

dalam konteks pendidikan Islam yang terdisrupsi oleh AI, dengan merujuk pada konsep *wujūd* dan *māhiyyah* dari filsafat Ibnu Sīnā. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi kepustakaan, dengan data primer berupa teks *al-Shifā'* karya Ibnu Sīnā dan data sekunder dari jurnal terakreditasi nasional dan internasional. Teori *wujūd* dan *māhiyyah* digunakan sebagai kerangka untuk mengevaluasi eksistensi AI sebagai "guru". Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa AI hanya memiliki eksistensi fungsional tanpa substansi spiritual, sehingga tidak memenuhi syarat sebagai entitas pendidik dalam perspektif pendidikan Islam. Guru manusia, menurut Ibnu Sīnā, memiliki *māhiyyah* yang mencakup dimensi ruhani dan moral yang tidak dimiliki oleh AI. Kesimpulan dari studi ini menegaskan bahwa meskipun AI dapat berperan sebagai alat bantu, peran guru tetap tak tergantikan dalam membentuk jiwa dan karakter peserta didik. Oleh karena itu, pendidikan Islam masa depan harus mengembangkan model kolaboratif yang menempatkan AI sebagai mitra, bukan pengganti guru.

Kata-kata Kunci: *Artificial Intelligence, Digitalisasi, Ibnu Sīnā, Ontologi, Pendidikan Islam.*

Introduction

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology globally has had a great influence on the transformation of education, including Islamic education in Indonesia. AI has now emerged as a new entity in the teaching and learning process, able to provide answers, explanations, and independent learning evaluations. This phenomenon raises a serious problem in the context of Islamic education: Are human teachers still relevant? Can the role of teachers be completely replaced by algorithms and digital intelligent systems? Concerns about the loss of the essential value and function of human teachers in learning, especially in the aspect of character formation and student morals, are problems that need to be studied. AI is able to help cognitive processes efficiently, but what about the ethical, affective, and spiritual dimensions that have been inherent in the teacher-student relationship in Islamic education? This is a big challenge, especially in the midst of the rapid progress of education digitalization.

This issue is relevant to the degradation of students' cognitive and reflective engagement. Meanwhile, teachers are no longer the only information center, but are shifting as a complement to the digital learning system. A study by Adiyono et al. (2025, 470) revealed that 70% of students at STIT Ibnu Rushd use AI to answer their exams, but only 30% feel that the use of AI improves their understanding of the material in depth. Syukur et al. (2024, 535) state that Islamic educational institutions have not yet included AI in the formal curriculum, despite its widespread use in various non-formal activities such as seminars and research. They also noted that Indonesian students are relatively more open to AI but tend to ignore the potential for algorithmic bias against Islamic values. This study highlights the potential for moral displacement, which is a shift in learning orientation from value to efficiency.

Theoretically, AI in education is thought to encourage personalization

of learning and improve administrative efficiency (Pertwi, Jailani, and Isma 2024, 3728). However, in practice, AI has the potential to distance humanistic relations in education. Teachers as *qudwah ḥasanah*—moral and spiritual examples—cannot be replaced by technological sophistication. This is a problem that has not been answered by the pragmatic approach of AI in education. This research is based on Ibn Sīnā's thoughts on *wujūd* and *māhiyyah*. In Ibn Sīnā's view, *wujūd* is the existence of something, while *māhiyyah* is the essence of something that distinguishes itself from other entities. The human teacher has a distinctive *wujūd* and *māhiyyah*—not merely a liaison of information, but a spiritual guide. AI, in this perspective, has only a functional form of existence without spiritual quiddity. Isnainiyah and Sauri (2021, 203) stated that, according to Ibn Sīnā, truth can only be achieved through philosophical and ethical approaches, not mere algorithms or data. Thus, the existence of teachers is not only important, but irreplaceable by the digital system. Other literature from Educational journals also confirms the same thing. Pertwi, Jailani, and Isma (2024, 3730) state that while AI helps with teachers' technical tasks, students' ethics and character guidance still require human presence. AI is not capable of reaching this.

To answer this problem, this study proposes the hypothesis that human teachers remain relevant and indispensable in the digital era, especially in Islamic education. AI lacks spirit, manners, and ethical awareness—elements on which character education is based. Therefore, AI can only be a tool, not a substitute for the role of teachers in educating the whole human being. For this reason, this study aims to analyze Ibn Sīnā's thoughts on the *wujūd* and *māhiyyah* in the book of *al-Shifā'* as a framework for philosophical reflection on the existence of "digital teachers"; presents a critique of the role of AI in Islamic education from an ontological and ethical perspective; and compiling a synthesis between technology and spiritual values of Islamic education that still places teachers as the main actors in shaping the character of students.

Research that uses classical Islamic philosophical approaches—especially Ibn Sīnā's theory of *wujūd* and *māhiyyah*—to assess the existence of digital teachers has not been widely studied. Studies like mine, Adiyono et al. (2025, 427) it does discuss the ethics of the use of AI in Islamic education, but it has not touched on the ontological and essential aspects of the "teacher" entity. Therefore, it is hoped that this study can fill this gap and provide a conceptual foothold for Islamic education in the digital era. On this basis, this research aims to examine the phenomenon of AI and digital teachers in Indonesian Islamic education from the perspective of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, especially the theory of *wujūd* and *māhiyyah*, and propose a synthesis of Islamic values in the era of digital education.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review. Literature research aims to understand the phenomenon through the

analysis of various written sources (Creswell 2014, 4). The primary literature in this study is a book entitled *al-Shifā'* by Ibn Sīnā, which was translated into Indonesian by Syihabul Furqan. Secondary data collection was carried out through a systematic literature review. This process involves the exploration of various scientific sources, such as theses, proceedings, and articles from accredited national journals as well as international journals. The literature search is carried out through two main channels: first, through the Elsevier website using keywords "teacher", "artificial intelligence" and "Avicenna", filtered by publication between 2017 and 2025; second, with the help of software Publish or Perish Using keywords "artificial intelligence", "Ibn Sīnā", and "Islamic education" in the same period. This approach is used to obtain relevant and accredited references from national journals, as well as international books, ensuring that the data used is scientific and accountable (Gravetter and Forzano 2019, 37). Data analysis was carried out by a descriptive-analytical method, which allowed an in-depth understanding of the various concepts and theories studied (Privitera 2020, 140).

The Concept of *Wujūd* and *Māhiyyah* in the Philosophy of Ibn Sīnā

The concepts of existence (*wujūd*) and quiddity (*māhiyyah*) in Ibn Sīnā's philosophy are the main foundations in understanding the ontology and reality of all things. In his peripatetic frame of thought, Ibn Sīnā emphasized that everything in this realm consists of two fundamental aspects, namely *wujūd*, which means the actual existence of an entity, and *māhiyyah*, which shows the essence or essence of the thing. Ibn Sīnā's dualistic view of form and matter emphasizes that everything has both an outer and an inner aspect. Even though something might be visible in existence, there is also a deeper meaning within it. Manifest indicates that something exists, while *māhiyyah* explains what something is essentially. Ibn Sīnā's ontology distinguishes between the obligatory existence (*al-wujūd al-wājib*), which is an absolute existence that does not depend on anything and belongs only to God, and the *mumkin* existence (*al-wujūd al-mumkin*), which is any entity other than God whose existence is contingent and dependent on the obligatory existence. With this framework, every existing being, including humans, does not have an independent and eternal existence, but rather its existence is obtained through the overflow of the Obligatory Existence (Sīnā 2024, 63).

The separation and the connection between *wujūd* and *māhiyyah* in Ibn Sīnā's teachings come with a hierarchical structure of reality, in which everything occupies its place in the cosmic order based on its existential and essential level. Ibn Sīnā rejected the idea that essence alone is sufficient for existence. In *al-Shifā'*, he asserts that *māhiyyah* does not inherently demand existence; something can be imagined in its essence

without the necessity of its existing. Therefore, existence must be added to the essence for something to become real in the empirical world. This is what he calls *iktisāb al-wujūd*—the acquisition of existence that comes from a higher entity, namely the obligatory existence (China 2024, 63–65). Thus, Ibn Sīnā’s ontological understanding provides a systematic framework for understanding not only the structure of reality but also the position of human beings and knowledge in the entire cosmos.

In Ibn Sīnā’s cosmological and epistemological system, the relationship between the human *wujūd* and the active intellect (*al-‘aql al-fa‘āl*) occupies a central position. Human beings, who are composed of a rational body and soul (*al-nafs al-nāṭiqah*), are positioned as entities that have the potential ability to attain universal knowledge and supreme truth through connection with the active intellect. The active intellect in Ibn Sīnā’s philosophy is the last cosmic principle in the chain of emanations emanating from God, which serves as the driving force and illumination of the human intellect. Its main function is to give intellectual *wujūd* (*ma‘qūlāt*) to the rational soul of man that are potential, so that they become actual (Saleh and Humaidi 2022, 4–6). In this context, man does not create knowledge, but captures and receives intellectual illumination from the active intellect.

The process of receiving knowledge from the active intellect is not merely cognitive but also spiritual. Ibn Sīnā considered that a person who achieves unity with the active intellect has reached the pinnacle of intellectual and moral perfection. A soul that has received these universal forms becomes not only knowledgeable but also moral, because it recognizes the highest principles of reality. In light of Ibn Sīnā’s Peripatetic teachings, which are rooted in Aristotelian thought, the formal essence of a human being lies in the soul. It is through the soul that the human body, as material, gains character and is shaped both physically and mentally in an ontological sense. Linked to the concept of human nature from Ibn Sīnā’s perspective, the ontological status of a teacher—as a human being—holds a significant role in guiding students and demonstrating moral nobility in directing the development of learners so they grow into mature and responsible individuals within society. Therefore, the ontological position of a teacher implies nurturing and providing training, instruction, direction, or guidance related to morals and intellectual development. Consequently, the relationship between humans and the active intellect cannot be reduced to merely an epistemic connection but also involves an ontological and ethical relationship. In this role, the teacher—as—a—human—being acts as a medium or bridge between the student and the active intellect. The teacher is not merely an instructor, but a spiritual guide who facilitates the student’s soul in gradually uniting with absolute truth (Nasr 2020, 54).

The ontology of teachers in their role as educators is not only to the

technical task of delivering content, but also concerns their existential responsibility as the primary agents in the transformation of students. A teacher is a subject with moral awareness, spirituality, and will, which enables intersubjective relationships and the formation of values in the educational process. In the ontological study, Fowler, Gabriel, and Leonard (2025, 323) emphasize that a teacher's ontological and epistemological understanding greatly influences their engagement in professional development. Teachers who are aware of the existential meaning of their role as educators demonstrate a more reflective and transformative commitment to teaching practice. This shows that teachers are not merely channels for transmitting knowledge but are sources of meaning, role models, and designers of ethical and meaningful learning environments.

In contrast, the ontology of AI in education presents a non-biological entity that operates through algorithmic networks and data-based logic. AI lacks intentionality, moral awareness, or free will, and thus its existence is instrumental. AI is classified based on technical functions such as models, agents, bias, and networks. They assert that AI is merely a systemic construction with no capacity for ethical or affective experience or understanding (Joachimik et al. 2024, 3). Firdaus (2025, 79) criticizes the modern education system's tendency toward posthumanism and transhumanism, which obscure the existential meaning of education. He reminds us that AI, no matter how advanced, lacks an ontological structure that allows for the formation of character and values, which are the core of true education. Thus, ontologically, teachers are moral and spiritual entities who serve as subjects of education, while AI is merely an instrumental object that supports—but does not replace—the mission of education.

The logical consequence of this construction is that the existence of the teacher cannot be replaced by an entity that lacks a soul and consciousness, such as AI. AI may be capable of accessing and conveying information, but it cannot connect the soul to transcendent reality or guide humans to moral and intellectual perfection. For Ibn Sīnā, humans and all creations are not only seen in terms of their physical form but also terms of their purpose and value. This carries an important message for today's educational world: technologies like AI can assist in teaching, but they cannot replace the role of teachers as moral and spiritual guides. A teacher is not just a transmitter of knowledge, but a guide in life. Amid the digital onslaught, it is crucial to ensure that education remains centered on human beings who possess feelings, intellect, and hearts. The soul, according to Ibn Sīnā, has the power to drive humans to grow and develop. Therefore, education should strengthen the soul, not weaken it. In Ibn Sīnā's view, the teacher is the intermediary between the contingent form (the disciple) and the source of true knowledge (the active intellect), and in this case, has a metaphysical position that is irreplaceable by

any technological device. Therefore, within the framework of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, the digitization of education must still place humans as the main subject of education, not the passive object of information transfer. The separation of the role of human teachers will create an essential gap in education, because true education is not just the transmission of data, but the transformation of the soul towards perfection.

Ibn Sīnā's View on the Educational Process

In Ibn Sīnā's view, the process of education is not just the transmission of information, but a spiritual and intellectual journey that leads the human soul to perfection. Teachers, in the education system idealized by Ibn Sīnā, are not only material conveyors, but have a deeper role as spiritual intermediaries between the active intellect and the soul of students. This is based on Ibn Sīnā's metaphysical view that true knowledge does not come from the material world, but from *al-'aql al-fa'āl* or the active intellect, which is the cosmic entity in the emanating order of Islamic philosophy. The active intellect functions as an inspiration or illuminator for the human intellect, and the teacher serves as a link between the source of divine knowledge and the learning reality that students live daily (Nasr 2020, 54).

Ibn Sīnā views that true education is a process of spiritualization of the intellect that allows man to achieve unity with an active intellect. In this case, teachers have a very important role because only with the right spiritual guidance can students actualize their potential towards perfection. This concept emphasizes that teachers must have moral integrity and spiritual depth because they not only convey knowledge but also shape the character and spirituality of students. As explained in the study of Islamic education from Ibn Sīnā's perspective, teachers are obliged to reflect noble morals because their success in educating is not only measured by the academic achievements of students, but also by the formation of a noble and civilized soul (Atabik and Fian 2023, 426).

In early childhood education, Ibn Sīnā compiled the stages of educational development based on age and spiritual and intellectual readiness of children. From an early age, children must be taught religious values and ethics as the foundation for the formation of the soul. In this context, teachers must be able to understand the spiritual aspects of children and instill noble values through affective and moral approaches, not just cognitive. This kind of education, according to Ibn Sīnā, can only be achieved if teachers are able to be spiritual role models for students (Hidayatulloh 2024, 158).

This view gains strong relevance in the modern context when technology, especially AI, is beginning to take over most pedagogical functions. The use of AI in Islamic education, as studied by Faisol Hakim et al., has changed the learning landscape, including shifting the position

of teachers from a central role to a technology facilitator. Although AI offers convenience and efficiency, it carries the risk of losing the spiritual relationship between teacher and student, and interfering with the internalization process of moral values in learning (Hakim, Fadlillah, and Rofiq 2024, 131). Achruh et al. emphasized that in higher Islamic education in Indonesia, the integration of AI must consider the ethical and spiritual dimensions that have been maintained by the teacher-based education system. AI is indeed able to provide personalized and adaptive learning, but it does not have the ability to instill value in a transcendent way because it lacks spirit and moral awareness (Adiyono et al. 2025, 425). Therefore, the existence of teachers not only remains relevant but is even more crucial amid technological developments that have the potential to obscure human values in education.

In the context of Indonesia's national education, the emphasis on spiritual values and character as part of the Pancasila Student Profile also shows synchronization with Ibn Sīnā's thought. Education is directed to form the whole human being, not only competent in the cognitive aspect, but also excelling in spirituality and social ethics. In this case, AI as a technology is still positioned as an auxiliary tool, not as an educational center (Shely Cathrin et al. 2024, 37). Thus, Ibn Sīnā's concept of education, which views the teacher as a spiritual intermediary and liaison with the active intellect, provides a solid philosophical framework to maintain the central role of the teacher in the digital age. Amid the onslaught of technology, the presence of teachers remains an absolute requirement in maintaining the originality and depth of Islamic education. The process of acquiring essential knowledge, in this framework, depends not only on the medium of learning but on spiritual strength and moral guidance that can only be given by an authentic teacher.

Teachers in Islamic Education: More Than Teachers

The role of teachers in Islamic education is not only as a conveyor of information or facilitator of learning, but more than that, teachers function as value planters, character builders, and spiritual guides of students. In this context, the teacher occupies a sacred position as *qudwah hasanah* (noble example), which not only transfers knowledge but also guides behavior and shapes the soul of the student as a whole. In the Islamic scientific tradition, the teaching-learning process is always accompanied by spiritual closeness between students and teachers, which makes teachers a source of moral, moral, and spiritual inspiration. This view is increasingly important to be affirmed amid the rapid flow of educational digitalization that is starting to rely on AI as the main teaching tool. Technology, although able to provide access to information, is not able to provide an example of life, because it lacks thought. The ideal teacher is a figure who is able to guide students towards intellectual

and moral perfection. The educational process can utilize technology, but it should never lose its direction. The most important thing is to ensure that teachers remain figures who shape character, not just servants of the system. Amalia (2023, 67) also states that Islamic education, according to Ibn Sīnā, aims to develop the intellectual, physical, and moral potential of students so that they are ready to face the world guided by religious values. This view emphasizes that teachers in Islamic education cannot be replaced by AI, because AI lacks spiritual skills and is unable to instill values holistically. AI is only capable of providing information, while teachers touch on the deepest dimensions of humans: spirit and morality.

Further, Siddiq and Siregar (2024, 780) explains that Islamic education in the contemporary context must still refer to classical figures such as Ibn Sīnā, who divided education into levels of spiritual development: from moral education at an early age, to learning the Qur'an at an elementary age, to the development of interests and talents in adolescence. In this process, the existence of teachers who understand the psychological and spiritual development of children is very necessary. Teachers not only manage learning strategies but also monitor students' spiritual development, provide advice, and instill life examples.

Replacing teachers with AI in religious education not only lowers the quality of education but also reduces the spiritual values that are at the core of Islamic education. This thought is also highlighted by Hadi (2024, 83) in his work on the comparison between Islamic religious education and the role of AI. He emphasized that in Islamic religious education, teachers do not only teach verses and hadiths, but also have a scientific sanad that links knowledge with moral authority. The existence of a pious teacher is very important in directing students' understanding of religious teachings so that they are not misinterpreted by AI, which does not necessarily have a basis for Islamic values and ethics. Ilham and Aripin (2025, 393) affirmed that in modern Islamic education, character and morality remain the main axis. Teachers are the bearers of a living spirit of education because, in addition to teaching knowledge, they also reflect Islamic values through their daily attitudes and behaviors. In Ibn Sīnā's view, human beings are creatures that have physical and spiritual elements, so the ideal education must be able to develop these two aspects in a balanced manner. This function can only be carried out by teachers who have a complete moral and spiritual dimension, not by AI systems that are simply based on logic and algorithms.

Thus, the Islamic scientific tradition that makes teachers *qudwah* has a very strong ontological and pedagogical foundation. Teachers in Islamic education are more than just teachers; He is a spiritual guide, moral guide, and guardian of divine values that cannot be replaced by any advanced technology. In the face of the digital era and the use of AI, the urgency of maintaining the role of teachers as role models and character

builders is becoming increasingly important to be fought for. Therefore, Islamic education must continue to place teachers as the moral center in the educational process, as an effort to maintain the integrity of the true mission of *tarbiyyah*.

The Reality of Education in Indonesia: AI and Student Independence

The digital transformation in the Indonesian education world marks a major shift in the way students acquire knowledge. The sophistication of technology, especially AI, has allowed students to learn independently through various platforms that provide subject matter, interactive simulations, and automated question-and-answer systems. This phenomenon shows that today's generation of learners is more familiar with technology than conventional learning methods, and this directly changes the dynamics of the classroom. The widespread use of AI reflects a shift in learning culture that is more personalized, fast, and flexible. However, behind the efficiency offered by AI, there are deep concerns about its impact on the relational and humanistic structure of education (Rusly 2024, 39).

The rise of the use of AI has also shifted the position of teachers from a central figure in knowledge transfer to more of a facilitator. The role of the teacher is no longer seen as the only source of knowledge, but rather as a companion in the learning process directed by the students themselves. Although pedagogically this is aligned with the principle of student-centered learning, in the context of Islamic education that emphasizes the importance of moral values and examples, this shift has the potential to reduce the spiritual and affective dimensions in the educational process. Teachers, in Islamic education, not only convey lessons but also guide the hearts and souls of students towards noble morals (Ulfah, Ridhoi, and Sridadi 2022, 69).

Concerns about the loss of emotional closeness between teachers and students are also getting stronger. Interactions that used to happen in person and allow for strong and deep relationships are now being replaced by screens and system logic. This not only has an impact on the effectiveness of learning, but also on the formation of students' character. When teachers are no longer present as a figure who can be directly emulated, students risk losing moral and spiritual role models in their lives. In Indonesia's education report towards 2045, it is stated that the tendency to dehumanize education is beginning to be seen clearly along with the penetration of AI in the classroom, which erodes the values of warmth and interpersonal character development (Agustina and Suharya 2024, 132).

Further, empirical facts in the field show that most students are starting to rely on AI to work on assignments and search for information. This

practicality does ease the learning process, but it also poses an ethical dilemma. As stated in the study of contemporary Islamic education, dependence on technology that is not accompanied by moral assistance from teachers has the potential to weaken students' critical power and attitude of responsibility towards their learning process (Aman and Mulisi 2023, 277). As a result, students can be technically smart but weak in character and personality dimensions. Therefore, in the face of the AI-based education revolution, it is important to reaffirm the position of teachers as key figures in the formation of students' character and morals. Teachers must still be role models (*qudwah*) who provide direction not only in academic aspects, but also in noble human values. In this context, technology should not replace teachers, but support the role of teachers to be more effective in conveying values and life inspiration. Islamic education, with its rich tradition of building a spiritual connection between teacher and student, offers relevant alternative solutions to maintain a balance between technology and values (Ulfah, Ridhoi, and Sridadi 2022, 70).

Thus, the reality of education in Indonesia, which is increasingly familiar with AI, needs to be accompanied by strengthening the role of teachers as the main guides in the process of internalizing values and morals. Digital transformation should not marginalize humanity from the core of education, but rather become a tool that remains based on humanistic and spiritual relations that have long been the spirit of Islamic education.

Do Digital Teachers Have a *Wujūd* and *Māhiyyah*?

The development of AI technology as a digital entity in education has challenged the conceptual foundations of teachers in Islamic philosophy. Although AI has exceptional technical capabilities in delivering learning materials, it still lacks spirit and morality. This raises a fundamental question: Is AI worthy of being considered a "teacher"? Within the framework of Ibn Sīnā's ontology, the answer to this question demands a search for two main concepts: *wujūd* (actual existence) and *māhiyyah* (essence). AI does exist as a digital device that can operate and provide information, but in essence, it lacks the spiritual substance that is the main characteristic of humans as educational subjects. Thus, AI only has a *wujūd* (actual existence) in a technical sense, but it does not have a *māhiyyah* (essence) as an educational entity.

In *al-Shifā'*, Ibn Sīnā emphasized that the soul or *nafs* is a separate substance that perfects the body and allows humans to know the truth and get closer to God (Sīnā 2024, 45). *Nafs* is not just a form or tool, but a spiritual essence that regulates, moves, and shapes human character. AI does not have *nafs*, so it cannot be said to have a *māhiyyah* as a teacher. Without *nafs*, AI is incapable of empathy, does not understand

moral values, and cannot be a role model. Thus, in the context of Islamic education, which emphasizes the formation of character and morals, AI does not have the ontological legitimacy to replace the role of teachers.

This perspective is reinforced by research by Ihsan, Silmi, and Indallah (2024, 273), which states that *nafs* in Ibn Sīnā's view is an independent substance that is the basis of the ability to think, feel, and act ethically. Without *nafs*, any entity cannot undergo the process of true learning, because it lacks moral awareness and responsibility. Therefore, AI, although sophisticated, is not capable of carrying out pedagogical functions in a spiritual and philosophical sense. Teachers as owners of *nafs* can respond effectively and morally, guiding students not only cognitively, but also emotionally and ethically.

In the explanation, Isnainiyah and Sauri (2021, 204), Ibn Sīnā taught that true truth is obtained not only from data, but from the relationship between knowledge, reality, and feeling. Truth is not merely objective, logical, but must go through a process of reflective understanding that includes both ethical and spiritual dimensions. AI, which works on the basis of algorithmic logic and has no consciousness, is incapable of fusing with the values of truth in a philosophical sense. Therefore, its use as a teacher risks reducing the meaning of education to mere transmission of information, not self-transformation. Furthermore, Seyyed Hossein Nasr explained that in classical Islamic philosophy, education is a spiritual journey to perfection, which is only possible for conscious and moral human beings. The teacher is a transcendental medium that directs the student to divine reality, a role that is not possible for machines to perform (Nasr 2020, 89). Therefore, education that relies solely on AI will lose its transcendental and spiritual dimension, making it devoid of value and wisdom.

In contemporary practice, studies by Hakim, Fadlillah, and Rofiq (2024, 131) also suggest that the overuse of AI in Islamic education can lead to distortion of value understanding and loss of emotional interaction between teachers and students. AI is capable of facilitating technical learning, but it fails to instill value because it lacks the depth of spiritual experience. This concern becomes even more relevant when education shifts to a model that relies too much on efficiency and forgets the process of moral formation that is at the core of Islamic education. Thus, the question of whether digital teachers have *wujūd* and *māhiyyah* must be answered within the framework of Islamic philosophy that places the spirit as an essential element in education. AI only has a functional existence, but it lacks spiritual substance as an educator. In Ibn Sīnā's view, only human beings who have *nafs nāṭiqah* can carry out the mandate of education in its entirety. Therefore, AI cannot replace teachers as educators in the ontological and moral sense in the Islamic educational tradition.

Teachers as Ethical Wujūd: Reflections on Ibn Sīnā's Anxiety

The human teacher in Ibn Sīnā's frame of thought occupies a much deeper position than just a teacher; He is the representative of the active intellect, the medium between the spirit of the student and the essential knowledge. This concept explains that teachers not only carry out epistemological functions but also play a transcendental role in guiding humans to spiritual perfection. In Ibn Sīnā's system of emanating philosophy, the active intellect functions as an inspiration that illuminates the human mind with knowledge. Human teachers, as concrete manifestations of active intellectual enlightenment, play a central role in translating divine knowledge into moral and ethical guidance that can be understood and internalized by learners. When this role is replaced by digital systems such as AI, which lack spirit and moral values, the educational process loses its inner dimension and risks degrading meaning.

This view is the same as the concept of *nafs al-nāṭiqah* in Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, which is a rational soul that has two powers: practical and theoretical. In the philosophy of Ibn Sīnā, *nafs* is understood as a spiritual essence that governs the body and enables human beings to think, feel, and make choices. It functions as an internal driver that shapes moral direction and guides individuals toward their ultimate perfection. A useful metaphor to illustrate this: *nafs* is the captain of a ship, reason is the compass, the body is the vessel, and life is the ocean. Without *nafs*, the ship may move, but it lacks a moral and spiritual course. Thus, *nafs* is not merely a motor of movement—it is the one who gives purpose and meaning to the journey of life. Only human beings who have perfect theoretical power—that is, those who have reached the level of *al-'aql al-mustafad*—can understand the true reality and guide others to perfection (Salim 2021, 2). The teacher, as the owner of *nafs* with theoretical intellect, is the only entity in education that is able to bridge the gap between knowledge and values, between logic and spirituality. The presence of AI that lacks an inner structure makes it unworthy of occupying the position.

In Ibn Sīnā's thought, as explained in *al-Shifā'*, man attains true knowledge not through the accumulation of information, but through illumination by the active intellect, which can only be achieved if the soul has been trained and cleansed (Sīnā 2024, 53). The teacher functions as an intermediary who purifies and sharpens the soul of students to be able to receive this illumination. Thus, the loss of a human teacher means the loss of the main channel for receiving knowledge in its purest form.

This analysis is reinforced by findings from Nata et al. (2024, 377), which explains that true education must pay attention to the overall development of the student's soul. Teachers in Ibn Sīnā's view must recognize the spiritual and moral needs of students to adjust learning

methods that are not only cognitive, but also affective and spiritual. This cannot be done by an AI that only works on data and logic. Next, Fatimah et al. (2023, 162) emphasize that the teaching method according to Ibn Sīnā is not only cognitive but also includes an exemplary approach, *targhīb-tarhīb*, as well as discussions that are dialogical and personal. This method aims to shape the character and personality of students, which can only be done by humans who have moral awareness. If education relies solely on AI, then these methods will not be able to be implemented authentically. Furthermore, in Ibn Sīnā's intellectual study of the classification of intelligibles, it is stated that only soul-conscious entities can understand philosophical second intelligibles, i.e., concepts such as justice, beauty, or wisdom, which cannot be understood logically alone but through philosophical understanding and inner experience (Soufi and Azimi 2024, 83). AI that is only capable of understanding logical second intelligibles cannot transmit these noble values authentically.

Thus, human teachers in Islamic education have an ontological and ethical status as ethical existence—creatures who have *māhiyyah* as true educators because they can convey knowledge while touching the souls of students. Losing the role of human teachers in the education system means losing a transcendental dimension that is very important in the process of transforming human personality. In Ibn Sīnā's reflection on the possibility of the degradation of education into a mere mechanical instrument, the presence of AI as a “teacher” without a spirit must be used as an alarm to reaffirm the position of human teachers as the main pillar of education that cannot be replaced by machines.

Character and Moral Education: Can't Be Automated

Character and moral education in Islam are not just an additional aspect of the curriculum, but is the core of the whole educational process itself. In this context, the function of teachers as value guardians is very important and cannot be replaced by AI systems. AI is indeed capable of providing information, compiling a curriculum, and even responding to students' questions at high speed, but it cannot understand, feel, or emulate moral values. Empathy, manners, and example are all parts of affective and spiritual education that can only be transmitted through meaningful human interaction. Therefore, character and moral education cannot be automated, because these values require behavioral models, real examples, and personal guidance that can only be provided by human teachers.

Other research conducted by Majid (2020, 71) at MTs Pattiro Bajo also showed that moral faith teachers play a dual role as informers, motivators, facilitators, and evaluators in fostering student tolerance. In teaching moral values such as tolerance, teachers use a dialogical approach and direct examples that form a sense of value in students. This

role is impossible for AI to perform because it cannot fully understand the social context and emotions of students, let alone internalize values and guide students spiritually. Meanwhile, Tamuri and Ismail (2021, 3) emphasized in their study of the Islamic education system in Malaysia, it emphasized that students' morality is highly correlated with the quality of their interactions with Islamic education teachers. Teachers are not only teachers, but also directors and soul builders. These interactions result in a well-rounded form of education: intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. The presence of teachers directly and relationally is an effective medium in teaching Islamic values that cannot be reached by digital media alone. AI, in this case, is not capable of building emotional connections or being a living source of inspiration for students.

Moral exemplary and character formation can only emerge from human to human, through personal encounters that allow for imitation of values, emotional appreciation, and spiritual dialogue. If education is completely left to the automatic system, then the most important aspect of Islamic education, namely the development of the spirit and morals, will be vacant. Teachers as figures who have a complete personality and spiritual responsibility are the tangible manifestations of the values taught. Therefore, the existence of teachers in Islamic education is not only important, but fundamental. Replacing them with AI means reducing education to mere information, not transformation. Thus, maintaining the role of teachers as guardians of values is a necessity in maintaining the sustainability of meaningful and soulful education.

Future Scenario: Collaboration, Not Substitution

The transformation of Islamic education in the digital era requires a strategic direction that does not solely place technology as a substitute for the role of teachers, but as a partner in the educational process. In the face of AI dominance, the biggest challenge is not how to replace teachers with machines, but how to develop an Islamic education model that is able to integrate AI ethically without sacrificing the spiritual and humanistic values inherent in the Islamic scientific tradition. The future educational model must encourage collaboration between the technological sophistication of AI and the inner depth of the teacher as the moral and spiritual guide of the students. Teachers must remain recognized as central figures who facilitate the transformation of students' character, while AI is used to support technical, administrative, and adaptive aspects of learning.

The success of Islamic digital education lies in the balance between technology and the spirit of spirituality instilled by teachers. This is confirmed by Hastuti and Hartono (2025, 76) that the importance of reconstructing Islamic education based on technoscience, which is able to optimize AI, aims to enrich learning, not to replace the role of teachers.

They found that AI can improve interaction and learning efficiency through features such as chatbots and adaptive learning systems, but it still requires digital literacy and an ethical approach that emphasizes the integrity of religious values.

Theoretically, this approach is reinforced by a SWOT analysis conducted by AN et al. (2025, 477) in the context of the integration of AI in Islamic education. They stated that AI is indeed superior in cognitive and psychomotor aspects, but it is still very limited in affective aspects, because it lacks emotional intelligence and moral and spiritual guidance abilities. Therefore, AI should be seen as a tool that expands the reach of education, not as a total replacement for teachers who have a deep responsibility for shaping students' personalities.

Teachers function as guardians of values who instill the principles of fairness, honesty, and responsibility in every AI-assisted learning process. Wang (2025, 144) also reminded that the integration of AI in education requires strict ethical regulation, including in the use of data and the potential for algorithm bias. He emphasized the need for the role of teachers to guide students to adhere to moral values during easy access to digital information. Meanwhile, Aulia, Nugraha, and Siahaan (2023, 146) show that AI as a digital entity does not yet have the legal or moral legitimacy equivalent to humans. This is a reminder that while AI can produce intellectual works, it is still not as ethically accountable as humans. In the context of education, this means that AI cannot be used as an exemplary model or figure whose values can be internalized by students.

Therefore, the ideal future scenario for Islamic education is collaborative, combining AI to support learning effectiveness while still affirming the presence of teachers as the main drivers of value education. Such a model presupposes an adaptive curriculum, teacher training in digital literacy, and educational policies based on Islamic ethical principles. Thus, AI is not a threat, but rather an opportunity to enrich the process of Islamic education as long as it is placed within the framework of a strong and directed spirituality. In holistic Islamic education, technology will only be a friend, not a substitute for the spirit of education.

Conclusion

This research confirms that from the perspective of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy, the existence of human teachers has an ontological and spiritual foundation that cannot be replaced by AI. The teacher not only imparts knowledge but also acts as a spiritual intermediary who guides the students towards intellectual and moral perfection. AI, while technically sophisticated, lacks the spiritual capacity or moral awareness to fully perform that role. Because, from an ontological perspective, the role of a teacher is to nurture and provide training, instruction, guidance,

or mentorship related to morality and intellectual development. This is different from AI, which holds only the position of a tool and lacks any spiritual dimension (soul).

In facing the flow of digitalization, Islamic education must keep spiritual and relational values as the main axis. It is recommended that AI be used wisely as a complement to the learning process, not as a substitution for the role of teachers. Islamic educational institutions also need to develop a curriculum that not only emphasizes mastery of technology but also strengthens teachers' ethical and spiritual literacy to remain relevant and effective in the digital era. This study recommends policies that affirm the position of teachers as the main actors in the value-based education system, as well as training that supports the integration of technology with humanistic and transcendental approaches.

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