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WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN ISLAM AND DIGITAL EDUCATION: PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES FOR TEACHING GENDER JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This paper examines how digital pedagogical approaches can enhance the teaching of women's rights in Islam while promoting an authentic understanding of gender justice rooted in the Qur'an, the Sunnah and established Islamic scholarship. Employing a qualitative library research design, the study analyses primary Islamic sources alongside contemporary literature on Islamic education, digital pedagogy, educational technology and gender studies. The paper argues that effective teaching of women's rights requires an integrated pedagogical framework that combines authentic Islamic knowledge, learner-centered instructional strategies, digital literacy and ethical use of emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI). The study also identifies major challenges, including digital inequality, online misinformation, ideological polarization, inadequate teacher preparedness and the misuse of AI in religious learning. To address these challenges, the paper proposes an integrated digital pedagogical framework that harmonises Islamic educational values with contemporary instructional technologies. It concludes that the responsible integration of digital education into Islamic Studies classrooms can strengthen the teaching of women's rights, correct widespread misconceptions, promote informed discussions on gender justice and prepare learners to engage in contemporary debates with knowledge, wisdom, ethical responsibility and academic integrity. The study recommends curriculum reforms, enhanced

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teacher capacity building, investment in digital infrastructure and the development of authentic digital learning resources to improve the teaching of Islamic Studies in the twenty-first century.

Keywords: Women's Rights; Digital Education, Gender Justice, Islamic Pedagogy, Artificial Intelligence

Introduction

The emergence of digital education has fundamentally transformed educational practice by redefining how knowledge is produced, accessed, shared and evaluated across diverse learning environments. The widespread adoption of internet technologies, online learning platforms, multimedia instructional resources, mobile applications and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has created unprecedented opportunities for expanding educational access and improving teaching effectiveness (UNESCO, 2023). These technological transformations are also reshaping educational systems globally through blended learning, online instruction, digital collaboration and AI-assisted learning environments, requiring educational institutions to rethink curriculum design, teacher competencies and learners' digital literacy (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2021; Selwyn, 2021).

Among the areas requiring renewed pedagogical attention is the teaching of women's rights in Islam. Despite the comprehensive rights guaranteed to women by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, contemporary discussions frequently portray Islam through narratives that are shaped by cultural practices, political ideologies, selective textual interpretations and misinformation disseminated through digital media (Barlas, 2019; Brown, 2017).

Consequently, many learners encounter conflicting representations of Islamic teachings, making it increasingly important for educators to provide balanced, evidence-based and contextually informed instruction.Classical and contemporary scholarship consistently demonstrates that many misconceptions regarding women's rights arise from the conflation of Islamic teachings with local cultural practices rather than from the primary sources of Islam themselves (Ahmed, 1992; Wadud, 1999; Al-Qaradawi, 2013).

Islam established a comprehensive framework of justice that recognizes the dignity, moral agency and legal rights of women more than fourteen centuries ago. The Qur'an affirms that all human beings originate from a single soul (Qur'an 4:1), emphasizes that honour before

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Allah is based upon righteousness rather than gender (Qur'an 49:13) and recognizes believing men and women as equal recipients of divine reward and accountability (Qur'an 33:35).The broader thematic unity of these Qur'anic teachings is further emphasized in the study of the Quran, which explains that justice, mercy and human dignity remain recurring ethical principles throughout the Qur'anic discourse on social relations and family life (Nasr, 2015).

Furthermore, Islamic law guarantees women important rights relating to education, inheritance, property ownership, and financial independence, marriage by consent, family life and participation in social and economic activities. These rights are further reinforced by the teachings and exemplary conduct of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whose interactions with women reflected justice, compassion, consultation and respect.

Historically, Muslim women made significant contributions to the intellectual and educational development of Islamic civilisation. Khadijah bint Khuwaylid (RA) played a central role in supporting the early Muslim community through her commercial expertise and unwavering support for the Prophet (peace be upon him). Aishah bint Abi Bakr (RA) emerged as one of the foremost authorities in Hadith, Islamic jurisprudence, medicine and Arabic literature, transmitting thousands of Prophetic traditions that continue to guide Muslim scholarship today. Numerous other women scholars, including Umm Salamah, Karimah al-Marwaziyyah, Fatimah al-Samarqandiyyah, and Zaynab bint al-Kamal, contributed immensely to Hadith scholarship, jurisprudence, education, and public intellectual life. These historical realities challenge contemporary stereotypes that portray Muslim women as passive recipients rather than active contributors to Islamic civilization. Modern historical studies similarly document the extensive scholarly, economic and social contributions of Muslim women throughout Islamic civilization, thereby challenging reductionist narratives that portray women as passive participants in Islamic intellectual history (Ali, 2016; Ahmed, 1992).

Despite these foundational teachings, misconceptions surrounding women's rights remain widespread. In many instances, cultural traditions are incorrectly presented as Islamic injunctions, while legitimate juristic differences are often misunderstood as contradictions within Islam itself. The rapid expansion of digital communication has further complicated this situation by facilitating the dissemination of inaccurate religious information, fabricated

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narrations, extremist interpretations and ideologically motivated content through websites, blogs, social media platforms and AI-generated materials. Without adequate digital literacy and proper scholarly guidance, learners may struggle to distinguish authentic Islamic teachings from misinformation.

Digital education provides important opportunities to address these challenges. Contemporary educational technologies including Learning Management Systems (LMS), virtual classrooms, educational videos, podcasts, interactive presentations, online discussion forums, digital libraries, collaborative learning platforms and AI-assisted educational tools have transformed traditional classroom practices by promoting flexible, student-centered and inquiry-based learning (Mayer, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). When integrated with authentic Islamic pedagogy, these technologies can enhance students' understanding of sensitive topics such as women's rights while promoting critical thinking, respectful dialogue, ethical reasoning and responsible digital citizenship.

This paper argues that the effective teaching of women's rights in Islam requires an integrated pedagogical model that combines authentic Islamic scholarship, learner-centered digital instruction, critical digital literacy and ethical educational practice. Such an approach not only deepens students' understanding of Islamic teachings on gender justice but also prepares them to participate constructively in contemporary discussions while remaining firmly grounded in the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and the rich intellectual heritage of Islamic scholarship.

Statement of the Problem

Although Islam guarantees women comprehensive spiritual, educational, economic, social and legal rights, misconceptions surrounding these rights continue to dominate both academic and public discourse. In many educational settings, discussions on women's rights in Islam are frequently influenced by cultural stereotypes, ideological assumptions, selective interpretations of Islamic texts and inaccurate representations circulated through digital media. Consequently, many students complete Islamic Studies programmes without developing a balanced understanding of the Islamic conception of gender justice or the historical contributions of Muslim women to scholarship and society.

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The increasing digitalization of education has further complicated this challenge. While digital technologies have expanded access to Islamic learning, they have simultaneously facilitated the rapid dissemination of unverified religious information, fabricated Hadith, extremist narratives, AI-generated inaccuracies and misleading interpretations that often shape students' perceptions before formal classroom instruction begins. The absence of adequate digital literacy skills among both teachers and learners further increases vulnerability to misinformation. The rapid transition to technology-supported education following the COVID-19 pandemic further exposed institutional weaknesses in digital readiness, teacher preparedness and pedagogical adaptation across many educational systems (Bozkurt& Sharma, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2021).

Moreover, many Islamic Studies curricula continue to rely predominantly on traditional lecture-based approaches that pay limited attention to interactive digital pedagogies capable of promoting critical thinking, collaborative learning, contextual analysis, and evidence-based engagement with authentic Islamic sources. Similarly, inadequate teacher preparation in educational technology limits the effective integration of digital tools into the teaching of sensitive contemporary issues such as women's rights and gender justice.

Despite growing literature on Islamic education, digital pedagogy and gender studies, relatively few studies have examined how digital educational approaches can be systematically employed to teach women's rights in Islam while maintaining fidelity to authentic Islamic scholarship. This gap highlights the need for an integrated pedagogical framework that combines Islamic educational principles with contemporary digital teaching strategies capable of correcting misconceptions, promoting informed dialogue and strengthening students' understanding of gender justice from an authentic Islamic perspective.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative library research design, which is appropriate for investigating conceptual, theological and pedagogical issues through the systematic examination of documentary sources. Library research enables scholars to analyse, synthesize and critically evaluate existing knowledge without collecting primary field data. Given that the study focuses on Islamic teachings, gender justice and digital pedagogy, this approach provides a suitable framework for integrating religious texts with contemporary educational scholarship.

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The study relies on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources include the Holy Qur'an, authentic collections of *Hadith* and classical works of *Tafsir* and *Fiqh*, which provide the normative Islamic foundation for understanding women's rights. Secondary sources comprise peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books and policy documents published by organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD and recent scholarly publications on Islamic education, educational technology, digital pedagogy, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and gender studies. The documentary review also included internationally recognized educational standards and policy frameworks relating to digital competence, educational innovation and responsible technology integration (International Society for Technology in Education [ISTE], 2021; OECD, 2021).

Data were analysed using qualitative content analysis. Relevant literature was carefully reviewed, categorized into major themes, compared across different scholarly perspectives and synthesized in relation to the objectives of the study. Particular attention was given to identifying areas of convergence and divergence between classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary educational research. The analysis also examined how emerging digital technologies can be integrated into Islamic pedagogy while preserving the authenticity of Islamic teachings and promoting ethical educational practices.

Although the study is primarily conceptual rather than empirical, its findings provide a useful theoretical framework that can guide curriculum developers, teacher educators, educational policymakers, researchers and Islamic Studies instructors in designing more effective pedagogical approaches for teaching women's rights in contemporary digital learning environments.

Conceptual Clarifications

Women's Rights in Islam: Women's rights in Islam refer to the divinely ordained rights and responsibilities granted to women through the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Unlike rights that are exclusively products of social or political developments, Islamic rights are regarded as part of the comprehensive objectives of the Shari'ah (*Maqasid al-Shari'ah*), which seek to preserve religion, life, intellect, family, dignity and property. Consequently, the rights of women are inseparable from the broader Islamic conception of justice, human dignity and social responsibility.

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The Qur'an establishes that men and women share a common human origin and possess equal spiritual worth before Allah (Qur'an 4:1; 33:35; 49:13). While Islam recognizes biological differences and complementary social responsibilities between men and women, it rejects any notion that women are spiritually or morally inferior. Instead, righteousness (*Taqwa*) constitutes the ultimate criterion of honour before Allah.

Islam guarantees women numerous rights, including the right to education, ownership of property, inheritance, independent financial transactions, marriage based upon free consent, fair treatment within the family, participation in economic activities and legal protection against injustice and oppression. These rights were revolutionary within the historical context of seventh-century Arabia and remain fundamental components of Islamic legal and ethical thought.Classical jurists consistently emphasized that these rights operate within the broader objectives of the *Shari'ah*, which seek to preserve justice, dignity and social welfare while ensuring balance between rights and responsibilities (Kamali, 2022; Al-Ghazali, 2005).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reinforced these Qur'anic principles through his teachings and practical example. His interactions with his wives, daughters, female Companions and the wider Muslim community demonstrated respect, consultation (*Shura*), compassion (*Rahmah*) and justice (*'Adl*). Consequently, understanding women's rights in Islam requires careful distinction between authentic Islamic teachings and cultural practices that developed in different Muslim societies over time.

Gender Justice from an Islamic Perspective: Gender justice is frequently discussed within contemporary human rights and educational discourse. However, the Islamic understanding of gender justice differs in important respects from some secular conceptions that equate justice exclusively with absolute sameness between men and women.

From an Islamic perspective, justice (*'Adl*) means placing everything in its proper position according to divine guidance while ensuring fairness, balance and protection of individual rights. The Qur'an repeatedly commands believers to uphold justice in all circumstances (Qur'an 4:135; 5:8; 16:90). Justice therefore involves both equality where appropriate and equitable recognition of legitimate differences in responsibilities and obligations.

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Islam acknowledges that men and women possess equal spiritual value while assigning certain complementary responsibilities intended to strengthen family stability and social welfare. Accordingly, gender justice in Islam should be understood as guaranteeing equal human dignity and accountability before Allah while recognizing legitimate distinctions established by divine revelation.

Educationally, teaching gender justice requires presenting Islamic teachings within their historical, textual, legal and ethical contexts. Students should be encouraged to distinguish between permanent Islamic principles, legitimate juristic differences (*Ikhtilaf*) and cultural customs that may not accurately represent Islamic teachings. Such an approach promotes critical thinking, respectful dialogue and informed engagement with contemporary debates.

Digital Education:

Digital education refers to the application of information and communication technologies to facilitate teaching, learning, assessment, communication and educational management. It encompasses online learning, blended learning, virtual classrooms, Learning Management Systems (LMS), multimedia instruction, mobile learning, collaborative learning environments, educational applications, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital educational resources.

Unlike conventional classroom instruction, digital education emphasizes learner engagement through interactive technologies that promote collaboration, flexibility, independent inquiry and personalized learning experiences. Recent developments in AI have further expanded educational possibilities by supporting lesson planning, automated assessment, adaptive learning, translation services and research assistance.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Framework developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006). The TPACK framework argues that effective teaching occurs through the integration of three interdependent domains of knowledge: Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) and Technological Knowledge (TK).

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Within the context of this study, Content Knowledge consists of authentic Islamic teachings on women's rights derived from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary academic literature. Pedagogical Knowledge involves learner-centered instructional approaches that promote inquiry, discussion, collaboration, contextual interpretation, critical thinking and ethical reflection. Technological Knowledge refers to educators' ability to utilize digital tools such as Learning Management Systems, multimedia resources, online discussion platforms, AI-assisted educational technologies, virtual classrooms and digital libraries.

The interaction of these three forms of knowledge enables Islamic Studies teachers to present sensitive issues such as women's rights and gender justice accurately, interactively and responsibly. Teachers who possess balanced competence across these domains are more likely to create meaningful learning experiences that combine authentic scholarship with innovative instructional practices.

In addition to TPACK, this paper draws upon the Islamic educational philosophy of *Tarbiyah*, which emphasizes the holistic development of learners intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally. Unlike purely cognitive models of education, *Tarbiyah* seeks to nurture knowledge (*'Ilm*), faith (*Iman*), moral excellence (*Akhlaq*), wisdom (*Hikmah*) and responsible citizenship. Accordingly, digital technologies should function as educational instruments (*Wasa'il*) that facilitate these broader objectives rather than replacing the moral and spiritual role of the teacher (*Murabbi*).

Based on these theoretical foundations, the study proposes an integrated conceptual framework for teaching women's rights in Islam through digital education:

Authentic Islamic Sources

(Qur'an – Sunnah – Classical Scholarship)

↓

Teacher Competence

(Islamic Scholarship + Digital Literacy + Pedagogical Skills)

↓

Digital Pedagogical Approaches

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(Multimedia Learning – LMS – AI-Assisted Learning – Online Collaboration – Digital Libraries)

↓

Student Learning Outcomes

(Critical Thinking – Authentic Understanding – Ethical Digital Citizenship – Respectful Dialogue – Gender Justice Literacy)

↓

Long-Term Educational Impact

(Informed Muslim Graduates – Reduced Misconceptions – Responsible Digital Engagement – Promotion of Justice and Social Harmony).

This conceptual framework demonstrates that technology alone cannot improve Islamic education. Rather, meaningful learning emerges when authentic Islamic knowledge, competent teachers, ethical pedagogy and appropriate digital technologies function as complementary components of an integrated educational system.

Qur'anic and Prophetic Foundations of Women's Rights and Gender Justice in Islam

The discourse on women's rights in Islam must begin with the primary sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, which constitute the normative foundation for understanding human dignity, justice and social relations. Contrary to widespread misconceptions that often arise from cultural practices, political narratives, or selective readings of Islamic texts, the Qur'an establishes a comprehensive ethical and legal framework that affirms the dignity, rights and responsibilities of women. Consequently, any meaningful discussion of gender justice within an Islamic framework must be grounded in these primary sources rather than in societal practices that may contradict them (Kamali, 2019). Classical exegetical works such as those of *Al-Tabari* and *Al-Qurtubi* demonstrate that Qur'anic rulings concerning women were consistently interpreted within the broader objectives of justice, mercy and public welfare rather than through isolated textual readings (Al-Tabari, 2000; Al-Qurtubi, 2006).

1. Human Dignity and Spiritual Equality: One of the fundamental principles governing women's rights in Islam is the equal spiritual status of all human beings before Allah. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes that honour is determined by righteousness (*Taqwa*) rather than

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gender, ethnicity, lineage, or social status:*"Indeed, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you"*(Qur'an 49:13). Similarly, Allah declares:*"Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women... Allah has prepared for all of them forgiveness and a great reward"*(Qur'an 33:35).

These verses reject any notion of spiritual superiority based on sex. Instead, both men and women are equally accountable before Allah and equally capable of attaining spiritual excellence. Classical exegetes such as *Ibn Kathir*, *Al-Tabari* and *Al-Qurtubi* interpret these verses as affirming that divine reward and accountability are determined by faith and righteous deeds rather than biological distinctions (Ibn Kathir, 2003; Al-Tabari, 2000; Al-Qurtubi, 2006).

The Qur'an also affirms the common origin of humanity:*"O mankind! Fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate..."* (Qur'an 4:1). This verse establishes the ontological equality of men and women by emphasizing their shared origin and common humanity. Contemporary Muslim scholars argue that this principle provides the theological basis for rejecting discrimination, oppression, and all forms of unjust treatment directed against women (Barlas, 2019; Rahman, 2009).

2. Educational Rights: The pursuit of knowledge occupies a central position in Islam and applies equally to men and women. The first Qur'anic revelation: *"Read in the name of your Lord Who created"* (Qur'an 96:1) establishes learning as the foundation of Islamic civilisation. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) further reinforced this principle by encouraging the acquisition of beneficial knowledge without restricting it to one gender. Numerous authentic Prophetic traditions recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim* emphasize the virtue of seeking beneficial knowledge and demonstrate that women actively participated in the educational life of the early Muslim community (Al-Bukhari, 1997; Muslim, 2007).

Throughout Islamic history, women actively participated in educational activities, transmitted Hadith, issued legal opinions and taught prominent male scholars. Aishah bint Abi Bakr (RA) remains one of the most influential scholars in Islamic history. She narrated more than two thousand Hadith and served as an authority in jurisprudence, medicine, Arabic language and Qur'anic interpretation. Likewise, scholars such as *Karimah al-Marwaziyyah* became

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renowned authorities in Hadith transmission, while Fatimah al-Samarqandiyyah and *Fatima al-Fihri* earned recognition for her expertise in Islamic jurisprudence. These examples demonstrate that women's educational participation is deeply rooted in Islamic civilisation rather than being a modern innovation. Consequently, denying women educational opportunities contradicts both Islamic history and the educational philosophy of Islam, which considers the acquisition of knowledge a lifelong obligation.

3. Economic and Property Rights: Long before the emergence of modern legal systems recognizing women's financial independence, Islam granted women the right to own property, conduct business, inherit wealth, and manage their financial affairs independently. The Qur'an explicitly states:*"For men is a share of what they earn, and for women is a share of what they earn"* (Qur'an 4:32).Similarly, Allah declares:*"For men is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, and for women is a share..."* (Qur'an 4:7). These verses recognize women as independent legal and economic persons capable of owning, buying, selling, investing, and inheriting property. Their financial rights are not dependent upon fathers, husbands, or other male relatives.

The commercial success of Khadijah bint Khuwaylid (RA), a respected businesswoman before and after the advent of Islam, further illustrates the practical implementation of these principles. Her economic independence and commercial leadership challenge persistent stereotypes portraying Muslim women as economically marginalized.

Although Islamic inheritance laws assign different shares to male and female heirs in certain circumstances, these allocations operate within a broader framework of reciprocal financial obligations. Men are legally responsible for providing maintenance (*Nafaqah*) for wives, children and in many cases, other dependants, whereas women retain exclusive ownership of their personal wealth. Consequently, many contemporary Muslim jurists argue that Islamic inheritance should be understood within the wider structure of distributive justice established by the *Shari'ah* rather than through isolated numerical comparisons (Esposito & DeLong-Bas, 2018).

4. Marriage, Family and Personal Rights: Islam conceptualizes marriage as a covenant based upon affection, mercy, cooperation and mutual respect rather than domination. The Qur'an states:*"Among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so*

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that you may find tranquility in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy" (Qur'an 30:21). Similarly, husbands are commanded:*"Live with them in kindness"* (Qur'an 4:19). These verses establish compassion, consultation and respect as the ethical foundations of family life.

Islam also requires the free consent of both parties before marriage. Numerous Prophetic traditions demonstrate that women who were forced into marriage had the right to reject such unions. This principle affirms women's legal agency in one of the most important decisions affecting their lives. These Prophetic precedents, preserved in the authentic Hadith collections, established women's legal agency and reinforced the Islamic requirement of free consent in marriage

One of the most debated Qur'anic passages concerning gender relations is Qur'an 4:34, particularly the concept of *Qiwamah*. Classical scholars generally interpreted *Qiwamah* as a functional responsibility involving financial maintenance, protection and leadership within the family rather than unrestricted authority over women. Contemporary scholars continue to examine this concept in light of changing social realities while emphasizing that leadership in Islam remains inseparable from justice, consultation, compassion and accountability (Kamali, 2019; Saeed, 2006).

Accordingly, teaching this verse requires careful contextual analysis to prevent simplistic interpretations that may reinforce harmful stereotypes or obscure the broader Qur'anic principles of justice and mutual responsibility.

5. Women's Participation in Public Life: Islamic history demonstrates that women actively participated in numerous aspects of public life, including education, commerce, healthcare, social welfare, legal consultation and community service .Female Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) participated in public discussions, narrated Hadith, provided legal opinions, assisted during military campaigns and contributed to community development. Their involvement reflects the dynamic nature of early Muslim society and illustrates that active public participation by women is compatible with Islamic teachings when conducted within appropriate ethical guidelines.

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The contributions of later Muslim women scholars further reinforce this historical reality. Thousands of women transmitted Hadith, established educational institutions, endowed charitable foundations (*Awqaf*) and mentored succeeding generations of scholars. Contemporary scholarship has increasingly highlighted these contributions, correcting earlier historical narratives that overlooked women's intellectual roles.

6. Gender Justice and Contemporary Misconceptions: Perhaps the greatest challenge facing contemporary educators is distinguishing authentic Islamic teachings from cultural practices and ideological interpretations. Practices such as denying girls access to education, forced marriage, domestic violence, or exclusion from legitimate educational and economic opportunities are sometimes presented as Islamic despite lacking support from the Qur'an and authentic *Sunnah*.

Digital media has amplified these misconceptions by allowing inaccurate religious opinions to circulate rapidly without scholarly verification. Consequently, students often encounter contradictory narratives that either portray Islam as inherently oppressive or interpret Islamic teachings through ideological frameworks detached from their textual and historical contexts.

Effective teaching of gender justice therefore requires contextual interpretation, critical engagement with authentic sources and recognition of the diversity of juristic opinions within the Islamic scholarly tradition. Rather than encouraging ideological polarization, Islamic education should cultivate balanced scholarship, intellectual humility, respectful dialogue and commitment to justice as defined by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Contemporary discussions on Islamic legal reform similarly emphasize that the objectives of the Shari'ah should guide the contextual application of Islamic rulings while preserving fidelity to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* (Fadel, 2021; Farooq, 2022).

From this perspective, gender justice in Islam is neither the denial of biological differences nor the legitimization of unjust discrimination. Rather, it represents a comprehensive ethical framework that seeks to preserve human dignity, ensure fairness, protect rights, strengthen families and promote social harmony under the guidance of divine revelation. Properly understood and effectively taught, these principles provide students with a balanced understanding capable of engaging contemporary discussions with both academic rigour and fidelity to authentic Islamic teachings.

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Digital Approaches for Teaching Gender Justice in the Twenty-First-Century Classroom

The teaching of women's rights in Islam requires more than the transmission of religious information; it demands pedagogical approaches that cultivate critical thinking, ethical reasoning, digital literacy and informed engagement with authentic Islamic scholarship. As educational environments become increasingly digital, Islamic Studies educators must adopt instructional strategies that integrate technology with sound pedagogy while remaining faithful to the objectives of Islamic education (*Maqasid al-Tarbiyah*). Effective digital pedagogy therefore combines authentic Islamic content, learner-centered teaching methods, technological competence and continuous scholarly guidance. Research in educational psychology further indicates that meaningful digital learning occurs when technology supports active engagement, collaboration, reflection and authentic problem-solving rather than merely replacing traditional lectures (Means, Bakia, & Murphy, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

1. Text-Based and Contextual Learning: The foundation of teaching women's rights in Islam should remain the primary sources of Islamic law, the Qur'an and the authentic *Sunnah*. Students should be encouraged to examine relevant Qur'anic verses and Hadith within their linguistic, historical, legal and socio-cultural contexts. This approach minimizes selective interpretation and helps learners distinguish between universal Islamic principles, juristic diversity (*Ikhtilaf*), and cultural practices.

Digital technologies can significantly enrich textual learning through authenticated Qur'anic databases, Hadith repositories, electronic libraries and digital collections of classical and contemporary scholarship. Rather than relying on isolated internet searches, students should be guided to consult reliable academic resources under the supervision of qualified instructors. Such practices develop evidence-based reasoning while strengthening students' confidence in authentic Islamic scholarship.

Contextual learning further enables students to appreciate the historical circumstances surrounding Qur'anic revelation (*Asbab al-Nuzul*) and the occasions of Hadith narration (*Asbab al-Wurud*). Understanding these contexts prevents simplistic interpretations and

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encourages balanced engagement with contemporary issues relating to women's rights and gender justice.

2. Collaborative and Inquiry-Based Learning: Islamic intellectual tradition has historically emphasized dialogue, consultation (*Shura*), scholarly debate (*Munazarah*) and collective learning. Contemporary digital technologies provide opportunities to revive these traditions through collaborative educational environments. This approach also reflects the Islamic ethics of scholarly disagreement (*Adabal-Ikhtilāf*), which encourage respectful dialogue, tolerance of legitimate juristic differences and the collective pursuit of truth within the boundaries of Islamic scholarship (Al-Alwani, 2003).

Inquiry-based learning further encourages students to formulate research questions, investigate authentic sources, evaluate scholarly opinions and construct evidence-based conclusions. Instead of memorizing isolated legal rulings, learners become active participants in the learning process. Such pedagogical approaches promote intellectual curiosity, analytical thinking and lifelong learning. The teacher remains indispensable throughout this process by facilitating discussions, correcting misconceptions, ensuring scholarly accuracy and maintaining respectful academic engagement.

3. Multimedia-Supported Instruction: The effective teaching of complex religious and ethical issues often benefits from multimedia instructional resources that combine visual, textual and auditory elements. Educational videos, documentaries, interactive presentations, podcasts, digital timelines, info-graphics and virtual exhibitions enable students to engage with historical developments and contemporary discussions more effectively than conventional lectures alone. Multimedia learning theory demonstrates that students understand and retain complex concepts more effectively when carefully designed visual and verbal materials are presented in complementary ways rather than through text alone (Mayer, 2021; Clark & Mayer, 2023).

For example, multimedia presentations can illustrate the lives and scholarly contributions of Khadijah (RA), Aishah (RA), Umm Salamah (RA), Fatimah *al-Samarqandiyyah*, Karimah al-Marwaziyyah and Nana Asma'u. Such resources provide concrete historical evidence of women's active participation in commerce, education, jurisprudence, public service and intellectual leadership within Islamic civilization.

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Similarly, digital maps, historical archives and documentary resources can help students understand the evolution of Islamic legal thought regarding women's rights across different historical periods and geographical regions. These learning experiences strengthen historical consciousness while correcting misconceptions derived from selective historical narratives.

4. Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Learning: Artificial Intelligence offers considerable opportunities for improving teaching and learning within Islamic Studies. AI-assisted educational technologies can support lesson preparation, literature searches, language translation, formative assessment, personalized learning pathways, and academic writing support. Recent systematic reviews indicate that AI has become increasingly influential in higher education through intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning, automated feedback, learning analytics and academic support services. When appropriately integrated into teaching, AI can enhance student engagement, personalize learning experiences and improve educational efficiency (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Zou, Huang, & Xie, 2023; Bozkurt, 2021).

Students may employ AI to summarize scholarly articles, compare academic viewpoints, generate research questions, organize literature reviews and identify relevant academic references. These applications enhance research efficiency and encourage independent learning.

Teachers should also discuss the ethical dimensions of AI, including algorithmic bias, misinformation, plagiarism, copyright, transparency and responsible academic use. Such discussions prepare students to benefit from emerging technologies without compromising scholarly integrity or Islamic ethical principles.

5. Problem-Based and Case-Based Learning: One of the most effective approaches for teaching sensitive contemporary issues is problem-based learning (PBL). This instructional method presents students with authentic scenarios requiring critical analysis and collaborative problem-solving. For instance, students may analyse case studies involving misconceptions about women's inheritance, debates surrounding female education, online misinformation regarding *Hijab*, or differing scholarly opinions on women's participation in public life. Guided by the instructor, students examine Qur'anic evidence, Prophetic traditions, juristic opinions and contemporary academic literature before presenting informed conclusions.

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Case-based learning encourages learners to connect theoretical knowledge with practical realities while developing analytical reasoning, communication skills and ethical decision It also demonstrates that many contemporary controversies require nuanced scholarly engagement rather than simplistic answers.

6. Ethical Digital Pedagogy: Technology should never be separated from ethics. Islamic pedagogy aims not only at transmitting knowledge but also at cultivating moral excellence (*Akhlaq*), sincerity (*Ikhlas*), trustworthiness (*Amanah*), justice (*'Adl*), wisdom (*Hikmah*) and good manners (*Adab*).Connectivist learning theory further suggests that meaningful learning in digital environments depends upon learners' ability to locate, evaluate and connect reliable sources of knowledge within distributed learning networks (Siemens, 2005).

Consequently, digital learning environments should promote respectful communication, intellectual humility, academic honesty and constructive engagement with differing opinions. Students should learn to verify online information before sharing it, avoid defamatory or inflammatory content, acknowledge intellectual sources appropriately, and use digital technologies responsibly.

The Qur'anic principle of *Tabayyun* (verification) remains especially relevant in contemporary digital environments characterized by rapid information exchange and frequent misinformation. Likewise, international human rights frameworks emphasize access to education, dignity, equality and responsible participation in society, values that resonate with Islam's commitment to justice while remaining rooted in divine revelation (United Nations, 1948).

7. Authentic Assessment in Digital Learning: Assessment methods should move beyond rote memorization to evaluate higher-order cognitive and ethical competencies. Digital assessment strategies may include electronic portfolios, reflective journals, multimedia presentations, collaborative research projects, online discussions, quizzes, peer assessment and case-study analyses.

Assessment should measure not only students' factual knowledge of women's rights in Islam but also their ability to interpret Islamic sources accurately, evaluate competing arguments

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critically, apply Islamic principles to contemporary issues and communicate respectfully within digital environments.

Conclusion

This study examined the intersection of women's rights in Islam and digital education by exploring pedagogical approaches capable of promoting an authentic understanding of gender justice in twenty-first-century classrooms. Drawing upon the Qur'an, the *Sunnah*, classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary educational literature, the paper demonstrated that Islam provides a comprehensive framework of justice that safeguards women's spiritual, educational, economic, legal and social rights while promoting human dignity, equity and moral responsibility.

The study further established that digital education has transformed contemporary teaching and learning by expanding access to authentic Islamic knowledge through Learning Management Systems, multimedia instruction, virtual classrooms, collaborative learning platforms, digital libraries and Artificial Intelligence educational technologies. When integrated with learner pedagogy and guided by qualified educators, these innovations have considerable potential to strengthen students' understanding of women's rights, promote critical thinking, encourage respectful dialogue, and cultivate responsible digital citizenship. These developments are consistent with recent international policy frameworks that call upon educational institutions to strengthen leadership, digital competence, ethical technology use and inclusive access to quality education in response to rapidly changing global educational realities (UNESCO, 2024).

Nevertheless, the paper also identified significant challenges, including technological inequality, inadequate teacher preparedness, misinformation, ideological polarization and ethical concerns associated with AI-generated religious content. Addressing these issues requires coordinated efforts involving curriculum reform, institutional investment, professional development, digital literacy education and sustained collaboration between Islamic scholars and educational technology specialists.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

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1. Curriculum Reform: Institutions offering Islamic Studies should revise their curricula to integrate authentic Islamic teachings on women's rights with contemporary digital pedagogical approaches, ensuring that students develop both religious understanding and digital competence.

2. Professional Development: Ministries of Education, Colleges of Education, Universitiesand teacher training institutions should organize continuous professional development programmes that strengthen teachers' competencies in digital pedagogy, multimedia instruction, Artificial Intelligence, online assessment and digital ethics.

3. Development of Authentic Digital Resources: Educational institutions should collaborate with qualified Islamic scholars to produce digital textbooks, multimedia instructional materials, educational videos, podcasts, online courses that accurately represent Islamic teachings on women's rights.

4. Promotion of Digital Literacy: Islamic Studies programmes should include structured instruction in digital literacy, emphasizing source evaluation, verification (*Tabayyun*), academic integrity, responsible AI use and ethical online communication.

5. Investment in Educational Infrastructure: Governments and educational stakeholders should improve internet connectivity, electricity supply, digital libraries, computer laboratories and access to educational technologies, particularly in rural and underserved institutions.

6. Integration of Student-Centered Pedagogies: Islamic Studies educators should adopt inquiry-based learning, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, multimedia instruction and authentic assessment strategies that encourage critical thinking and evidence engagement with Islamic sources.

7. Promotion of Balanced Scholarship: Classroom instruction should distinguish clearly between authentic Islamic teachings, legitimate juristic diversity (*Ikhtilaf*) and cultural practices that do not necessarily reflect Islamic principles. This distinction will reduce misconceptions and promote informed dialogue on gender justice.

8. Ethical Governance of Artificial Intelligence: Educational institutions should formulate policies regulating the responsible educational use of AI while ensuring that matters relating to Qur'anic interpretation, Hadith authentication and Islamic jurisprudence remain under the guidance of qualified scholars.

9. Support for Further Research: Researchers should undertake empirical studies examining the effectiveness of digital pedagogical models in improving students' understanding of women's rights, gender justice, digital literacy and ethical decision within Islamic education.

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