

Fitrah And Transpersonal Psychology: Addressing The Challenges Of Islamic Education In The Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technology has brought various challenges, such as fragmented attention, digital social pressure, and identity struggles related to the meaning of life, resulting in changes to students' psychological and social environments. These dynamics, within the context of Islamic education, require an approach that addresses not only students' cognitive development but also their spiritual dimensions and consciousness. This article examines the integration of the concept of fitrah in Islam and transpersonal psychology as a conceptual framework to address contemporary challenges in Islamic education during the digital era. This study used a systematic literature review approach, examining relevant studies on fitrah, transpersonal psychology, fitrah and transpersonal psychology, and digital era. These findings yield a conceptual model of integration between Fitrah and Transpersonal Psychology to address the challenges of the digital era within the context of Islamic education, comprising the digital context, fitrah, self-awareness, transpersonal consciousness, meaning-making, human transformation, and holistic Islamic education. Education in Islam is understood as a holistic process of human transformation, grounded in fitrah and transpersonal consciousness, thereby fostering students' ability to address the challenges of digitalization.

Introduction

The role of the digital space has evolved beyond its function as a tool for communication and access to information. Nowadays, the digital space has become a new social environment that plays a significant role in shaping psychological profiles, personal identities, and the ways in which individuals interpret their lives. Young people, particularly students, view digital interactions not merely as a means of communication and entertainment, but also as a space for identity formation, social relationships, and the interpretation of life experiences, all of which are integral parts of the process of personal development in everyday life (Odgers & Jensen, 2020).

Digital technology offers a wide range of opportunities for the development of learning and access to knowledge. Nevertheless, the digital environment also poses a number of psychological challenges for the younger generation. The intensity of social media use, the relentless flow of information, and the dynamics of digital social interaction are often implicated in increased concentration difficulties, social anxiety, and psychological stress among adolescents (Keles, McCrae, & Grealish, 2020). Furthermore, the digital space has become a newly emerging domain for the process of self-identity development, where individuals frequently construct their self-image through digital representations influenced by societal standards that are not consistently realistic.

This situation indicates that the challenges of education in the digital age are not merely about mastering knowledge, but also about helping students understand themselves, build a stable sense of identity, and develop a meaningful life perspective. Consequently, education requires more than a focus on the development of cognitive abilities; it must also take into account the psychological, existential, and spiritual dimensions of human development. Islam considers the concept of *fitrah* to be an integral part of understanding the essence of humanity. *Fitrah* is defined as the innate human potential that guides individuals towards the recognition of God and a natural preference for a harmonious lifestyle aligned with moral and ethical values (Arroisi et al., 2021). This concept emphasizes that humans possess a spiritual dimension that serves as the foundation for the development of self-awareness and identity. Hence, the purpose of education from an Islamic perspective is not merely to transmit knowledge, but also to nourish the potential of *fitrah* through the growth of moral and spiritual awareness, enabling humans to pursue a meaningful and responsible life (Hamidy, & Sassi, 2025).

On the contrary, within the development of modern psychology, concerns regarding the spiritual dimension of human beings have also grown through the transpersonal psychology approach. This approach emphasises that human experience is not limited to behavioural and cognitive aspects, but also encompasses self-awareness, existential reflection, and the search for the meaning of life as an integral part of human psychological development (Hartelius, Caplan, & Rardin, 2016). Transpersonal psychology views humans as beings with the potential to develop deeper consciousness through processes of self-reflection and spiritual experience. Although the concept of *fitrah* in Islam and transpersonal psychology originates from different intellectual traditions, both share a common understanding of humans as beings possessing a spiritual dimension and the potential to develop profound self-awareness. However, research specifically integrating these two perspectives within the context of Islamic education in the digital age remains relatively limited (Haryanto & Sila, 2022).

Considering the above background, this study intends to analyse the conceptual relationship between *fitrah* from an Islamic perspective and transpersonal psychology in understanding human development. Furthermore, this study explains how the integration of these two approaches can provide a conceptual framework for Islamic education in addressing the psychological challenges faced by students in the digital age. Through a systematic literature review, this study aims to make a conceptual contribution to the development of a more holistic educational approach that not only addresses cognitive aspects but also emphasises the psychological and spiritual dimensions of human development.

Method

The researcher used qualitative research through a systematic literature review approach, examining, analysing, and summarising relevant literature on the concept of fitrah in Islamic education, transpersonal psychology, and the psychological challenges faced by students in the digital age, in order to gain a comprehensive conceptual understanding. The literature review was conducted using several major academic databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar. The search process used a combination of keywords such as 'fitrah and Islamic education', 'transpersonal psychology and spirituality', 'digital era and youth mental health', and 'social media and adolescent well-being'. The selected articles were scientific publications from the period 2010–2025 that discussed students' psychological development, spirituality in education, or the impact of digital technology on adolescent mental health.

The procedure for collecting literature as research data involved selection based on inclusion and exclusion criteria (Sutikno & Hadisaputra, 2021). Inclusion criteria encompassed peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to the research topic and available in English or Indonesian. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria encompassed scientific journals not indexed in Sinta or Scopus, lacking a peer-review process, and with themes irrelevant to this research topic. The literature analysis used thematic synthesis, grouping research findings into three main themes: students' psychological development in the digital age, the concept of fitrah in Islamic education, and the transpersonal psychology perspective on consciousness and the meaning of life. This synthesis was used to develop a conceptual framework explaining the integration of spiritual and psychological dimensions in Islamic education. Based on the literature synthesis, the researcher will discuss four concepts, namely: the concept of fitrah in the Islamic perspective on human nature; transpersonal psychology as a process of psychological awareness; the psychological challenges faced by students in the digital age; and a model for the integration of fitrah and transpersonal psychology in Islamic education in the digital age.

Result and Discussion

The Fitrah Concept in the Islamic Perspective on Human Nature

Within the Islamic perspective, the concept of fitrah is one of the fundamental ideas that explains the nature of humanity. Fitrah is not merely understood as the natural condition of human beings from birth, but as an innate potential that reflects humanity's inclination to recognise the truth, lead a meaningful life, and develop a moral and spiritual orientation within their lives. Thus, fitrah can be interpreted as the basic framework that shapes how humans understand themselves, their environment, and their relationship with God (Husain, Nazam, & Gull, 2024).

Etymologically, fitrah is linked to the words khilqah (instinct) and thabi'ah (character), indicating that humans, having been created by Allah with a tendency towards purity of heart and body, accept tawhid, truth, and ma'rifatullah, thereby denying evil (Pransiska, 2016). Fitrah is formed before an individual is born into the world, endowed by Allah with perfect potential. However, as their mindset and will develop under the influence of their environment, individuals are faced with two realities: either becoming people who stray and turn away from

their fitrah, or conversely, becoming good people by following Islamic sharia and thus fulfilling their God-given mandate well on earth (Sit, Ramzani, Rahmi, & Sapiyah, 2025).

Mohamed (1995) also argues that, in determining the status of humanity in Islam, an individual must understand three principles regarding fitrah: First, fitrah relates to an individual's innate reality and beliefs, composed of values, character, perspectives, and interactions with the environment; thus, fitrah develops under the influence of the individual's surroundings. Second, fitrah is described as a God-given innate state characterized by conviction in God's existence and worship. Third, fitrah also explains the truth in religion through tawhid, whereby individuals deviating from fitrah are characterized by life goals inconsistent with Islamic sharia. Meanwhile, Ibn Taymiyyah explains that within the individual, there are two types of fitrah: Fitrah al-munazzalah derives from outside the human self, from the Qur'an and Hadith, to guide fitrah al-gharizah. Fitrah al-gharizah is the fitrah created by Allah within the individual, namely the power of reason used to develop one's potential (Nuranisa, Anwar, & Firmansyah, 2025).

The concept of fitrah fundamentally has a positive connotation and is aligned with the living values education framework, which encompasses values such as justice, peace, compassion, care, and honesty (Muniroh, 2019). Amaliati, Mudlofir, dan Fitriani (2024) stated that in an educational context, fitrah is inseparable from both individual and collective dimensions. The individual side is the ability of an individual to value themselves without excess. In contrast, the collective side involves equality in rights, duties, and responsibilities, so that each influences and respects the others. When people believe with their intellect, faith continues to develop and form awareness, attitudes, and ways of thinking that yield virtuous behavior (Zarkasyi, 2020). Thus, the fitrah that Allah has bestowed upon every individual holds the potential to cultivate faith and virtuous character, provided the individual upholds and acts upon the Islamic Sharia guidelines.

Hence, endeavours to develop one's innate nature align with the objectives of Islamic education, which can be realised through efforts to guide, mentor, supervise, and provide feedback to pupils; yet, more importantly, they involve nurturing the natural potentials that a child possesses from the moment of birth. Islamic education is also inseparable from the process of inculcating divine values, which are formulated in a systematic and adaptive manner, adapted to the abilities and development of students' potential (Hanief et al., 2023).

Transpersonal Psychology: A Process of Psychological Awareness

Transpersonal psychology refers to an approach within psychology that seeks to understand dimensions of human experience that transcend the boundaries of ego identity itself. Rather than focusing on behavioural, cognitive, or emotional aspects—as is often the case with traditional psychological approaches—transpersonal psychology focuses on the dimensions of consciousness, spiritual experience, and the search for meaning in life as integral parts of human development. Contrary to classical psychological approaches, which often emphasise the individual's adaptation to the environment, transpersonal psychology views humans as beings with the potential to develop towards deeper and more reflective levels of consciousness (Hartelius, 2022).

The roots of transpersonal psychology can be traced back to the development of humanistic psychology, which emphasises the human potential for optimal development. Abraham Maslow, one of the key figures in the development of humanistic psychology, explained that humans do not merely seek to satisfy basic needs, but also possess a drive to

achieve self-actualisation—a state in which an individual is able to fully realise their greatest potential. Throughout his development of this theory, Maslow went on to emphasise that human experience does not stop at self-actualisation, but can evolve towards a deeper experience known as ‘peak experiences’—peak moments of consciousness characterised by a profound sense of connectedness, meaning in life, and a broader or deeper spiritual awareness (Maslow, 1969; Banerji, 2023).

Human development in transpersonal psychology refers to a process involving a gradual increase in self-awareness, the search for meaning in life, and the ability to see oneself as part of a broader reality. In the early stages, individuals are typically oriented toward fulfilling personal needs and adapting to their social environment. Subsequently, as life experiences and self-reflection unfold, individuals begin to strive beyond fulfilling basic psychological needs; they also begin to develop broader awareness regarding the life values they embrace, their life’s purpose, and their relationships with others and with a larger reality. Transpersonal psychology understands this process as an “expansion of consciousness” (Shapiro et al., 2002).

In terms of mental health, the transpersonal approach makes a significant contribution to human well-being, as it does not view mental health merely as the absence of psychological problems. Instead, mental health isn't just viewed as a condition free from psychological problems; it's also understood as an individual's ability to live a meaningful life, possess a developed sense of self-awareness, and be able to integrate emotional, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions into their life (Rimban et al., 2024).

Human well-being in contemporary psychological literature is often discussed through two main approaches: hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being. The hedonic well-being approach emphasises experiences of pleasure, comfort, and positive emotions as indicators of well-being. Conversely, the eudaimonic well-being approach emphasises the meaning of life, personal growth, and the actualisation of human potential as the core of a deeper sense of well-being (Ryff et al., 2021).

Transpersonal psychology complements these two approaches by adding the dimension of spiritual well-being, namely the experience of connection with a broader transcendent reality, increased awareness of life's purpose, and the attainment of meaning beyond personal needs (Haryanto & Muslih, 2025).

Transpersonal psychology could be considered an approach that encourages individuals to develop a sense of self-awareness more deeply. Through self-reflection, spiritual experiences, an understanding of the meaning of life, and openness to the spiritual dimension, individuals can achieve a more mature level of psychological integration. This condition allows a person not only to live a functional life and avoid psychological problems, but also to reflectively strive toward a more conscious, meaningful, and responsible way of living.

Theoretical Framework: A Model of Human Development Based on Fitrah and Transpersonal Consciousness

Digitization in recent decades has brought about significant changes within the youth generation. The social environment where students grow up is no longer confined solely to physical spaces such as schools, families, or local communities. In many ways, digital technology no longer functions merely as a communication tool but has become an integral part of the social space where students learn, interact, and build their identities (Daniels et al., 2021). This transformation presents significant educational opportunities, particularly in the areas of knowledge access and the expansion of learning networks. However, these changes also present a number of new challenges for students' psychological development. Digital environments are

often designed to maintain users' attention through constant notifications, rapidly changing visual content, and a never-ending flood of information. These conditions cause individuals to become accustomed to moving their attention from one piece of information to another in an extremely short time. Consequently, their ability to maintain focus and engage in deeper reflection is frequently diminished (McCrary et al., 2020).

The digitisation of social life through social media has given rise to patterns of interaction that differ from face-to-face interaction. In the digital space, personal identity is increasingly often formed through online representations, such as photos, status updates, and the number of followers. While social media expands social networks and opens up broader opportunities for communication, the digital space also generates forms of social pressure, which the users rarely realise. Many teenagers feel compelled to maintain a certain image on social media and seek acceptance through digital responses, such as likes, comments, or the number of followers. This situation can give rise to the phenomenon of 'fear of missing out' (FOMO), namely the anxiety of being left out of others' social experiences, which ultimately contributes to increased anxiety and psychological pressure (Keles et al., 2020). Furthermore, constant exposure to representations of others' lives on social media tends to create unrealistic social standards, leading individuals toward excessive social comparison, social pressure, identity confusion, and difficulties in making sense of life (Zhang, 2025).

Furthermore, the digital environment also tends to encourage patterns of experience geared towards instant pleasure. Many platforms are designed to provide rapid feedback that triggers short-term pleasure. Such patterns make individuals more prone to becoming trapped in a form of well-being that is hedonic in nature, namely an orientation towards the immediate fulfilment of emotional pleasure (Rini & Masduki, 2020). In the long term, these tendencies have the potential to weaken individuals' ability to develop self-control, psychological resilience, and a deeper sense of values. At the same time, the emergence of various signs of declining moral standards among the younger generation raises concerns regarding unethical behaviour and the weak internalisation of values within the educational process. This phenomenon indicates that the current educational approach has not yet been fully capable of responding to human development in a holistic manner (Widyasari et al., 2020).

This situation signals a crisis that is not merely psychological but also existential. The more intensely individuals are connected to the fast-paced digital world, the more limited the space becomes for self-reflection and the interpretation of life experiences. In this context, education plays a strategic role in helping learners understand themselves and develop a more stable value orientation. Aisyah (2025) emphasises that the psychological challenges of the digital age are not only related to technology but also to the way individuals interpret their life experiences amidst a constantly changing environment. From the perspective of Islamic educational philosophy, this situation should not be viewed merely as a matter of technological adaptation, but also as a matter of human interpretation of oneself, one's purpose in life, and one's relationship with transcendent values.

In the context of Islamic education, education does not merely function as a means of intellectual development constrained to the transfer of knowledge and the inculcation of behaviour alone. Education must also enable learners to recognise themselves in accordance with their *fitrah*, understand the purpose of life, and shape their relationships with God, fellow human beings, and the digital environment that continually influences their consciousness.

Within this framework, transpersonal psychology can be positioned as a conceptual tool that helps explain the processes of self-exploration, meaning-making, and the psychological development of consciousness. The point of convergence between the concept of fitrah and transpersonal psychology is the recognition that humans are not merely understood as biological and rational beings, but also as spiritual beings possessing the potential to develop through their reflective consciousness. Therefore, transpersonal psychology can enrich the psychological elaboration of the concept of fitrah, particularly regarding aspects of self-awareness, the search for meaning, deep reflection, and human inner experience (Haryanto & Sila, 2022).

An understanding of human development from an Islamic perspective cannot be separated from the concept of fitrah as an innate potential present from birth. However, this potential does not develop automatically; rather, it requires divine guidance through revelation so that humans may live their lives in accordance with the truth and come to know God more deeply (Husain, Nazam, & Gull, 2024). Thus, fitrah not only indicates a natural inclination towards truth but also emphasizes the importance of education as a means of actualizing this potential. Education plays a role not merely as a mechanism for the transmission of knowledge but also as a process of shaping moral consciousness, strengthening character, and fostering individual responsibility towards oneself and one's social life (Abd Rahman et al., 2020).

The concept of the development of human consciousness is aligned with the transpersonal psychology approach. This approach views human development as extending beyond cognitive and behavioural aspects to encompass self-reflection, spiritual awareness, and a deeply meaningful inquiry into the meaning of life (Hartelius, 2022). Human beings are understood as subjects capable of expanding their consciousness through reflective and spiritual experiences. Consequently, education should not be understood merely as a means of developing intellectual abilities, but also as a space for self-transformation that enables individuals to interpret their life experiences reflectively and to build a more stable, integral, and meaningful value orientation (Hamidy & Sassi, 2025).

The integration of the concept of fitrah with transpersonal psychology provides a realm of dialogue to understand humans more holistically, particularly within the context of Islamic education in the digital age. Fitrah establishes an ontological foundation regarding humanity's inherent potential and divine orientation, whilst transpersonal psychology offers a psychological framework to explain the dynamics of consciousness, self-reflection, and spiritual experience. Although both stem from different epistemological foundations, the dialogue between them enables the formation of a more comprehensive perspective in interpreting human development. This integrative approach simultaneously serves as a basis for critiquing the modern educational paradigm, which tends to measure success solely through academic achievement. Conversely, Islamic education must be directed towards the holistic development of the human person, encompassing intellectual, moral, spiritual, and existential dimensions, so that learners are able to build a life that is more conscious, meaningful, and oriented towards divine values.

A Model Integrating Fitrah and Transpersonal Psychology within Islamic Education in the Digital Age

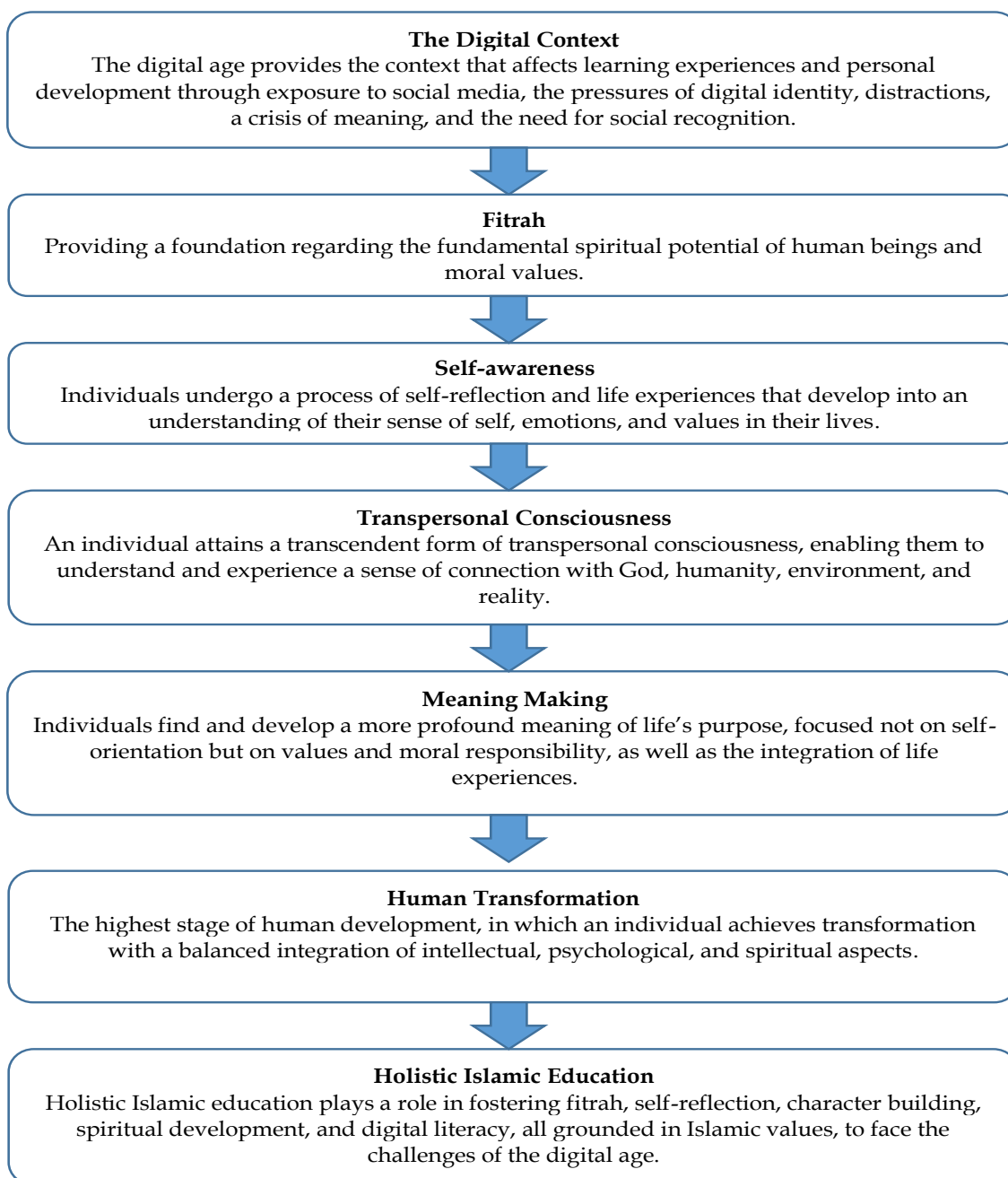
Various studies indicate increased concern regarding a decline in moral standards amongst the younger generation. This situation suggests that educational approaches, which have traditionally placed greater emphasis on academic achievement, have not been fully capable of addressing the complexities of human development amidst rapid social change. Therefore, education requires an approach that is not only oriented towards the mastery of knowledge but also towards the development of self-awareness, value orientation, and the interpretation of life experiences (Widyasari et al., 2020). In this context, the integration of the concept of fitrah within the Islamic perspective and transpersonal psychology offers a more comprehensive framework for understanding human development. Fitrah explains the fundamental nature of human beings as creatures possessing spiritual potential, a tendency towards truth, and a moral orientation leading to the recognition of God (Bor & Şahin, 2018). Thus, human development from an Islamic perspective is understood not merely as intellectual growth, but also as a process of actualising the spiritual potential inherent since the very beginning of creation.

On the other hand, transpersonal psychology emphasises that human experience is not confined to behavioural, cognitive, or emotional aspects, but also encompasses experiences of consciousness, self-reflection, and the search for meaning in life as an integral part of human psychological development (Hartelius, 2022). Viewed from this perspective, humans are understood as subjects possessing the potential to expand their consciousness through reflective and spiritual experiences; thus, transpersonal psychology provides a relevant psychological framework for explaining the dynamics of human consciousness development in greater depth. When these two perspectives are placed within a single conceptual framework, a convergence becomes apparent in the way humans are viewed as beings possessing both spiritual potential and the capacity to develop self-awareness. Fitrah can be interpreted as the ontological foundation regarding the nature of humanity, whilst transpersonal psychology offers a psychological explanation of self-reflection and the interpretation of life experiences. The convergence of these two concepts opens up possibilities for the development of a more holistic educational model, in which human development is understood through intellectual, psychological, spiritual, and existential dimensions simultaneously.

This framework became increasingly relevant in the context of Islamic education amidst the dynamics of digital life, which tend to encourage fast-paced, instant, and short-term pleasure-oriented interactions. Many digital platforms are designed to generate immediate social responses, such as 'likes' and comments, which can reinforce a hedonic orientation to well-being (Hancock et al., 2022).

Conversely, education needs to guide learners towards a deeper form of well-being, namely eudaimonic well-being, which relates to personal growth, self-awareness, and the search for meaning in life. This perspective aligns closely with the concept of spiritual development in Islam, which is rooted in the actualisation of human fitrah (Ismail & Berghout, 2024). The integration of the concept of fitrah with transpersonal psychology provides a crucial conceptual foundation for the development of Islamic education in the digital age. In addition to developing learners' intellectual abilities, education aims to strengthen self-awareness, reflective capacity, value orientation, and spiritual depth. Therefore, education can be understood as a process of transforming human consciousness that enables individuals to develop their potential optimally to face the realities of modern life (Ulfiani et al., 2022).

Figure 1. The Model integrated Fitrah and Transpersonal Psychology into Islamic Education during the Digital Age



Source: Researcher Data (2026)

The figure represents a conceptual model that integrates fitrah and transpersonal psychology into Islamic education in the digital age. The digital context is positioned as a space for the formation of students' experiences, identities, attention, and life orientation, characterized by identity pressures, distractions, characterized by identity pressures, distractions, a crisis of meaning, and the need for approval on social media. The fitrah functions as a spiritual foundation for the actualization of human moral potential through education. Self-awareness develops from this foundation as a reflective capacity to understand experiences,

emotions, and values, leading to transpersonal consciousness—a shift from an ego-centric orientation toward an awareness of interconnectedness with God, others, the environment, and a broader reality. This stage fosters the formation of a life's meaning as the integration of experience, values, and moral responsibility into a deeper life orientation. Ultimately, this process leads to human transformation characterized by the integration of intellectual, psychological, and spiritual dimensions, and is realized through holistic Islamic education that emphasizes self-reflection, character development, spirituality, and ethical digital literacy within the framework of Islamic values. Viewed from this perspective, the integration of the concept of fitrah with transpersonal psychology yields a model of Islamic education relevant to the dynamics of modern life without losing the meaning and purpose of life.

Conclusion

The development of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the social and psychological environment of the younger generation. Digitalization challenges education not only to focus on the development of cognitive abilities but also to address how to promote self-awareness among students. In the context of education, the concept of fitrah from an Islamic perspective and transpersonal psychology in modern psychological studies share a crucial conceptual intersection in understanding human development through a more holistic Islamic educational model in the digital age. Recommendations for further research, which is based on this model, explore the practical implications for Islamic education in the digital age, particularly in regard to reflective education or the concept of *muhasabah* in Islam, strengthening students' self-awareness and developing spiritual digital literacy among student.

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