

## From Classroom to Culture: Islamic Education Teachers' Strategies for Preserving Local Wisdom in The Digital Era

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### Abstract

This study examines strategies used by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers to preserve local wisdom in the digital-hyperreal era, where virtual cultural representations increasingly shape younger generations' experiences. Unlike previous research focusing mainly on integrating local culture into teaching practices, this study positions PAI teachers as cultural agents responsible for sustaining local values amid global digital culture. It aims to analyze opportunities, challenges, and strategies applied by teachers at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak. A qualitative case study design was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, and analyzed using an interactive model with triangulation for validity. Findings show that the digital era presents both challenges and opportunities for revitalizing local wisdom. Opportunities emerge through digital media use, integration of local values into Islamic education, and project-based P5RA learning. However, challenges include students' low cultural literacy, dominance of global popular culture, and limited local learning resources. The study further indicates that preserving local wisdom depends on teachers' ability to design contextual, collaborative, and reflective learning. Theoretically, it contributes to Islamic education discourse on local wisdom within the framework of hyperreality. Practically, it offers insights for developing adaptive Islamic education strategies that strengthen cultural identity in the digital age.

**Keywords:** Hyperreality; Local Wisdom; Contextual Learning; Islamic Religious Education Teachers.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi yang digunakan guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam merawat kearifan lokal di era digital-hyperreal, ketika representasi budaya virtual semakin membentuk pengalaman generasi muda. Berbeda dari penelitian sebelumnya yang lebih banyak berfokus pada integrasi budaya lokal dalam praktik pembelajaran, penelitian ini menempatkan guru PAI sebagai agen kultural yang bertanggung jawab menjaga keberlanjutan nilai-nilai lokal di tengah dominasi budaya digital global. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peluang, tantangan, dan strategi yang diterapkan guru di MAS Mujahidin Pontianak. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model analisis interaktif dengan triangulasi untuk menjamin keabsahan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa era digital menghadirkan sekaligus tantangan dan peluang dalam revitalisasi kearifan lokal. Peluang tersebut muncul melalui pemanfaatan media digital, integrasi nilai-nilai lokal dalam pendidikan agama Islam, serta penerapan pembelajaran berbasis proyek melalui program P5RA. Namun demikian, tantangan yang dihadapi meliputi rendahnya literasi budaya peserta didik, dominasi budaya populer global, serta terbatasnya sumber belajar berbasis lokal. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa keberhasilan pelestarian kearifan lokal sangat bergantung pada kemampuan guru dalam merancang pembelajaran yang kontekstual, kolaboratif, dan reflektif. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini memperkaya kajian pendidikan Islam berbasis kearifan lokal dalam perspektif hyperreality. Secara praktis, temuan ini memberikan

kontribusi bagi pengembangan strategi pembelajaran PAI yang adaptif terhadap transformasi digital sekaligus memperkuat identitas budaya peserta didik.

**Kata kunci:** Hyperreality; Kearifan Lokal; Pembelajaran Kontekstual; Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam.

## INTRODUCTION

At the normative level (*das sollen*), education is not merely positioned as a mechanism for knowledge transmission but also serves as a strategic medium for cultivating awareness while preserving and transmitting local wisdom to younger generations (Gaffar et al., 2025). Within the context of Islamic education, this orientation requires learning processes that extend beyond normative understanding toward the holistic development of religious, social, and cultural consciousness (Anwar et al., 2023). Consequently, learning should function as a constructive process that enables students to generate meaning through experience, social interaction, and direct engagement with the realities of their everyday lives (Le & Nguyen, Quoc, 2024).

However, this ideal faces significant challenges within the landscape of the digital-hyperreal era. In Islamic educational discourse, the concept of hyperreality introduced by Jean Baudrillard describes a condition in which the boundary between reality and simulation becomes increasingly blurred, with digital representations often replacing authentic experiences (Baudrillard, 1994). In such circumstances, students tend to interact more frequently with simulated realities constructed by digital media than with the living cultural realities surrounding them (Galan, 2015). As a result, local wisdom, which should constitute an essential component of cultural identity, becomes marginalized amid the dominance of global cultures characterized by immediacy, visual appeal, and consumerism (Magu, 2015). In a world that appears increasingly compressed by globalization, intercultural encounters occur rapidly and intensively, leading cultures to influence, blend with, and potentially displace one another (Hong & Cheon, 2017)

In this context, teachers occupy a central position as cultural agents who bridge local values and global dynamics (Rahman & Azzahra, 2024). Their primary challenge lies in their ability to design, develop, and utilize learning resources effectively so that local values can be presented in ways that are relevant, contextual, and meaningful to students (Bella & Irawan, 2026). This role extends beyond conventional pedagogical functions to encompass responsibilities as meaning-makers, cultural mediators, and educational innovators (Musa et al., 2023). On the one hand, digital technological advancements provide opportunities for teachers to package local wisdom creatively and contextually through diverse media and pedagogical approaches. On the other hand, the pervasive influence of globalization, the dominance of social media, and

shifting patterns of student interaction pose serious challenges, including the gradual erosion of local cultural identities (Fajarushidiq & Fauziah, 2025).

At the empirical level (*das sein*), these conditions are evident in educational practice. Observations at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak indicate that many students possess only limited understanding of the local wisdom traditions of West Kalimantan. They tend to be more familiar with popular global culture, which is highly visual and widely disseminated, than with local cultural traditions rich in values and meanings. Furthermore, Islamic Religious Education instruction continues to be dominated by monodisciplinary and transmissive approaches that are teacher-centered and heavily reliant on memorization. This condition creates a disconnect between the values taught in classrooms and the socio-cultural realities students encounter in their daily lives.

Theoretically, numerous studies have demonstrated that integrating local wisdom into learning processes can enhance cultural awareness while strengthening students' character development (Nurmaya et al., 2025). Nevertheless, its implementation continues to face various obstacles, including limited cultural literacy among students, insufficient pedagogical innovation, and a lack of contextual learning resources. In fact, local wisdom embodies positive values that are crucial for character formation (Wagiran, 2012) and the cultivation of national identity and citizenship (Kusnadi, 2023). Therefore, adaptive, reflective, and contextual learning approaches are required to ensure that local values remain relevant and meaningful in students' lives through interdisciplinary educational practices (Lestari et al., 2025). Contextual and local wisdom-based learning is no longer merely an educational alternative but has become an educational necessity in responding to contemporary societal dynamics (Diana, R. et al., 2025).

Despite these developments, most existing studies examine constructivism, digital culture, and local wisdom as separate domains. Research that specifically connects Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality with local wisdom-based Islamic Religious Education remains scarce, particularly within the Indonesian Islamic educational context.

Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to analyze how Islamic Religious Education teachers respond to the challenges of digital hyperreality while preserving local wisdom through contextual and constructive learning practices. The research focuses on the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers to integrate local values into Islamic Religious Education at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak. Accordingly, this study not only contributes theoretically by integrating constructivist and hyperreality perspectives within Islamic education but also offers practical implications for the development of adaptive, reflective, and culturally grounded Islamic Religious Education in the digital era.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach focusing on the context of MAS Mujahidin Pontianak. This approach was selected because the phenomenon of Islamic Religious Education teachers' innovations in preserving local wisdom within the digital-hyperreal era is understood as a complex, dynamic, and context-dependent social reality. The study aimed to explore in depth the challenges and opportunities involved in transforming learning from classroom spaces into cultural spaces through innovative pedagogical practices. A qualitative case study design was utilized to facilitate comprehensive, in-depth, and holistic data collection. The research framework was grounded in the qualitative research paradigm, which emphasizes the naturalistic exploration of social phenomena (Moleong, 2011). The study involved two Islamic Religious Education teachers and twelve students from MAS Mujahidin Pontianak who were purposively selected based on their active participation in local wisdom-based learning activities. The participants included teachers who actively developed instructional innovations rooted in local culture and students who were engaged in P5RA programs and other school initiatives integrating local cultural values.

Research participants were selected purposively and consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers and students at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak. The selection of informants was based on their level of involvement in local wisdom-based learning practices, particularly through P5RA programs and instructional activities that incorporated local cultural traditions into educational settings. Data were collected with the researcher serving as the primary instrument, supported by interview guides, observation protocols, and documentation procedures. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation of learning activities, and documentation studies of various school programs representing the integration of classroom and cultural spaces (Sugiyono, 2017). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each informant, lasting approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Fieldwork procedures involved preliminary observation, participant selection, data collection within the school environment, and systematic recording and documentation of research findings. All participants were informed about the objectives of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate through informed consent procedures. To ensure confidentiality, participants' identities were anonymized using codes or initials throughout the reporting process.

The research was conducted through several systematic stages, including preparation, implementation, and data analysis. The collected data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model comprising data condensation, data display, and

conclusion drawing (Creswell, John W., 2017). Data analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process, from data collection to the completion of the study, utilizing (Baudrillard, 1994) theory of hyperreality as the primary interpretive framework. The trustworthiness of the data was established through source and methodological triangulation to ensure the validity and credibility of the findings (Miles, 2014). The reliability of the analysis was further strengthened through repeated verification of interview results, interpretive discussions, and cross-comparisons among observational, interview, and documentary data to maintain consistency and dependability.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### **Opportunities for Teachers to Integrate Local Wisdom in the Digital-Hyperreal Era**

The findings indicate that the digital-hyperreal era does not merely pose challenges to the preservation of local wisdom; it also creates opportunities for educational innovation. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak have strategically utilized technological advancements and visual culture as pedagogical tools to reconnect students with local cultural values.

Interview findings revealed that IRE teachers actively encourage students to produce digital content grounded in local wisdom, such as documentary videos of cultural practices and visual representations of traditional customs. This strategy has proven effective in fostering students' interest while simultaneously making local culture more relevant to their digitally oriented lifestyles. As one IRE teacher explained:

*"We often assign students to create videos about cultural traditions or activities within their communities. Through this approach, students not only become familiar with local culture but also learn how to present it through media platforms they enjoy, such as videos and social media."* (IRE Teacher Interview, 2026)

Furthermore, the P5RA program provides a concrete example of this process. From the perspective of hyperreality, the program functions not merely as a project-based learning activity but also as a mechanism for reconnecting cultural representations with lived experiences. Through activities such as simulations of traditional Malay wedding ceremonies and exhibitions of cultural products, students engage with cultural practices not only at the cognitive level but also through direct participation. This approach demonstrates that project-based learning can facilitate a deeper internalization of cultural values.

By engaging directly in cultural activities, students move beyond passive observation and symbolic recognition toward experiential learning, enabling them to appreciate the meanings and values embedded within local traditions. Consequently, the integration of local wisdom through project-based learning serves not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as a cultural intervention aimed at strengthening

students' cultural awareness and identity in the midst of an increasingly digitalized social environment.

**Figure 1. Implementation Process of the P5RA Program on the Theme of Local Wisdom at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak (Source: Researcher Documentation, 2025)**



Analysis of Figure 1 demonstrates that the P5RA activities function not only as project-based learning initiatives but also as spaces for the production and reconstruction of cultural meaning. Students' active engagement in cultural practices reflects a shift from being passive consumers of cultural representations to becoming active participants in cultural experiences. In this regard, the figure illustrates the school's strategy to reduce the gap between culture as represented through digital media and culture as directly experienced by students in their everyday lives.

The integration of local wisdom is also implemented across multiple subject areas. Observational findings indicate that cultural values are incorporated into the teaching of fiqh, history, and visual arts. For example, within the context of traditional Malay marriage customs, students are not only introduced to the cultural dimensions of the practice but also learn about the pillars (arkan) and legal principles of marriage from an Islamic perspective. This interdisciplinary approach enhances the relevance of learning while fostering an integrative understanding of the relationship between religion and culture.

At the institutional level, school support emerged as a crucial factor in facilitating these opportunities. The provision of adequate facilities, spaces for cultural expression, and policies that encourage culture-based educational innovation enables teachers to develop and implement pedagogical strategies more effectively.

Nevertheless, the findings also emphasize that the successful optimization of these opportunities depends largely on teachers' professional competencies. A thorough understanding of local culture, the ability to design contextualized learning experiences, and proficiency in utilizing digital technologies constitute essential prerequisites. Teachers who demonstrate adaptability are better positioned to transform contemporary challenges into opportunities for pedagogical innovation.

### **1. Challenges Faced by Teachers in Preserving Local Wisdom in the Digital-Hyperreal Era**

On the other hand, the study found that the challenges encountered by teachers are complex and multidimensional. One of the most significant findings concerns students' limited understanding of local wisdom. Many students are

more familiar with global cultural trends than with the cultural traditions of their own region.

Interview findings revealed that students often perceive culture primarily at a symbolic level, such as traditional attire or visual decorations, without fully understanding the meanings and values embedded within these cultural expressions. This phenomenon indicates a transition from authentic cultural experience toward simulated cultural representation, which is characteristic of the hyperreal condition. This situation is reflected in the statement of one teacher:

*“Most students know about Malay culture through videos they watch on social media, but that does not necessarily mean they have ever directly observed or participated in the actual cultural practices.”* (Teacher Interview, MAS Mujahidin Pontianak, 2026)

In addition, the limited availability of learning resources grounded in local wisdom constitutes a significant challenge. Teachers are frequently required to develop instructional materials independently, a process that demands considerable creativity, effort, and time. Furthermore, the integration of local wisdom has not yet been implemented consistently across all subjects and grade levels, thereby limiting its overall educational impact.

Another prominent challenge concerns students’ declining interest in local culture. Continuous exposure to popular culture through digital media has contributed to perceptions that local traditions are less appealing and less relevant to contemporary life. Consequently, teachers are required to design learning strategies that are more innovative, engaging, and contextually meaningful.

Overall, the challenges identified in this study originate not only from students themselves but also from broader systemic limitations, resource constraints, and wider social dynamics. Therefore, addressing these challenges requires comprehensive, sustained, and multidimensional efforts.

## **2. Teachers’ Strategies for Preserving Local Wisdom through Learning Transformation**

The findings reveal that teachers at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak have moved beyond rhetorical commitments and have undertaken tangible transformations in educational practice. One of the primary strategies is the implementation of project-based learning through the P5RA program.

Through this approach, students are directly involved in cultural experiences, allowing learning to move beyond abstract conceptualization toward contextualized and meaningful engagement. Such involvement fosters students’ emotional connection with local culture, which in turn strengthens their cultural awareness and sense of identity.

In addition, teachers utilize extracurricular activities as more flexible cultural spaces for learning. Activities such as traditional dance training, pantun (Malay poetic verse) recitation, and simulations of customary practices serve as effective media for the natural and sustainable internalization of cultural values.

A collaborative learning approach also constitutes an important strategy. Students work in groups to produce culture-based projects, such as miniature

replicas of regional monuments and cultural landmarks. This process not only results in tangible products but also creates meaningful social learning experiences that reinforce cooperation, communication, and collective responsibility among students.

**Figure 2. Miniature of a West Kalimantan Cultural Monument Created by Students of MAS Mujahidin Pontianak (Source: Researcher Documentation, 2026)**



Analysis of Figure 2 reveals a dimension that extends beyond the students' creative output itself. The miniature cultural monument produced by the students reflects a process of reinterpreting local culture into a visual form that resonates with the experiences of the digital generation. This work may be understood as a form of symbolic reproduction of local cultural heritage that not only preserves local identity but also adapts it to the learning preferences and cultural realities of contemporary learners. Consequently, the learning product represents a process of cultural transformation rather than mere cultural preservation.

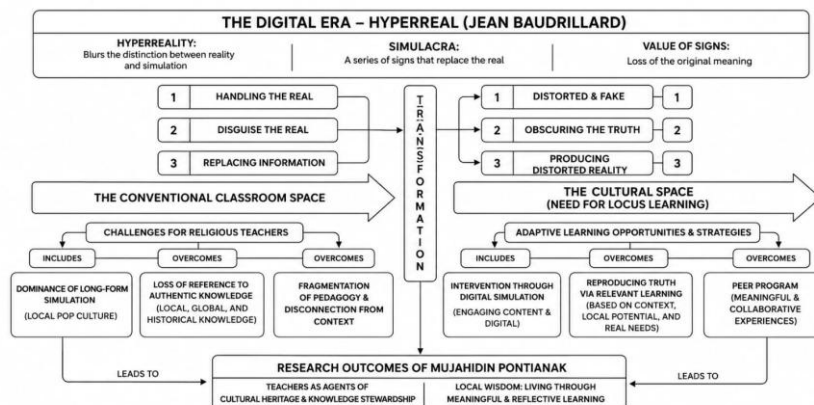
At the same time, teacher role modeling constitutes an equally important dimension. Teachers not only teach cultural values but also embody and demonstrate those values through their attitudes and everyday practices. However, within the context of the digital-hyperreal era, such role modeling faces significant challenges due to the growing dominance of digital figures and social media influencers in shaping students' perceptions, aspirations, and behavioral orientations.

As a result, teachers are required to develop forms of role modeling that are adaptive to contemporary realities, including the responsible and ethical use of digital technologies. By doing so, teachers can maintain their relevance as trusted reference figures amid the increasingly pervasive influence of simulated realities and digitally constructed identities.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers has undergone a significant transformation. Teachers no longer function merely as transmitters of knowledge; rather, they serve as cultural mediators who bridge the gap between local cultural realities and the digital world of simulation experienced by students. Within the condition of hyperreality, the success of local wisdom-based learning is determined not by the quantity of cultural content delivered but by teachers' capacity to create meaningful learning experiences that enable students to distinguish between cultural representations and authentic cultural meanings.

## Discussion

**Figure 3. Opportunities and Challenges Faced by MAS Mujahidin Teachers in Preserving Local Wisdom in the Era of Hyperreality**



The findings of this study affirm that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak occupy a position that is simultaneously strategic and problematic when confronted with educational realities in the digital-hyperreal era, as conceptualized by (Baudrillard, 1994). Within this framework, the classroom can no longer be understood as the sole stable and authoritative locus of learning. Instead, it expands into a more fluid “cultural space” characterized by openness and intensified competition of meaning between authentic reality and symbolic representations produced through media.

From the perspective of hyperreality, reality no longer exists as a singular and referential entity; rather, it is replaced by simulacra that appear more convincing than reality itself (Baudrillard, 1994). The findings indicate that students at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak inhabit such a landscape, where local culture is no longer experienced directly but is increasingly encountered in the form of visual images, fragmented video clips, or digital symbols. In this condition, a loss of reference occurs, whereby the sign no longer corresponds to an authentic referent.

At this point, the role of the Islamic Religious Education teacher becomes both crucial and complex. Teachers are not only confronted with pedagogical limitations but also with shifts in the structure of reality that shape how students understand the world, potentially leading to dehumanization in cases of pedagogical misalignment (Diana, A. et al., 2024). This phenomenon aligns with Kirschner’s (2024) argument regarding generational differences in how digital natives access and interpret information.

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that this hyperreal condition is not entirely reductive. It also contains strategic opportunities that teachers can leverage. Within the logic of third-order simulacra, where reality is constructed through models and representations (Baudrillard, 1994), teachers are able to reconstruct meaning by intervening within these simulated spaces. Practices such as producing digital content based on local culture, simulating traditional Malay wedding ceremonies, and exhibiting miniature cultural monuments of West Kalimantan represent concrete manifestations of this strategy.

In this context, the P5RA program can be understood as an effort to restore reference within the dominance of simulation. As stated by an IRE teacher at MAS Mujahidin Pontianak:

*“Students understand culture more deeply when they are directly involved in traditional practices rather than merely observing them through digital media.”* (IRE Teacher Interview, MAS Mujahidin Pontianak, 2026)

This finding suggests that when students not only observe culture but also experience and reflect upon it directly, a strengthening of meaning occurs one that had previously been diminished by digital representations. Thus, teachers do not reject hyperreality; rather, they strategically utilize it as a medium to reintroduce more meaningful cultural experiences.

The transformation from classroom to cultural space carries a deeper significance than a mere expansion of learning settings. It reflects a reconstruction of how knowledge is produced and interpreted. Learning is no longer centered on information delivery but on the formation of experiences and meanings rooted in students' socio-cultural contexts (Taufikin, 2025).

However, this transformation process faces several challenges. The dominance of global culture in digital media has created what (Baudrillard, 1994) describes as a hyperreal nebula, a condition in which individuals are submerged in continuously reproduced images and symbols. In such a context, local culture must compete with global popular culture, which is visually more appealing and disseminated more rapidly. As a result, students' interest in local cultural traditions tends to decline due to their weaker position in symbolic competition within digital spaces.

Moreover, the limited availability of learning resources grounded in local wisdom indicates that the educational system has not yet provided adequate institutional support (Umam & Husain, 2024). Teachers are often required to develop instructional materials independently, thereby expanding their role as both educators and instructional innovators. This demands substantial competence, not only in pedagogy but also in cultural and digital literacy (Fuadi & Elsyam, 2024).

The strategies developed by teachers demonstrate strong adaptive and context-oriented practices (Aulia & Mahliatussikah, 2025). Project-based learning, collaborative approaches, the use of digital media, and the strengthening of experiential learning represent concrete responses to the digital-hyperreal condition while bridging the gap between symbolic representation and authentic cultural experience (Nisa & Mubin, 2025). In this regard, Islamic Religious Education teachers are no longer merely transmitters of knowledge but function as cultural agents and meaning-makers who curate and recontextualize cultural values in ways that are relevant to students' lived realities (Omar & Noh, 2015). This confirms that Islamic Religious Education possesses an open space for transitioning from instructional activity toward a more living and meaningful practice of cultural preservation and development.

Nevertheless, this pedagogical transformation is accompanied by persistent challenges. The dominance of global popular culture in digital media forces local

culture to compete within an expansive symbolic arena. At the same time, limited culturally grounded learning resources, uneven teacher competencies in integrating culture and technology, and insufficient policy support indicate that the education system has not yet provided adequate structural reinforcement (Khusyairin et al., 2025). Within the framework of hyperreality, these conditions suggest that the preservation of local wisdom cannot rely solely on the existence of educational programs, but must also depend on teachers' ability to reconstruct the relationship between cultural symbols and the lived meanings embedded in students' experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the shift from classroom-based learning to cultural-space learning represents an essential requirement in Islamic Religious Education within the digital-hyperreal era. Amid the dominance of digital media that shapes students' cultural experiences in symbolic and instantaneous forms, local wisdom-based learning can no longer rely solely on classroom instruction. Instead, it must be realized through authentic, participatory, and contextually grounded cultural experiences. In this context, Islamic Religious Education teachers function not only as educators but also as cultural agents who bridge local values with students' digital life-worlds.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic Education scholarship by integrating Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality with local wisdom-based learning. The findings show that hyperreality not only influences how students access culture but also transforms the process of meaning-making itself. Therefore, the concept of transforming classroom space into cultural space can be understood as a pedagogical strategy to restore authentic cultural experience while strengthening the internalization of local values in Islamic Religious Education.

Practically, the findings highlight the need to strengthen experiential, culture-based learning programs through collaboration among schools, families, and communities. Teachers should integrate cultural literacy and digital literacy in a balanced manner, while schools must provide more contextual learning resources grounded in local wisdom. This ensures that students do not merely recognize culture as visual representation but also understand the meanings and values embedded within it.

This study is limited to a single madrasah context; therefore, its findings cannot be generalized broadly. Future research should examine the implementation of the cultural-space approach across different educational levels and contexts. Further studies are also needed to assess the long-term impact of this approach on cultural identity formation, religious character development, and students' digital literacy skills, as well as to explore more innovative models for integrating technology and local wisdom in Islamic Religious Education.

## AI USE DECLARATION

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used Grammarly to improve linguistic clarity, check typographical errors, and refine grammatical structure. After using this tool, the author carefully reviewed and edited the content to ensure accuracy and assumes full responsibility for the final published work.

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