings so that there is no erosion of core values, while remaining relevant to the contemporary needs of students. On the other hand, Fauzi et al. (2025) and Salamuddin et al. (2024) research shows that the implementation of hybrid learning, which combines classic face-to-face methods with digital instruction and is assessed through a holistic framework, supports the development of 21st-century competencies such as digital literacy, collaboration, and problem-solving, without sacrificing the religious character of the students.

The teacher development strategy at Al-Bahjah, which prioritizes internal mentoring followed by external expert collaboration, is consistent with the Professional Learning Community (PLC) framework. The professional growth is most effective when it is collaborative and goal-oriented. However, Al-Bahjah extends this by emphasizing the teacher as an *uswah* (role model) in daily worship, such as *qiyamul lail*. This exemplary leadership is successful because of the ideal 1:15 teacher-to-student ratio, which facilitates intensive 24-hour spiritual mentoring. The systematic "*Manhajiyah Al-Bahjah*" ensures that even new staff quickly adapt to this culture of integrity. This research contributed to the field of educational management by highlighting that "role-model-based education" is a concrete solution to the modern crisis of identifying authentic mentors, shifting the focus from purely pedagogical skills to holistic moral integrity.

Adaptive Learning: Moral Inclusivity in the Digital Era

The findings on Al-Bahjah's conditional use of technology demonstrated a nuanced alignment with existing theories and prior studies on Student-Centered Learning (SCL) and holistic education. In line with constructivist learning theory, SCL emphasized active student engagement and autonomy. However, Al-Bahjah adapts this principle by integrating moral regulation, thereby extending the framework beyond purely cognitive dimensions (Chen et al., 2024; Schwartz et al., 2025). This approach resonates with previous studies (Abuhassna et al., 2024; Pandita & Kiran, 2023; Suraijiah et al., 2023; Wu, 2024) that highlight the importance of balancing technological integration with character education in Islamic schooling contexts, where digital tools are not value-neutral but must align with ethical and spiritual goals. Compared to earlier research by Hussam & Liyawu (2025) and Murtianingsih & Sujito (2025) which often reports challenges in managing unrestricted technology use in schools, Al-Bahjah presented a more controlled and value-driven model, similar to findings by Hulkin & Santosa (2023) and Lutz et al. (2025), which emphasize linking digital access with behavioral accountability. Furthermore, the involvement of students in managing *da'wah* media reflects an advancement of prior models of digital literacy by embedding it within the framework of *Maqashid Sharia*, thus reinforcing that sustainable modern education can harmonize technological innovation with moral and spiritual development.

Al-Bahjah's approach to technology utilizes Zoom and Google Meet while strictly controlling personal gadget access to reflect a conditional adoption of Student-Centered Learning (SCL). This is consistent with the view that modern *pesantrens* can combine traditional and modern curricula within an essentialist philosophical framework that emphasizes flexibility. Unlike public schools that may face disciplinary issues due to lenient digital policies, Al-Bahjah uses technology based on "Moral Inclusivity". This controlled digitalization is effective because it links digital privileges to a student's moral track record, turning technology into a reward for integrity rather than a source of distraction. By involving students in managing *dawah* media, the institution fosters digital literacy that is grounded in *Maqashid Sharia*.

This study contributes a "preventive-adaptive" strategy for digital-age education, offering a middle ground where technological advancement is embraced without compromising the traditional spiritual roots of the institution. It further demonstrates that the integration of technology can be strategically regulated to reinforce students' moral accountability rather than diminish it. In addition, this approach provides a practical framework for other educational institutions seeking to balance innovation with value-based education. Ultimately, it highlights that sustainable modern education is achievable when digital transformation is guided by ethical and spiritual considerations.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that Al-Bahjah Islamic boarding school successfully implements a holistic education model that harmonizes traditional

Islamic values with modern pedagogical demands. The implicit message of these findings is that the dichotomy between "worldly" and "spiritual" knowledge can be bridged through a systemic transformation that prioritizes *adab* (manners) as the foundation of all learning. By integrating a hidden curriculum and exemplary leadership (*uswah*), the institution proves that Islamic boarding schools are not merely bastions of tradition but are dynamic laboratories for sustainable educational innovation. This model ensures that graduates possess not only high cognitive competence but also the moral integrity required to navigate the complexities of the digital era.

The implications of this research suggest that a character-first approach, supported by an ideal teacher-student ratio and controlled technological integration, is vital for achieving educational sustainability. Theoretically, this study enriches the discourse on holistic education by providing a concrete framework for implementing Student-Centered Learning within a religious context. Practically, the Al-Bahjah model serves as a strategic reference for other Islamic institutions seeking to modernize their curricula without losing their spiritual identity. Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its focus on a single institution, which may affect the generalizability of the findings across diverse cultural or geographic contexts. Additionally, the reliance on a specific number of informants may not fully capture the perspectives of all stakeholders within the large Al-Bahjah ecosystem. Future research should consider longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impact of this holistic model on graduates' professional and social lives. Comparative studies involving different types of Islamic boarding schools would also provide broader insights into how various institutional structures adapt to modern educational demands while maintaining their core religious values.

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