

Reclaiming Human-Centered Education: Muhammadiyah's Progressive Islamic Response to Smart Society 5.0

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Abstract

The concept of Smart Society 5.0 developed in Japan emphasizes a human-centered approach through the integration of digital technology, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and big data to improve social well-being in a sustainable manner. However, this transformation also has serious implications for the world of education, especially related to the potential for dehumanization of learning, the tendency to secularize science, and the inequality of access to education due to the digital divide. This research aims to analyze the strategic position of Muhammadiyah education in facing the dynamics of Smart Society 5.0 and formulate the response of Progressive Islamic Education to these challenges. This research uses a literature study method with a qualitative-descriptive approach through the analysis of scientific literature and official documents of Muhammadiyah published in the range of 2018–2024. The results of the study show that Muhammadiyah responds to the challenges of Society 5.0 through a value-based education paradigm by placing technology under the control of the principle of monotheism, strengthening humanist pedagogy in the relationship between teachers and students, and revitalizing Al-Ma'un theology as the basis of social justice and educational inclusivity. This finding confirms that Muhammadiyah education is not only technologically adapted, but plays an active role as a moral guide so that the transformation of education in the era of Society 5.0 remains oriented towards humanity and social justice.

Keywords: Smart Society 5.0, Advanced Islamic Education, Human-centered Education, Humanist Education, Al-Ma'un Theology.

Introduction Section

The Society 5.0 era is an intelligent society concept that integrates digital technology, artificial intelligence (AI), IoT, and big data into life by placing humans as the center of control (*human-centered*). Different from the industrial era that emphasized mechanization and production speed, Society 5.0 utilizes technology to solve social problems and improve the quality of life in a sustainable manner. This concept was pioneered by Japan in response to various social challenges, so that technology was developed to support human needs and well-being, not replace them. (Narvaez Rojas et al., 2021)

Smart Society 5.0 has a major structural impact on the education sector through digitalization, artificial intelligence integration, and the expansion of virtual learning spaces. This development changes the design, implementation, and learning evaluation process (Aulia et al., 2024; Narvaez Rojas et al., 2021). This transformation requires the education system to integrate technological competence with critical thinking skills, adaptability, and social character. Educational institutions now play a strategic role in developing cognitive intelligence while maintaining human values in the midst of rapid technological developments (Minina, V. & Mabrouk, 2019; Takakuwa, S., Veza, I., & Celar, 2018)

Muhammadiyah responds to this dynamic through the paradigm of Progressive Islamic Education. This article argues that Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Education functions as an ideological and moral regulator of technology, not just an instrument of technical adaptation. This is based on the pillars of monotheism, *tajdid*, and social theology of al-Ma'un which function as a normative foundation in the development of Muhammadiyah education (PP Muhammadiyah, 2015; Anzalman et al., 2024). Through the perspective of monotheism, technology is positioned as a mandate for the benefit and not a value-free entity (Mulkhan, 2010; Suyatno, 2024). Meanwhile, the spirit of *tajdid* ensures an open attitude towards science, and al-Ma'un's theology emphasizes the role of education as an instrument of social justice (Baidhawiy, 2015; Nashir, 2016).

A number of previous studies have explored the Islamic education system (Uyun, 2023), PAI learning in the Independent Curriculum (Rianti, 2024), the role of religious education in character (Rozak, 2023) and the relevance of Muhammadiyah education to face Society 5.0 (Suyato, 2024; Mansir et al, 2023). However, the majority of these studies still place technology as the center of analysis so that Islamic education is only positioned as a party that adjusts to digital transformation (As'ari et al., 2024; Parhan et al., 2024 ; Rianti, 2024; Suyatno, 2024). This article fills this void by offering conceptual novelty in the form of a shift in focus from technology orientation to a value paradigm, namely positioning Muhammadiyah education as a moral regulator for technology through the synthesis of monotheism, *tajdid*, and social

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theology al-Ma'un (Nashir, 2016; Ampera, 2023). From this gap, this article aims to answer the main challenges of Muhammadiyah education in the Smart Society 5.0 era as well as formulate how Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Education responds in the face of these dynamics. This framework provides an alternative normative foundation that prioritizes divine values, humanity, and social justice as the main determinants of educational transformation in the 5.0 era.

Method

This research applies a library *research* method with a qualitative-descriptive approach to analyze the challenges and responses of Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Education to Smart Society 5.0. Data is collected through reputable databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Garuda and Google Scholar. The search strategy is carried out by combining several main keywords, namely "Society 5.0", "Muhammadiyah Education", and "Progressive Islam", to obtain specific and relevant literature. The literature selection uses *the purposive sampling technique*, where the researcher only takes specific manuscripts that discuss the relationship between digital technology and Islamic values and are published by credible sources.

This study limits the main literature on *Society 5.0* and Muhammadiyah education in the range of 2018–2024. This period was chosen because it was the beginning of the massive discourse of *Society 5.0* and included the latest policy cycle after the Muhammadiyah Congress. Moreover, classical references outside that range (such as Freire, Rawls, and Habermas) remain used as fundamental philosophical foundations. In total, as many as 33 reference sources were analyzed in depth until they reached the data saturation point.

Data analysis was carried out using content *analysis techniques* that focused on three domains. First, the realm of values to identify the challenges of dehumanization and secularization. Second, the realm of ideology to map a strategic response based on the pillars of Tawheed, Tajdid, and Al-Ma'un Theology. Third, the pedagogical realm to analyze the implementation of the hybrid learning model and the role of teachers in the digital era. All the results of the analysis were validated through the source triangulation technique, namely by comparing the literature of scientific journals with official documents of the Muhammadiyah organization to ensure the objectivity and sharpness of the research results.

Results and Discussion

Challenges of Muhammadiyah Education in the Smart Society 5.0 Era

The transformation towards Smart Society 5.0 brings multidimensional challenges that touch on aspects of values, ideological orientation, and structural justice (Aulia et al., 2024; Narvaez Rojas et al., 2021). The results of the analysis show three main challenges summarized in Table 1:

Table 1. Synthesis of the Three Challenges of Smart Society 5.0

Domain	Challenge	Manifestations	Impact on Muhammadiyah
Pedagogical-humanistic	Dehumanization	AI is replaced by teacher-student relations (Dewi, 2019)	A Crisis of <i>Humanity, Human Being</i>
Epistemological-ideological	Secularization	Faith is separate from knowledge (Al-Attas, 1978)	Fragmentation of knowledge, faith, charity
Socio-structural	Elitism	Digital divide	Contrary to the theology of Al-ma'un

1. Dehumanization of Education (Pedagogical Realm) Analysis of the pedagogical realm shows that the massive dependence on AI risks reducing the role of educators from moral exemplars to mere technical facilitators (Dewi, 2019; Mansir et al, 2023). This phenomenon validates Paulo's concerns (Freire, 1970) in *Critical Pedagogy* Regarding "bank-style education", where digital technology has the potential to objectify students as passive data recipients. Progressive Islamic Education responds to this challenge through a paradigm *Humanizing Education* an attempt to restore subject-to-subject dialogue to ensure technology remains an instrument of critical awareness, not a substitute for the essence of humanity (Abdillah, 2017; Minna, V. & Mabrouk, 2019; Takakuwa, S., Veza, I., & Celar, 2018).
2. Secularization of Educational Orientation (Epistemological Realm) In the epistemological realm, there is a tendency to separate religious values from technical rationality (Al-Attas, 1978; Cox, 2013; Bafadhol, 2015). For Muhammadiyah, this fragmentation threatens the principle of integration of faith, knowledge, and charity. By borrowing Harvey Cox's perspective on desacralization and Jürgen's ideas (Habermas, 2008) About *Post-Secular Society*, Muhammadiyah positioned itself as an educational model that was able to integrate technical modernity

without losing its transcendental compass. The goal is that the development of science in the 5.0 era still has a strong ethical-religious base (Nashir, H & Jinan, 2016)

3. Eliticism as Structural Inequality (Socio-Structural Domain) Structural challenges arise in the form of *Digital divide* that hinder marginalized groups' access to quality education (Norris, 2001); Mujahidun, 2016; Adelia, S., & Partners, 2021). This condition is fundamentally contrary to the principle of education as an instrument of social justice (Indra, R. & Suryadi & Hakim, 2020). In the framework of Muhammadiyah, digital elitism is the antithesis of Al-Ma'un Theology which requires partiality to the people *mustadh'afin*. In line with *difference principle* John (Rawls, 1971), Muhammadiyah functions its education system as a tool of redistribution of justice to ensure that the weak group is not alienated by technological leaps (Baidhaw, 2015) These findings prove that the main problem in the Smart Society 5.0 era is not only the ability to adapt to the latest technology, but also the ability to maintain the integrity of basic values of education so that it is not disrupted by the flow of value-free digitalization.

Muhammadiyah's Progressive Islamic Education Response

The crises of dehumanization, secularization, and elitism confirm that the challenges of *Smart Society 5.0* cannot be solved through technical upgrades or digital infrastructure alone. Muhammadiyah is required to provide a fundamental response that is rooted in its basic values. In this regard, the Progressive Islamic Education paradigm is present as a normative and strategic framework to respond to these disruptions critically, constructively, and value-based.

Table 2. Mapping and Response of Muhammadiyah Education

Key Challenges	Domain Analysis	Ideological Pillars	Response Strategy
Dehumanization	Pedagogical-Humanistic	Tajdid, Tajdid	Critical Pedagogy (Freire)
Secularization	Ideological-Spiritual	Tauhid	Post-Secular Integration (Habermas)
Elitism	Structural-Social	Al-Ma'un	Social Justice (Rawls)

1. Integration of Tawheed-Based Curriculum and Digital Literacy The first response places Tawheed as an epistemological foundation that directs technology for benefit, not as a value-free entity (Mul Khan, 2010); Suyatno, 2024; PP Muhammadiyah, 2015). Theoretically, this strategy is a real implementation of the community *Post-secular* Jürgen (Habermas, 2008), where religious values are not marginalized, but rather present as an ethical compass that guides the use of digital devices in order to remain morally responsible.
2. Transformation of Humanist and Adaptive Pedagogy Through the spirit of Tajdid, Muhammadiyah implements the model *blended learning* that are selective to maintain interpersonal relationships (Nastiti, 2020; Minna, V. & Mabrouk, 2019; Narvaez Rojas et al., 2021). In principle *Critical Pedagogy* Paul (Freire, 1970), technology is used as a tool of intellectual liberation to build students' critical awareness, not to create passive obedience to algorithms. This ensures that the process of "humanizing human beings" continues to run in the midst of automation.
3. Strengthening Educators as Agents of Value and Transformation In the era of Smart Society 5.0, Muhammadiyah educators have transformed from mere teachers to The main actor in internalizing values and shaping students' character (Abdillah, 2017; Suyatno, 2024). This model is in line with the Terence frame (Lovat, 2017) About *Value-Based Education*, where the success of education depends heavily on the ability of educators to integrate academic quality with moral integrity. Educators are the main shield against the dehumanization of education triggered by artificial intelligence.
4. The Social Function of Al-Ma'un Theology-Based Education The last strategy focuses on expanding access for marginalized groups to counter digital elitism (Baidhaw, 2015); Scott, 2015; Anzalman et al., 2024). Al-Ma'un theology provides an ethical basis for Muhammadiyah to reject the commercialization of education. As *difference principle* John (Rawls, 1971) Muhammadiyah ensures that the technological advancement of Society 5.0 must provide the greatest benefits to those who are least fortunate (*mustadh'afin*).

The four responses form a strategic framework that synergizes the ideological pillars of Muhammadiyah with global discourse. By integrating Freire's critical pedagogy and Habermas' post-secular social theory into the values of Tawheed and Al-Ma'un, this study confirms that Muhammadiyah applies the *Value-Based Education Model*. Here, technology is

not adopted wildly, but is controlled by transcendental and humanitarian values to shape the whole human being in the era of Smart Society 5.0.

In contrast to previous research that focused on technical adaptation, this article offers a new paradigm in which technology is governed by the principles of monotheism and social justice. Theoretically, Muhammadiyah is positioned as a *unique Case of Value-Based Education Model* on a global scale. In the midst of the identity crisis of educational institutions due to digital disruption, the constancy of ideological identities (Tauhid, Tajdid, and Al-Ma'un) functions as a normative parameter that prevents the commodification of education.

This finding provides a theoretical contribution that religion plays a role as an active subject that directs the development of technology according to human values. This finding provides a theoretical contribution that religion is not just a passive object of the progress of the times, but an active subject that humanizes technology. The Muhammadiyah model offers a solution for the world order: that the modernity of Society 5.0 will only reach its peak if technology is controlled by intact and civilized human values.

Conclusion

This research aims to map the strategic position of Muhammadiyah Progressive Islamic Education in facing the dynamics of Smart Society 5.0 which tends to be technocentric. The findings of the study show that digital transformation not only brings efficiency, but also presents fundamental challenges in the form of the potential dehumanization of education, the tendency to secularize knowledge, and the gap in access to education due to the digital divide. In this context, Muhammadiyah responds by placing technology under the control of values through the strengthening of monotheism as the basis of digital ethics, the application of humanist pedagogy to maintain the relationship between teachers and students, and the revitalization of Al-Ma'un theology as the foundation of social justice and educational inclusivity. Theoretically, this finding confirms that Islamic education has an adaptive capacity to dialogue with modernity without losing its moral identity, while practically this research provides a reference for educational institutions to carry out digital transformation that still places humans as the main subjects so that technological advances in the Society 5.0 era run in harmony with human values and social justice.

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