

Repositioning K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's "Kiai-Intelek" Philosophy: Relevance and Competence Development of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in the Society 5.0 Era

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reposition K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's Kiai-Intelek philosophy and examine its relevance to the development of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher competence in the Society 5.0 era. The study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design with a biographical-philosophical orientation. Data were obtained from primary and secondary literature concerning Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought, including Kiai-Intelek, Tajdid, Al-Ma'un theology, and contemporary studies on IRE teacher competence and Society 5.0. Data were analyzed through content analysis and Gadamerian philosophical hermeneutics by interpreting relevant texts, contextualizing Ahmad Dahlan's ideas, and reconstructing their implications for contemporary teacher competence. The findings indicate that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy remains relevant but requires contextual repositioning. Kiai-Intelek provides a foundation for integrating spiritual depth and intellectual competence; Tajdid supports adaptive and innovative teacher development; while Al-Ma'un strengthens the humanistic and social-ethical orientation of education. Based on these dimensions, this study proposes the Transcendental-Facilitator Model, which conceptualizes IRE teachers as educators who integrate spiritual-transcendental, intellectual-critical, adaptive-technological, humanistic-social, and transformative-facilitative competencies. The model positions technology as an educational instrument rather than an ultimate objective and emphasizes the teacher's role as a critical mediator of knowledge and ethical guide in technology-mediated learning. The study contributes a conceptual framework connecting Ahmad Dahlan's educational heritage with contemporary teacher professionalism and the human-centered orientation of Society 5.0.

Keywords: Ahmad Dahlan; Kiai-Intelek; Islamic Religious Education; Society 5.0; Teacher Competence; Transcendental-Facilitator

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INTRODUCTION

The transition from the Industrial Revolution 4.0 toward Society 5.0 represents more than a technological transformation; it signifies a fundamental shift in the orientation of social life, including education. Industry 4.0 emphasizes automation, digitalization, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, the Internet of Things (IoT), and interconnected technological systems, whereas Society 5.0 places humans at the center of technological development. Technology is expected not merely to increase efficiency but also to address social problems, improve human well-being, and create a more inclusive and sustainable society. Within education, this transformation requires a redefinition of the teacher's role. Teachers are no longer positioned solely as transmitters of information because information can increasingly be accessed through search engines, digital platforms, generative AI, and other intelligent technologies. Instead, teachers are expected to function as facilitators, mentors, ethical guides,

learning designers, and role models who help students interpret information, develop critical judgment, and apply knowledge responsibly.

This transformation presents a particular challenge for Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers. The responsibility of IRE teachers extends beyond the transmission of religious knowledge because Islamic education is also concerned with the formation of faith, morality, character, spirituality, and social responsibility. The emergence of AI and increasingly sophisticated digital learning technologies may facilitate access to religious knowledge, personalized learning, and educational resources. Nevertheless, technological accessibility does not automatically guarantee the development of religious maturity, moral sensitivity, or responsible human behavior. The abundance of digital religious information may even create new problems, including superficial understanding, misinformation, religious polarization, excessive dependence on algorithmic recommendations, and the separation of religious knowledge from ethical practice. Consequently, the central challenge for IRE teachers in Society 5.0 is not simply how to master digital technology but how to integrate technological competence with spiritual depth, moral integrity, social empathy, and pedagogical responsibility.

Recent scholarship confirms that IRE teachers are experiencing increasingly complex competency demands in the Society 5.0 era. Nurdyanto et al. (2025), through a systematic literature review, found that the professionalism and competence of IRE teachers require continuous improvement through education, training, teacher development programs, professional communities, and strengthened work ethics. Their study emphasizes the importance of developing teachers who are responsive to technological and educational changes. However, the discussion remains primarily focused on professional development and competency improvement rather than on the philosophical foundations that should guide such competence. Similarly, Hamzah and Mudlofir (2025) explain that the development of IRE teachers in Society 5.0 requires teachers to adapt to technological changes while maintaining the educational objective of forming *insān kāmīl*. Their study establishes the importance of teacher development but does not formulate a specific philosophical reconstruction of teacher identity based on the intellectual heritage of Islamic educational reformers.

Other recent studies have emphasized particular dimensions of teacher competence. Hakim, (2025) argue that IRE teachers need to strengthen religious, technological, pedagogical, and methodological competencies in responding to Society 5.0. Their research also identifies technological mastery, professional training, and appropriate learning methods as important requirements for teachers. Ramadayanti et al., (2025) similarly highlights pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies together with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. These studies are important because they demonstrate that teacher competence in Society 5.0 cannot be reduced to conventional professional qualifications. Nevertheless, their approaches predominantly frame competence as a set of skills that teachers must acquire, leaving relatively limited discussion of the philosophical and theological worldview that determines how those skills should be used.

The same tendency can be identified in studies concerning the professional profile of IRE teachers. (Nurdyanto et al., 2024) identifies teacher leadership, digital literacy, communication, emotional intelligence, global citizenship, teamwork, and problem-solving as important components of IRE teacher professionalism in Society 5.0. Such competencies are highly relevant to the changing educational environment because teachers are required to operate within increasingly digital, collaborative, and global learning ecosystems. Nevertheless, an important question remains: what philosophical orientation should prevent these competencies from becoming merely instrumental skills? Digital literacy, leadership, communication, and problem-solving are valuable, but for IRE teachers they need to be directed toward a broader educational purpose involving faith, morality, humanity, and social transformation.

Studies specifically addressing Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought have provided another important foundation for this discussion. Kuniasih, (2024) demonstrate that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy has significant implications for the epistemology of contemporary Islamic education, particularly through the integration of religious knowledge

and broader intellectual development. Laila and Mahyani (2026) further argues that Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought remains relevant to Society 5.0 because Islamic education should produce individuals who are religiously committed, intellectually broad, and capable of understanding developments in science and society. More recent research similarly emphasizes Ahmad Dahlan's integration of religious and general knowledge, contextual learning, character formation, and social concern. For example, (Rangkuti, Isnaini and Lubis, 2026) shows that Ahmad Dahlan's educational methodology combines religious and general education while emphasizing moral, individual, and community dimensions. These studies establish that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy possesses substantial contemporary relevance. However, most of them examine his ideas as a general foundation for educational modernization rather than translating those ideas into a concrete competency orientation for IRE teachers facing the human-centered technological environment of Society 5.0.

The limitation becomes more apparent when Ahmad Dahlan's ideas are examined in relation to the concept of *Kiai-Intelek*. The intellectual identity represented by Ahmad Dahlan cannot be adequately understood through the dichotomy between religious authority and modern intellectualism. His educational movement attempted to bring together religious commitment, intellectual openness, scientific knowledge, social engagement, and practical action. The integration of religious and general knowledge was not merely a curricular strategy; it represented an epistemological and ethical orientation in which knowledge was expected to generate responsible action. Recent scholarship confirms this integrative character. Research on Ahmad Dahlan's social-intellectual contribution shows that he combined religious knowledge with general knowledge and directed education toward social transformation, including expanding educational access to marginalized communities. Other studies identify contextual interpretation, exemplary conduct, experiential learning, and the practical application of knowledge as important dimensions of his educational thought.

This intellectual orientation is closely connected to the theological significance of *Al-Ma'un* and the reformist orientation of *Tajdid*. For Ahmad Dahlan, religious understanding was not intended to remain within abstract theological discourse. The internalization of religious teachings had to be manifested through concrete concern for human beings and society. The *Al-Ma'un* orientation therefore provides a social dimension to Islamic education: knowledge should produce sensitivity toward poverty, inequality, vulnerability, and human suffering. Meanwhile, *Tajdid* represents an orientation toward renewal, critical reflection, contextualization, and the willingness to respond creatively to changing circumstances while maintaining Islamic principles. Recent studies continue to identify the integration of religious knowledge, character development, social awareness, and contextual learning as central characteristics of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy.

However, the existing literature still reveals a conceptual gap. First, studies on IRE teacher competence in Society 5.0 generally emphasize technological literacy, professional development, 4C skills, pedagogical competence, and adaptive strategies (Hamzah and Mudlofir' 2025; Nurdyanto et al., 2024; Hakim, 2025; Hamzah and Mudlofir, 2025). These studies effectively identify what teachers need to develop, but they provide less explanation regarding the philosophical identity that should orient these competencies. Second, studies on Ahmad Dahlan generally emphasize educational modernization, integration of religious and general sciences, humanistic pedagogy, character formation, and social transformation (Kuniasih, 2024; Laila and Mahyani, 2026; Rangkuti, Isnaini and Lubis, 2026). Nevertheless, these studies have not sufficiently connected Ahmad Dahlan's intellectual-religious orientation with the contemporary competency architecture required of IRE teachers in Society 5.0. Third, the literature has not adequately conceptualized *Kiai-Intelek* as a teacher identity capable of mediating technological advancement and transcendental-humanistic values. Thus, there remains a theoretical space for repositioning Ahmad Dahlan's philosophy from a historical educational legacy into a contemporary framework for teacher competence.

This gap is significant because the central problem of IRE in Society 5.0 is not simply technological inadequacy. If teacher development is approached exclusively through digital skills, professional certification, technological training, or 21st-century competencies, there is a

risk that IRE teachers will become technically adaptive but philosophically disoriented. Conversely, if IRE teachers focus exclusively on traditional religious knowledge without developing technological and pedagogical capabilities, they may lose their capacity to guide students within a rapidly changing digital environment. The challenge therefore lies in achieving a productive synthesis between technological adaptability and transcendental-humanistic orientation. Society 5.0 requires teachers who can use technology without being dominated by technology, employ AI without surrendering ethical judgment to algorithms, and utilize digital resources while preserving the human relationship at the heart of education.

The urgency of this research is consequently rooted in the need to address the potential imbalance between technological competence and the spiritual-humanistic mission of Islamic education. IRE teachers occupy a strategic position in helping students navigate the ethical consequences of digital transformation. They must be capable of distinguishing information from knowledge, knowledge from wisdom, and technological capability from responsible action. In this context, Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy offers an intellectual resource that is particularly relevant because it rejects the separation between religious and general knowledge and connects knowledge with moral and social action. The contemporary challenge is therefore not to reproduce Ahmad Dahlan's educational practices literally, but to reinterpret their underlying principles in response to the conditions of Society 5.0.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze and reposition K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's *Kiai-Intelek* philosophy as a conceptual foundation for the development of IRE teacher competence in the Society 5.0 era. More specifically, the study seeks to: (1) identify the core intellectual, theological, and pedagogical dimensions underlying the *Kiai-Intelek* orientation; (2) examine the relevance of *Al-Ma'un* and *Tajdid* as complementary foundations for teacher competence in a human-centered technological society; (3) analyze the competency challenges faced by IRE teachers in Society 5.0; and (4) formulate a conceptual model that integrates technological, pedagogical, intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social competencies within the identity of the contemporary IRE teacher.

The principal contribution of this study is the proposed conceptualization of the IRE teacher as a **"Transcendental-Facilitator."** This concept extends existing discussions of teacher professionalism by positioning the teacher not merely as a digitally competent educator but as a facilitator who mediates between technological resources and transcendental-humanistic educational purposes. The *Kiai-Intelek* dimension provides the intellectual foundation through the integration of religious and scientific knowledge; *Tajdid* provides the orientation for continuous renewal and adaptive thinking; while *Al-Ma'un* provides the ethical-social orientation that directs knowledge toward human welfare and social responsibility. Within this framework, digital literacy and AI competence are not treated as independent ends but as instruments for achieving educational, spiritual, ethical, and social objectives.

The proposed framework therefore distinguishes this study from previous research in an important way. Whereas previous studies primarily identify the competencies IRE teachers need in Society 5.0 or examine the contemporary relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought separately, this study connects the two domains into an integrated conceptual framework. The novelty lies in repositioning *Kiai-Intelek* from a historical description of Ahmad Dahlan's intellectual identity into a competency-oriented paradigm for contemporary IRE teachers. The **"Transcendental-Facilitator"** is consequently proposed as a human-centered teacher identity that balances cyber-technological competence with spiritual depth, ethical discernment, intellectual integration, pedagogical adaptability, and social commitment. Such a repositioning is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic educational thought and practically to the design of teacher education, professional development, and competency frameworks for IRE teachers in the Society 5.0 era.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design with a biographical-philosophical orientation. The material object of the study was the educational thought of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, particularly the concepts of *Kiai-Intelek*, *Al-Ma'un*, and *Tajdid*,

while the formal object was the development of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teacher competence in the Society 5.0 era. This design was selected because the study aims to reconstruct and interpret Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy and examine its contemporary relevance rather than measure variables statistically. The analysis therefore moves from historical-philosophical reconstruction toward the formulation of a conceptual framework for contemporary IRE teacher competence.

As a library research study, this research did not involve human participants or respondents; instead, the units of analysis were documentary sources representing Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought and contemporary literature on IRE teacher competence and Society 5.0. Primary sources consisted of historical writings, manuscripts, institutional documents, educational records, and authoritative publications that directly or substantively document Ahmad Dahlan's educational ideas and practices. Secondary sources comprised peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, research reports, and relevant educational regulations, with priority given to recent publications while retaining older foundational sources when historically or theoretically necessary. Sources were selected purposively based on their relevance, scholarly credibility, historical significance, and contribution to the research objectives.

Data were collected through systematic library research and documentary analysis. Relevant literature was identified through academic databases and scholarly repositories using keywords related to "K.H. Ahmad Dahlan," "*Kiai-Intelek*," "*Al-Ma'un*," "*Tajdid*," "Islamic Religious Education teacher competence," and "Society 5.0." The selected sources were screened according to relevance, credibility, publication quality, and substantive contribution to the research questions. Relevant information was then extracted using a data-extraction matrix containing bibliographic information, main arguments, key concepts, evidence concerning Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought, and implications for contemporary teacher competence. The extracted data were subsequently organized into four analytical domains: *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, *Al-Ma'un*, and IRE teacher competence in Society 5.0.

Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis combined with Gadamerian hermeneutics. Content analysis was used to identify, code, categorize, and synthesize recurring concepts within the selected sources, while hermeneutics was used to interpret Ahmad Dahlan's ideas within their historical context and relate their underlying meanings to contemporary educational challenges. The analysis proceeded through five stages: textual understanding, open coding, conceptual categorization, contextual interpretation, and theoretical synthesis. The identified dimensions of *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un* were subsequently compared with contemporary competency demands related to digital literacy, pedagogical competence, ethical judgment, spirituality, adaptability, and social responsibility. This analytical process culminated in the reconstruction of the "**Transcendental-Facilitator**" as a conceptual model of IRE teacher competence for the Society 5.0 era.

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through source triangulation, theoretical triangulation, peer debriefing, and documentation of the analytical process. Information concerning Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought was compared across historical documents, scholarly publications, and institutional sources, while contemporary claims concerning IRE teacher competence were examined across recent peer-reviewed literature. The combination of content analysis and Gadamerian hermeneutics enabled the study to maintain systematic control over the documentary data while also interpreting their philosophical and contemporary significance. This methodological design directly supports the research objectives because it enables the study to reconstruct Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy, identify its relevance to the competency demands of Society 5.0, and synthesize these findings into a theoretically grounded conceptual framework rather than claiming empirical measurement of the proposed model.

Results and Discussion

1. Mapping Previous Research on Ahmad Dahlan and Society 5.0

The mapping of the reviewed literature reveals two major research streams that are relevant to the repositioning of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy in the Society 5.0 era. The first stream focuses on Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought, particularly the integration of religious and general knowledge, educational renewal (*Tajdid*), character formation, social praxis, inclusivity, and the formation of intellectually and spiritually integrated individuals. The second stream examines Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in the context of Society 5.0, emphasizing digital transformation, artificial intelligence, digital literacy, pedagogical adaptation, ethical challenges, and the preservation of human values. The 23 studies reviewed in this research indicate that these two streams have developed considerably, but they have not yet been sufficiently synthesized into a specific conceptual framework for IRE teacher competence.

The first research stream demonstrates that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy consistently emphasizes the rejection of the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge. Several studies identify educational integration as one of the central characteristics of his reformist thought. Nurdianto et al. (2025), Abbas (2020), Husin (2023), Hasanah et al. (2024), Akhyar et al. (2024), Kuniasih (2024), and Chasanah and Khoir (2026), for example, describe Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform as an effort to combine religious knowledge, scientific knowledge, moral formation, and practical action. This orientation was not merely theoretical, but was reflected in the development of modern educational institutions, classroom systems, curriculum integration, and forms of social engagement. Ahmad Dahlan's educational orientation consequently positions education as a means of forming individuals who possess religious commitment, intellectual capacity, and the ability to respond to social realities.

knowledge and social action. Studies by Mutiah et al. (2021), Tarik et al. (2024), Labib (2024), and Wulan and Setiyani (2025) emphasize the significance of moral education, the theology of *Al-Ma'un*, social equality, and the transformation of religious understanding into concrete action. These studies indicate that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy cannot be reduced to cognitive development or the transmission of religious knowledge. Instead, knowledge is expected to produce ethical behavior, social responsibility, empathy, and practical contributions to society. The *Al-Ma'un* orientation therefore provides an important humanistic dimension within Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought, particularly because it connects religious understanding with the needs and problems experienced by vulnerable members of society. A further pattern in the Ahmad Dahlan literature concerns the relationship between.

The literature also identifies *Tajdid* as an important dimension of Ahmad Dahlan's educational orientation. Abbas (2020), Akhyar et al. (2024), Chasanah and Khoir (2026), and Rahmah (2026) demonstrate that Ahmad Dahlan's reform movement was characterized by openness to educational renewal, rational inquiry, contextualization, and the adoption of educational practices that were considered appropriate for changing social conditions. His reformist approach demonstrates that maintaining Islamic values does not necessarily require rejecting modern knowledge or educational innovation. Instead, renewal involves critically selecting and adapting new developments according to Islamic objectives and social needs. This finding becomes particularly relevant when considering the rapid transformation of educational practices through digital technologies and artificial intelligence.

The second research stream concerns Islamic education in the Society 5.0 era. The reviewed studies show that contemporary discussions have increasingly shifted from conventional digitalization toward the broader question of how technology can be integrated with human values. Research by Al Hamdany et al. (2020), Restu et al. (2024), Yemmardotillah et al. (2024), Jatmiko et al. (2026), and Roszana et al. (2026) identifies digital literacy, technological competence, pedagogical adaptation, and ethical awareness as important requirements for Islamic education. These studies indicate that AI, learning management systems, multimedia, mobile learning, and data-based learning can improve accessibility, flexibility, and personalization. At the same time, they identify significant

challenges, including inadequate teacher digital competence, infrastructure inequality, the credibility of Islamic content in cyberspace, and the potential reduction of interpersonal interaction.

The literature on Society 5.0 also demonstrates a growing concern regarding the human dimension of technology-mediated education. Yemmardotillah et al. (2024) highlights the possibility that excessive technological dependence may weaken social interaction and traditional forms of spiritual transmission, while Jatmiko et al. (2026) emphasizes the need to balance technological development with pedagogical and spiritual values. Roszana et al. (2026) further identifies the risk of reducing the spiritual dimension of IRE through digitalization and emphasizes that interpersonal teacher–student relationships remain essential because religious education involves not only information transfer but also spiritual guidance and authentic human interaction. Similarly, (Baharuddin et al. (2025) argues that AI integration in Islamic education must be accompanied by Islamic ethical principles to prevent dehumanization. These findings reinforce the human-centered orientation of Society 5.0, in which technology is positioned as an instrument for human well-being rather than as an autonomous replacement for human agency. This broader understanding is also consistent with research on Muhammadiyah education, which identifies dehumanization, secularization, and elitism as important challenges for education in the Smart Society 5.0 context.

When the two research streams are compared, a clear pattern emerges. Studies of Ahmad Dahlan provide a strong philosophical and ethical foundation, particularly through the integration of knowledge, *Tajdid*, character formation, *Al-Ma'un*, and the relationship between faith, knowledge, and action. In contrast, studies of Society 5.0 provide a strong technological and pedagogical framework, emphasizing AI, digital literacy, learning technologies, teacher adaptation, and digital ethics. Recent research has begun to directly connect Ahmad Dahlan's educational values with Society 5.0, demonstrating the continuing relevance of *Tajdid*, independent thinking, integrated knowledge, and moral formation for contemporary Islamic education. Nevertheless, these studies primarily establish the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's values to contemporary educational challenges, rather than systematically reconstructing those values into a comprehensive model of IRE teacher competence.

The mapping therefore identifies a specific conceptual gap. Previous studies have largely answered what Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy consists of and why his ideas remain relevant in contemporary education, while Society 5.0 studies have predominantly examined what technological and pedagogical competencies teachers require. What remains insufficiently developed is an integrated explanation of how Ahmad Dahlan's intellectual-spiritual orientation can be translated into a contemporary competency framework for IRE teachers who must operate within an AI-mediated, technologically advanced, yet human-centered educational environment. This gap provides the analytical basis for the subsequent reconstruction of the *Kiai-Intelek* concept, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un* theology as interconnected foundations for developing the IRE teacher as a Transcendental-Facilitator.

Tabel 1. Research Mapping of Previous Studies

Research Focus	Representative Studies	Main Findings	Identified Gap
Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform	Abbas (2020); Husin (2023); Akhyar et al. (2024)	Integration of religious and general knowledge, educational renewal, rationality, and social praxis	Not yet translated into a specific teacher competence framework for Society 5.0
<i>Kiai-Intelek</i> and integrated	Nurdiyanto et al. (2025); Kuniasih	Integration of intellectual and	The concept has not been systematically

education	(2024); Hasanah et al. (2024)	religious dimensions in educational formation	repositioned as contemporary IRE teacher competence
<i>Al-Ma'un</i> and humanistic education	Mutiah et al. (2021); Tarik et al. (2024); Labib (2024)	Social responsibility, equality, empathy, and practical action	Limited connection with AI-mediated and digital Islamic education
<i>Tajdid</i> and educational renewal	Abbas (2020); Akhyar et al. (2024); Chasanah and Khoir (2026)	Openness to innovation, rationality, contextualization, and reform	Its potential as an adaptive teacher competency in Society 5.0 remains underdeveloped
PAI and Society 5.0	Al Hamdany et al. (2020); Restu et al. (2024); Yemmardotillah et al. (2024)	Digitalization, character formation, digital literacy, and pedagogical adaptation	Technology-oriented approaches need stronger philosophical and humanistic foundations
Digitalization and AI in PAI	Jatmiko et al. (2026); Roszana et al. (2026); (Baharuddin et al. (2025)	AI and digital technologies offer personalization but create ethical and dehumanization risks	Need for an integrated Islamic-humanistic teacher competency framework
Ahmad Dahlan in contemporary education	Chasanah and Khoir (2026); Rahmah (2026)	Ahmad Dahlan's thought remains relevant to modern and digital education	Relevance has not been sufficiently developed into a systematic competency model

2. The Philosophical Dimensions of *Kiai-Intelek*

The literature mapping indicates that the educational thought of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan is characterized by an integrative conception of religious authority and intellectual capability. Although the term *Kiai-Intelek* is not always presented as a formal theoretical construct in the literature, the underlying orientation is consistently reflected in Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform: the formation of individuals who possess strong religious commitment while simultaneously demonstrating intellectual openness, rationality, scientific awareness, and responsiveness to social change. Studies by Nurdiyanto et al. (2025), Husin (2023), Hasanah et al. (2024), Kuniasih (2024), and Chasanah and Khoir (2026) indicate that Ahmad Dahlan rejected the separation between religious and general knowledge. Education was instead directed toward producing individuals capable of integrating faith, knowledge, and practical action.

The first philosophical dimension identified is the integration of spirituality and intellectuality. Ahmad Dahlan's educational orientation did not place religious knowledge and modern science in opposition. Rather, both were regarded as complementary dimensions in the formation of an educated Muslim. The concept of the *ulama-intelek* or *intelek-ulama* illustrates this orientation, in which religious understanding must be accompanied by intellectual competence and intellectual development must remain grounded in religious and ethical values. This finding is supported by Akhyar et al. (2024), who identify the integration of religious and general sciences as a central characteristic of Ahmad Dahlan's reformist educational thought. Similarly, Kuniasih (2024) emphasizes that the desired educational outcome was an individual with strong faith, broad knowledge, and balanced physical and spiritual development. Therefore, the philosophical foundation of *Kiai-Intelek* can be understood as an attempt to overcome the dichotomy between spirituality and intellectuality.

The second dimension concerns rationality and openness to knowledge. Ahmad Dahlan's reformist orientation demonstrates that Islamic education should not be isolated from developments in science, education, and society. His adoption of elements of modern educational organization, including the classroom system and systematic instructional practices, demonstrates a selective and critical attitude toward external knowledge and educational innovation. Abbas (2020), Akhyar et al. (2024), and Chasanah and Khoir (2026) show that this openness was part of the broader *Tajdid* orientation that characterized Ahmad Dahlan's educational movement. Consequently, *Kiai-Intelekt* does not represent a religious intellectual who merely possesses extensive religious knowledge, but an educator who is capable of interpreting developments critically and determining which innovations are compatible with educational and ethical objectives.

The third dimension is the transformation of knowledge into ethical and social praxis. The literature demonstrates that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy cannot be separated from the principle that knowledge must produce action. Studies by Mutiah et al. (2021), Tarik et al. (2024), Labib (2024), and Setiyani and Tentiasih (2025) emphasize the relationship between religious education, character formation, social responsibility, and the practical implementation of Qur'anic values. The theology of *Al-Ma'un*, in particular, illustrates the transformation of religious understanding into concrete concern for disadvantaged communities. From this perspective, intellectual competence without ethical orientation is insufficient. The ideal educator must be able to translate knowledge into meaningful educational practices and social contributions.

The fourth dimension is continuous intellectual and spiritual development. The reviewed literature presents Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform as a dynamic process rather than a static preservation of established educational practices. The principle of renewal encourages educators to remain intellectually responsive to changing circumstances while maintaining religious foundations. This dimension becomes particularly significant in the Society 5.0 context, where teachers encounter rapid developments in artificial intelligence, digital platforms, data-driven education, and changing patterns of student interaction. The *Kiai-Intelekt* orientation therefore provides a philosophical basis for understanding teacher competence as an ongoing process of learning, adaptation, reflection, and ethical decision-making.

Based on the synthesis of these findings, *Kiai-Intelekt* can be repositioned into four interconnected dimensions: (1) spiritual-intellectual integration, (2) critical and rational openness to knowledge, (3) transformation of knowledge into ethical-social praxis, and (4) continuous self-development in response to changing contexts. These dimensions extend the conventional understanding of teacher competence beyond technical mastery. In the context of Society 5.0, an IRE teacher is not merely expected to operate digital technologies but must also possess the intellectual capacity to critically evaluate technological developments, the spiritual foundation to establish ethical boundaries, and the social sensitivity to ensure that technology serves human development. This synthesis becomes the conceptual foundation for connecting *Kiai-Intelekt* with *Tajdid* as a mechanism of adaptive and innovative competence development.

3. *Tajdid* as a Foundation for Adaptive and Innovative Teacher Competence

The second major finding concerns the role of *Tajdid* as a philosophical mechanism for responding to educational change. The reviewed literature indicates that *Tajdid* in Ahmad Dahlan's thought should not be interpreted simply as replacing old educational practices with modern ones. Rather, it represents a process of critical renewal that maintains fundamental religious principles while adapting educational methods, institutions, curricula, and forms of social engagement to changing circumstances. Abbas (2020), Akhyar et al. (2024), Husin (2023), and Chasanah and Khoir (2026) demonstrate that Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform emerged from his response to the limitations of existing educational systems, particularly the dichotomy between traditional religious education and the modern colonial school system.

The findings reveal three important characteristics of *Tajdid* that are relevant to teacher competence. First, *Tajdid* involves critical adaptation. Ahmad Dahlan demonstrated that modern educational practices could be adopted when they served educational objectives without abandoning Islamic principles. His adoption of classroom-based instruction, systematic educational organization, and integration of general knowledge illustrates an approach based neither on unrestricted acceptance nor complete rejection of modernity. For contemporary IRE teachers, this principle implies the ability to evaluate digital technologies, AI applications, learning platforms, and emerging pedagogical approaches critically rather than adopting them merely because they are technologically sophisticated.

Second, *Tajdid* promotes pedagogical innovation. The literature describes Ahmad Dahlan as an educational reformer who moved beyond conventional instructional patterns and introduced more systematic and contextual approaches to education. This orientation demonstrates that innovation is not necessarily synonymous with technological sophistication. Innovation may also involve redesigning learning experiences, developing contextual learning strategies, integrating disciplines, and connecting religious knowledge with students' social realities. In the Society 5.0 era, this principle enables IRE teachers to use digital technology as a pedagogical instrument while preserving the substantive objectives of religious education.

Third, *Tajdid* requires contextual responsiveness. Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform was closely connected to the social conditions of his time. His educational movement sought to respond to problems such as educational backwardness, social inequality, and the separation of religious and general knowledge. Contemporary IRE teachers encounter a different but equally complex context characterized by artificial intelligence, information abundance, algorithmic influence, digital inequality, and rapidly changing student behavior. The principle of *Tajdid* therefore provides a philosophical basis for teachers to reinterpret educational practices according to contemporary circumstances without losing their normative foundation.

The relationship between *Tajdid* and contemporary teacher competence can consequently be formulated through three capacities: critical technological adaptation, pedagogical innovation, and contextual responsiveness. These capacities complement conventional digital competencies by providing a philosophical orientation for determining how and why technology should be used. This distinction is important because technological proficiency alone does not guarantee meaningful Islamic education. A teacher may be highly capable of operating AI tools or digital platforms while remaining unable to evaluate their ethical implications, pedagogical appropriateness, or consequences for students' spiritual and social development.

The synthesis also demonstrates that *Tajdid* functions as a bridge between Ahmad Dahlan's historical educational philosophy and the contemporary demands of Society 5.0. The relevance does not lie in directly reproducing Ahmad Dahlan's educational practices in a digital environment, but in applying the logic of renewal that characterized his educational movement. In this sense, *Tajdid* enables IRE teachers to remain faithful to Islamic educational objectives while continuously adapting their pedagogical approaches to new technological and social realities. This finding strengthens the argument that teacher competence in Society 5.0 requires not only digital literacy but also the capacity for critical reflection, ethical judgment, innovation, and continuous learning.

Taken together, the findings from *Kiai-Intelek* and *Tajdid* demonstrate a complementary relationship. *Kiai-Intelek* provides the identity and philosophical orientation of the educator, emphasizing the integration of spirituality, intellectuality, ethics, and social responsibility, while *Tajdid* provides the dynamic mechanism for responding to change through critical adaptation and innovation. This relationship becomes particularly important in developing the proposed Transcendental-Facilitator concept, in which the IRE teacher functions simultaneously as an intellectually capable educator, a spiritual guide, a critical mediator of technology, and a facilitator of human development.

4. *Al-Ma'un* Theology as the Humanistic and Social-Ethical Dimension

The third major finding of this study concerns the position of *Al-Ma'un* theology as the humanistic and social-ethical dimension of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy. The reviewed literature demonstrates that Ahmad Dahlan's understanding of religious education was not limited to the transmission of doctrinal knowledge or the formation of individual piety. Religious understanding was expected to manifest itself in concrete social action, particularly through concern for vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged members of society. Studies by Mutiah et al. (2021), Tarik et al. (2024), Labib (2024), Setiyani and Tentiasih (2025), and Nurdianto et al. (2025) consistently demonstrate that the *Al-Ma'un* orientation connects religious knowledge with social responsibility, character formation, empathy, equality, and practical action.

The findings indicate that *Al-Ma'un* theology provides an important corrective to a purely cognitive conception of Islamic Religious Education. Within this orientation, the success of education cannot be measured exclusively by students' ability to understand religious concepts, memorize Qur'anic verses, or achieve academic performance. Education must also cultivate the capacity to recognize social problems and respond to them through ethical and meaningful action. Ahmad Dahlan's interpretation of *Al-Ma'un* consequently establishes a close relationship between faith, knowledge, empathy, and social praxis. This relationship is particularly significant for contemporary IRE because students increasingly encounter social realities through digital environments, including inequality, misinformation, cyberbullying, discrimination, and exposure to unverified religious content.

The second finding concerns the human-centered orientation embedded within *Al-Ma'un*. The theology places human dignity and social welfare at the center of religious praxis. Labib (2024), for example, demonstrates that *Al-Ma'un* became an important foundation for educational equality and social empowerment, while Tarik et al. (2024) emphasizes the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's thought for inclusive education. These findings suggest that Islamic education should not merely prepare students to become technologically competent individuals but should also develop their sensitivity toward the needs of others. In the Society 5.0 context, this principle becomes increasingly important because technological advancement can simultaneously expand access to knowledge and create new forms of exclusion.

The humanistic dimension of *Al-Ma'un* also provides an ethical basis for the use of technology in Islamic education. The literature on Society 5.0 identifies several risks associated with digitalization, including dehumanization, excessive dependence on artificial intelligence, weakening interpersonal relationships, unequal access to technology, and exposure to unreliable religious information (Yemmardotillah et al., 2024; Jatmiko et al., 2026; Roszana et al., 2026.; Baharuddin et al., (2025)). From the perspective of *Al-Ma'un*, these challenges cannot be addressed merely through technical improvement. Teachers must evaluate whether the use of technology actually contributes to students' educational welfare, dignity, inclusion, and social development. Thus, *Al-Ma'un* transforms technological competence from a purely instrumental ability into an ethically accountable practice.

A further finding is that *Al-Ma'un* reinforces the importance of empathy and social engagement as teacher competencies. The teacher is positioned not simply as a provider of instructional content but as an educator who recognizes students' individual and social circumstances. Such an orientation is particularly relevant in Society 5.0 because the expansion of digital learning may increase personalization while simultaneously reducing direct human interaction. The IRE teacher therefore has a distinctive responsibility to maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships and to ensure that technological mediation does not eliminate the relational dimension of Islamic education.

Based on the literature synthesis, *Al-Ma'un* can consequently be operationalized into four dimensions of IRE teacher competence: (1) social empathy, (2) commitment to educational inclusion, (3) ethical responsibility in technology use, and (4) transformation of

religious knowledge into social action. These dimensions complement the intellectual and adaptive competencies derived from *Kiai-Intelek* and *Tajdid*. While *Kiai-Intelek* emphasizes the integration of intellectuality and spirituality and *Tajdid* provides the orientation for renewal and adaptation, *Al-Ma'un* establishes the social and ethical purpose of that competence.

The synthesis therefore demonstrates that the three philosophical dimensions are not separate constructs. Rather, they form an interconnected educational logic: *Kiai-Intelek* provides the educator's intellectual-spiritual identity; *Tajdid* provides the capacity for critical adaptation and innovation; and *Al-Ma'un* provides the ethical-humanistic direction of educational action. This interconnectedness becomes the basis for reconstructing the competence of IRE teachers in the Society 5.0 era.

5. Reconstruction of IRE Teacher Competence: The Transcendental-Facilitator Model

The synthesis of the preceding findings leads to the reconstruction of an IRE teacher competence model conceptualized in this study as the Transcendental-Facilitator. This concept emerges from the intersection of three philosophical dimensions identified in Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought: *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un*. Rather than positioning the teacher as a mere transmitter of religious knowledge or a technical operator of digital learning platforms, the Transcendental-Facilitator is conceptualized as an educator who integrates spiritual depth, intellectual capacity, technological adaptability, ethical judgment, and social responsibility.

The first component of the model is transcendental-spiritual competence. This dimension is derived primarily from the religious orientation of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy, in which educational activity is fundamentally connected to faith, moral responsibility, and the realization of Islamic values. The teacher's competence therefore begins with the ability to maintain religious integrity while engaging with contemporary knowledge and technology. In the Society 5.0 context, transcendence functions as an ethical compass that enables teachers to distinguish between technological possibilities and educational purposes. Artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and data-driven learning are consequently treated as instruments rather than ultimate objectives.

The second component is intellectual and critical competence, derived from the *Kiai-Intelek* orientation. The teacher must possess sufficient intellectual capacity to critically examine information, evaluate technological developments, interpret contemporary issues, and connect religious knowledge with scientific and social perspectives. This competency is particularly important in an environment characterized by an abundance of information and AI-generated content. The IRE teacher is expected to function as an epistemic mediator who helps students distinguish reliable knowledge from misinformation, contextualize religious information, and develop critical thinking without abandoning Islamic principles.

The third component is adaptive-technological competence, which emerges from the principle of *Tajdid*. The findings indicate that Ahmad Dahlan's educational renewal was characterized by openness to useful innovation and the ability to adapt educational practices to changing circumstances. Applied to Society 5.0, this principle requires teachers to develop digital literacy, AI literacy, media literacy, and the capacity to select appropriate technologies for pedagogical purposes. However, adaptation is understood critically rather than technologically deterministically. Teachers are not required to adopt every emerging technology; instead, they must determine which technologies genuinely enhance learning, remain ethically appropriate, and support the objectives of Islamic education.

The fourth component is humanistic-social competence, derived from *Al-Ma'un*. This dimension requires teachers to maintain empathy, inclusivity, social awareness, and concern for student welfare. Technology should therefore be used to strengthen, rather than weaken, human relationships. The Transcendental-Facilitator recognizes that students are not merely data points in a digital learning system but individuals with different backgrounds, needs, emotions, and social circumstances. Consequently, teacher competence includes the ability to create inclusive learning environments, respond to students' social and emotional needs, and connect religious learning with real social problems.

The fifth component is transformative-facilitative competence. This component represents the shift from the conventional teacher-centered conception toward the teacher as facilitator, mentor, mediator, and designer of meaningful learning experiences. In a technologically saturated environment, students can access information independently through search engines, digital libraries, educational platforms, and generative AI. The distinctive role of the IRE teacher therefore lies increasingly in helping students interpret, evaluate, contextualize, and ethically apply the information they encounter. The teacher facilitates the development of religious understanding, critical consciousness, character, and social responsibility rather than merely transferring information. The five components can be synthesized into the following conceptual

Table 2. five components can be synthesized into the following conceptual structure

Dimension	Philosophical Foundation	Core Teacher Competence	Society 5.0 Application
Transcendental-Spiritual	Islamic orientation of Ahmad Dahlan	Spiritual integrity, ethical awareness, moral consistency	Establishing ethical boundaries for AI and digital technology
Intellectual-Critical	<i>Kiai-Intelekt</i>	Critical thinking, interdisciplinary knowledge, epistemic literacy	Evaluating AI-generated information and digital religious content
Adaptive-Technological	<i>Tajdid</i>	Digital literacy, AI literacy, pedagogical innovation	Selecting and integrating appropriate emerging technologies
Humanistic-Social	<i>Al-Ma'un</i>	Empathy, inclusion, social responsibility	Ensuring technology supports human dignity and educational equality
Transformative-Facilitative	Integration of <i>Kiai-Intelekt</i> , <i>Tajdid</i> , and <i>Al-Ma'un</i>	Mentoring, mediation, contextual learning, character formation	Guiding students to transform information into ethical knowledge and action

The model demonstrates that the competence of IRE teachers in Society 5.0 should not be constructed through technological competence alone. Instead, teacher competence needs to operate through a transcendental-humanistic-technology continuum. At the transcendental level, Islamic values provide the normative foundation; at the intellectual level, critical reasoning enables teachers to evaluate knowledge and technology; at the technological level, adaptive competence enables effective utilization of digital innovations; at the humanistic level, empathy and social responsibility ensure that technology remains oriented toward human welfare; and at the facilitative level, these dimensions are integrated into meaningful educational practice.

The distinctive feature of the Transcendental-Facilitator model lies in its attempt to resolve the tension between technological advancement and the preservation of human-centered Islamic education. Existing studies on Society 5.0 tend to emphasize digital literacy, AI integration, pedagogical innovation, and technological infrastructure, while studies on Ahmad Dahlan predominantly discuss educational integration, character formation, *Tajdid*, social praxis, and the relevance of his thought to contemporary education. The present synthesis brings these previously separated dimensions together by positioning Ahmad Dahlan's philosophical principles as the foundation for developing contemporary IRE teacher competence.

Accordingly, the proposed model does not seek to reproduce Ahmad Dahlan's educational practices literally in the twenty-first century. Rather, it repositions the philosophical logic underlying his educational movement. *Kiai-Intelekt* is repositioned as the

foundation of intellectual-spiritual teacher identity; *Tajdid* becomes a framework for adaptive and innovative professional development; and *Al-Ma'un* becomes the humanistic and social-ethical orientation of educational practice. Their integration produces the Transcendental-Facilitator, an IRE teacher who is capable of navigating technological transformation without surrendering the spiritual, ethical, relational, and social purposes of Islamic education.

The final finding is therefore that the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy to Society 5.0 does not primarily lie in his historical use of particular educational technologies or institutional practices. Its enduring relevance lies in the principles governing how an educator responds to change: integrating faith and intellect, renewing educational practices critically, transforming knowledge into social action, and placing human welfare within the purpose of education. These principles provide a philosophical foundation for reconstructing IRE teacher competence in an era where technology increasingly performs functions previously associated with teachers. The teacher's distinctive role consequently shifts from being the primary source of information toward becoming a spiritual-intellectual guide, critical technological mediator, and humanistic facilitator of learning.

DISCUSSION

Repositioning *Kiai-Intelek* in the Society 5.0 Era

The findings of this study indicate that the concept of *Kiai-Intelek* requires repositioning rather than simple reproduction in the context of Society 5.0. Historically, the concept represents the integration of religious depth and intellectual capacity, reflected in Ahmad Dahlan's educational aspiration to overcome the dichotomy between religious and general knowledge. In the contemporary context, however, the meaning of intellectuality has expanded significantly. An IRE teacher is no longer required merely to master religious knowledge and general academic knowledge but must also possess digital, technological, epistemic, and ethical competencies. Therefore, *Kiai-Intelek* can be repositioned as a model of teacher identity that integrates spiritual authority, intellectual competence, critical digital literacy, and humanistic responsibility. This repositioning is important because the increasing availability of information and generative artificial intelligence has shifted the function of teachers from being the primary source of information toward becoming interpreters, validators, mentors, and facilitators of meaningful knowledge.

This interpretation is consistent with previous research on Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought. Nurdyanto et al. (2025) found that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy remains relevant to twenty-first-century learning because it integrates religious knowledge, scientific knowledge, critical literacy, collaboration, character, and adaptation to technological developments. Similarly, Hasanah et al. (2024) emphasized the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's thought to contemporary education through integrated curricula, active learning, character formation, and the development of soft skills. Husin (2023) further demonstrated that Ahmad Dahlan's ideal educational formation was directed toward producing an *ulama-intelek* or *intelek-ulama*, namely individuals who possess religious commitment while remaining intellectually responsive to modern knowledge. These findings support the present study's interpretation that *Kiai-Intelek* possesses a philosophical basis for addressing contemporary educational transformation. However, the present study extends these findings by translating the historical intellectual-religious integration into a more specific framework of IRE teacher competence in the Society 5.0 environment.

The repositioning proposed in this study also differs from approaches that interpret Ahmad Dahlan primarily as an educational reformer who introduced modern institutional and pedagogical practices. Abbas (2020), for example, emphasizes Ahmad Dahlan's *Tajdid* movement in responding to the educational dualism between colonial secular schools and traditional Islamic institutions. Akhyar et al. (2024) similarly identify educational system, curriculum, objectives, and methods as major dimensions of Ahmad Dahlan's reform.

Kuniasih (2024) highlights the integration of religious and general sciences as a means of producing individuals who are intellectually broad while remaining spiritually grounded. While these studies establish the historical and philosophical foundations of Ahmad Dahlan's educational renewal, the present study moves the analysis from educational system reform toward educator competence reconstruction. The central question is therefore not merely how Ahmad Dahlan's educational system can remain relevant, but how his philosophical orientation can shape the identity and competencies of teachers who operate within radically different technological conditions.

This distinction becomes particularly important when the findings are compared with studies concerning Islamic education in Society 5.0. Yemmardotillah et al. (2024) identify digital inequality, teacher digital literacy, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and the weakening of interpersonal interaction as major challenges for Islamic education. Jatmiko et al. (2026) similarly demonstrate that digital technologies can make PAI more interactive and personalized but emphasize the continuing need to balance technological development with pedagogical and spiritual values. Roszana et al. (2026) further argue that digitalization creates risks of spiritual reduction and exposure to non-authoritative religious content, while emphasizing that interpersonal relationships between teachers and students remain indispensable. (Baharuddin et al. 2025) also highlights the ethical risks associated with AI and argues that technological implementation in Islamic education must remain under the guidance of Islamic ethical principles. These findings indicate that technological competence alone cannot adequately address the challenges of Society 5.0. The present study therefore interprets *Kiai-Intelek* as a philosophical response to this problem: intellectual competence must be accompanied by spiritual orientation and ethical responsibility.

The similarities between the present findings and these previous studies can be explained by the common recognition that technology is an instrument rather than the ultimate purpose of education. Both Ahmad Dahlan-oriented studies and Society 5.0-oriented studies emphasize the importance of integrating knowledge, character, and social responsibility. The difference, however, lies in their analytical starting points. Previous Society 5.0 studies generally begin with technological transformation and subsequently identify the need for ethical and spiritual safeguards. The present study reverses this direction by beginning with the philosophical identity of the Islamic educator and then determining how technological competence should be incorporated into that identity. Consequently, technology becomes subordinate to the educational mission, rather than becoming the foundation for defining teacher competence.

This repositioning is also supported by studies concerning the humanistic dimensions of Ahmad Dahlan's thought. Mutiah et al. (2021) demonstrates that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy emphasizes the integration of faith, knowledge, and practical action in character formation. Tarik et al. (2024) emphasizes inclusivity and equality as important dimensions of his educational thought, while Labib (2024) demonstrates how *Al-Ma'un* theology transforms religious understanding into social action and educational equality. These findings broaden the meaning of *Kiai-Intelek*: intellectuality should not be understood merely as cognitive sophistication but as the ability to use knowledge responsibly for human and social improvement. In the Society 5.0 era, this means that an intellectually competent IRE teacher must also be capable of identifying the ethical consequences of AI, recognizing digital inequalities, protecting students from harmful information, and ensuring that technological innovation remains oriented toward human dignity.

The novelty of the present study therefore lies in repositioning *Kiai-Intelek* from a historical educational ideal into a contemporary framework of IRE teacher competence. Rather than treating the concept merely as an expression of Ahmad Dahlan's aspiration to integrate religious and general knowledge, this study reconstructs it as a multidimensional teacher identity consisting of spiritual-intellectual integration, critical epistemic capacity, technological adaptability, and humanistic responsibility. This repositioning also

establishes a conceptual bridge between Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy and the human-centered orientation of Society 5.0. In this framework, the technologically competent teacher is not simply a user of AI or digital platforms but a critical mediator who determines how technology should be used, what knowledge should be trusted, and how technological resources can contribute to students' intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social development.

From this perspective, the *Kiai-Intelekt* concept provides an alternative to the increasingly instrumental understanding of teacher professionalism. Conventional digital-competency frameworks may emphasize the ability to operate platforms, create digital content, employ AI tools, or analyze learning data. Such abilities remain necessary, but they are insufficient for IRE because religious education involves questions of meaning, morality, worldview, and character formation. The *Kiai-Intelekt* orientation places these technological competencies within a broader hierarchy of educational purposes: spirituality provides direction, intellectuality provides critical judgment, technology provides instruments, and humanism provides the ultimate social orientation. This hierarchical relationship represents an important philosophical implication of repositioning Ahmad Dahlan's thought in Society 5.0.

Accordingly, *Kiai-Intelekt* should not be understood as an attempt to preserve a nineteenth- or early twentieth-century model of Islamic intellectualism. Instead, it should be interpreted as a dynamic educational identity capable of responding to technological transformation while maintaining transcendental and humanistic foundations. This interpretation provides the philosophical basis for the subsequent discussion of *Tajdid*, which explains how the teacher can continuously adapt, innovate, and critically engage with technological change. In other words, *Kiai-Intelekt* answers the question "what kind of educator is needed?", while *Tajdid* addresses "how should that educator respond to continuous change?". Together, these dimensions contribute to the formation of the Transcendental-Facilitator model proposed by this study.

The findings of this study demonstrate both continuity and differentiation when compared with previous research on K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, Islamic Religious Education, and Society 5.0. The first point of continuity concerns the integration of religious and general knowledge. Nurdyanto et al. (2025), Husin (2023), Hasanah et al. (2024), Akhyar et al. (2024), and Kuniasih (2024) consistently identify the rejection of educational dichotomy as one of the central characteristics of Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought. Their findings indicate that Ahmad Dahlan envisioned an educational system capable of producing individuals who were simultaneously religiously grounded and intellectually competent. The present study confirms this interpretation but extends it by arguing that, in Society 5.0, the meaning of intellectual competence must include the ability to navigate digital information, artificial intelligence, interdisciplinary knowledge, and emerging epistemological challenges. Thus, the present study does not replace the earlier interpretation of *Kiai-Intelekt* but expands its functional meaning for contemporary teacher competence.

A second similarity can be observed in relation to the principle of educational renewal. Abbas (2020) and Akhyar et al. (2024) demonstrate that *Tajdid* was central to Ahmad Dahlan's educational reform, particularly through the adoption of systematic classroom organization, integration of religious and general sciences, and adaptation of educational methods. Chasanah and Khoir (2026) similarly identify rationality, contextualization, and educational innovation as important elements of Ahmad Dahlan's contemporary relevance. The present study agrees that Ahmad Dahlan's reformism cannot be separated from openness to change. However, the distinction lies in the object of renewal. Previous studies primarily examine the renewal of educational systems, institutions, curricula, and methods, whereas this study emphasizes the renewal of teacher competence and professional identity. This shift is important because technological transformation ultimately requires teachers who can interpret and implement innovation rather than merely institutions that possess technological infrastructure.

The third comparison concerns character and humanistic education. (Ninik Mutiah*, Happy Susanto, 2021) found that Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought is highly relevant to character education through the integration of faith, knowledge, and practical action. Tarik et al. (2024) further demonstrated the importance of inclusivity, equality, and social praxis in Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy. Labib (2024) specifically showed that *Al-Ma'un* theology provides a foundation for educational equality and social empowerment. The present study reaches a similar conclusion regarding the importance of humanistic and social dimensions but extends the discussion to the technological environment. In Society 5.0, humanism must not only be expressed through direct social action but also through responsible decisions concerning technology, AI, digital access, data use, and the quality of teacher-student interaction. Consequently, the *Al-Ma'un* dimension in this study is interpreted as a basis for ethical technological mediation, rather than solely as a framework for conventional social service.

The findings also correspond with research specifically examining Islamic education in Society 5.0. Restu et al. (2024) found that PAI teachers need to combine digital learning strategies with character formation and religious habituation. Yemmardotillah et al. (2024) identified digital inequality, inadequate teacher digital literacy, privacy concerns, and weakening interpersonal interaction as important challenges. Jatmiko et al. (2026) similarly found that digital technology and AI provide opportunities for personalized and interactive PAI learning but must be balanced with pedagogical and spiritual considerations. Roszana et al. (2026) emphasized the importance of maintaining the spiritual and interpersonal dimensions of PAI amid digitalization, while Baharuddin et al. (2025) highlighted the need for Islamic ethical principles in the implementation of AI. These studies strongly support the present finding that technological competence alone is insufficient for IRE teachers.

Nevertheless, there is a significant difference in the theoretical direction of the present study. Most Society 5.0 studies begin with technological transformation and subsequently ask how Islamic values can be incorporated into digital education. In contrast, the present study begins with Islamic educational philosophy and subsequently determines how technological competence can be integrated into the educator's philosophical identity. This reversal produces a different conceptual relationship between technology and education. Technology is not positioned as the central determinant of teacher competence; instead, technology becomes an instrument whose use is guided by spirituality, intellectual judgment, ethics, and humanistic responsibility. This distinction is particularly important in IRE because the educational process concerns not only the acquisition of information but also the formation of religious understanding, character, moral judgment, and social responsibility.

The present findings also differ from studies that primarily discuss the contemporary relevance of Ahmad Dahlan without developing a specific competency framework. Rahmah (2026) and Chasanah and Khoir (2026), for instance, demonstrate that Ahmad Dahlan's principles of integrated knowledge, character formation, *Tajdid*, and social praxis remain relevant to contemporary Islamic education. These studies strengthen the historical and philosophical basis of the present research. However, the present study takes a further analytical step by connecting those principles to specific dimensions of IRE teacher competence in Society 5.0. The resulting framework consists of transcendental-spiritual competence, intellectual-critical competence, adaptive-technological competence, humanistic-social competence, and transformative-facilitative competence. Therefore, the contribution of this research is not simply to reaffirm the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's thought but to provide a conceptual mechanism through which that relevance can be operationalized in contemporary teacher development.

The comparison also reveals methodological differences that may explain variations among the studies. Most of the Ahmad Dahlan studies reviewed employ qualitative library research, historical analysis, character studies, or content analysis, focusing primarily on textual and philosophical interpretation. Studies of Society 5.0, on the other hand, include both library research and empirical field studies examining teachers, students, digital

platforms, and classroom practices. These different methodological orientations naturally produce different types of findings. Historical and philosophical studies tend to emphasize values, principles, and educational ideals, whereas empirical Society 5.0 studies tend to identify practical technological challenges. The present research seeks to bridge these two orientations through philosophical reconstruction: historical-philosophical concepts are interpreted in relation to contemporary teacher competency requirements without claiming that Ahmad Dahlan directly formulated concepts such as AI literacy or digital pedagogy.

The similarities and differences across the literature can therefore be synthesized into three major conclusions. First, previous studies provide strong evidence that Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy contains enduring principles of integration, renewal, character, and social responsibility. Second, research on Society 5.0 demonstrates that contemporary IRE requires digital adaptability, technological literacy, ethical awareness, and preservation of human relationships. Third, these two bodies of literature have generally developed in parallel rather than being fully integrated into a single teacher-competence framework. The present study addresses this intersection by repositioning *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un* as complementary foundations for IRE teacher competence.

Accordingly, the comparison with previous studies strengthens rather than weakens the novelty of the proposed Transcendental-Facilitator model. Its novelty does not reside in claiming that Ahmad Dahlan's ideas are relevant to modern education a conclusion already established by numerous studies. Instead, its contribution lies in reconstructing the relationship between Ahmad Dahlan's philosophical principles and the specific demands of teacher professionalism in a human-centered technological society. The model consequently provides a conceptual bridge between the historical intellectual tradition of Islamic educational reform and contemporary challenges involving AI, digitalization, ethical uncertainty, and the preservation of human agency in education.

The similarities identified between this study and previous research can be explained by the common philosophical foundation underlying Islamic education and Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought. Previous studies consistently demonstrate that Ahmad Dahlan rejected the separation between religious knowledge and general knowledge, emphasized character formation, promoted educational renewal, and connected religious understanding with concrete social action (Abbas, 2020; Husin, 2023; Akhyar et al., 2024; Hasanah et al., 2024; Kuniasih, 2024). These principles remain relevant because the fundamental purpose of Islamic education has not changed despite substantial changes in the technological environment. Education continues to be directed toward the formation of knowledgeable, morally responsible, and socially engaged human beings. What has changed is the context in which these educational purposes must be achieved. In the Society 5.0 era, teachers operate in an environment characterized by abundant information, algorithmic mediation, artificial intelligence, digital communication, and increasingly complex ethical problems.

The similarity between the present findings and studies on PAI in Society 5.0 can likewise be attributed to the increasingly central role of technology in educational processes. Restu et al. (2024), Yemmardotillah et al. (2024), Jatmiko et al. (2026), Roszana et al. (2026), and Baharuddin et al. (2025) all indicate that technology provides opportunities for improving accessibility, interaction, personalization, and learning efficiency while simultaneously creating challenges related to digital literacy, infrastructure, ethics, information validity, and the preservation of human relationships. The present study reaches a similar conclusion but interprets these challenges from a philosophical rather than primarily technological perspective. The problem is not simply whether teachers are capable of operating digital platforms or AI applications; rather, it concerns whether teachers possess sufficient intellectual and moral capacity to determine when, why, and for what educational purposes technology should be used.

The differences between the findings of this study and previous research can therefore be understood through differences in analytical focus. Studies focusing on Ahmad Dahlan generally examine his historical contribution to educational modernization,

institutional reform, curriculum integration, character education, or social empowerment (Abbas, 2020; Mutiah et al., 2021; Akhyar et al., 2024; Labib, 2024). Meanwhile, studies concerning Society 5.0 primarily investigate digital transformation, technological integration, teacher digital competence, curriculum adaptation, and ethical challenges (Yemmaridotillah et al., 2024; Jatmiko et al., 2026; Amarullah, 2026). The present study brings these two domains into a single analytical framework. This explains why its findings do not simply repeat the conclusion that Ahmad Dahlan's thought remains relevant, but instead attempt to determine how that relevance can be reconstructed into a contemporary professional identity for IRE teachers.

The methodological differences among previous studies also contribute to differences in their findings. Historical and philosophical studies generally rely on textual interpretation and documentary analysis, enabling researchers to identify fundamental educational principles but providing limited operationalization for contemporary teacher competency. Conversely, empirical studies of Society 5.0 often focus on observable practices, technological adoption, classroom behavior, or digital learning challenges but may provide less philosophical explanation regarding the values that should guide technological transformation. The present study positions itself between these two orientations through philosophical reconstruction. The historical ideas of Ahmad Dahlan are not treated as rigid prescriptions but as philosophical principles that can be reinterpreted according to contemporary educational conditions.

This interpretation is particularly important in understanding the concept of *Kiai-Intelek*. If the concept is interpreted literally and historically, its relevance may appear limited to the integration of religious and intellectual knowledge. However, when interpreted contextually, its underlying principle is the formation of educators who possess religious depth while remaining intellectually open and responsive to social change. In Society 5.0, intellectual openness necessarily includes digital literacy, critical engagement with AI-generated information, interdisciplinary understanding, and the ability to evaluate the epistemic credibility of digital religious content. Similarly, the religious dimension cannot be reduced to ritual knowledge but must provide ethical direction for the use of technological power. This contextual interpretation explains why the present study conceptualizes *Kiai-Intelek* as a dynamic rather than static educational philosophy.

The same interpretive logic applies to *Tajdid* and *Al-Ma'un*. *Tajdid* should not merely be understood as historical reform of educational institutions but as an epistemological orientation toward continuous renewal, critical reflection, and adaptive innovation. In the Society 5.0 context, this principle requires teachers to engage continuously with new technologies while critically evaluating their pedagogical and ethical consequences. Meanwhile, *Al-Ma'un* provides a social-humanistic orientation that prevents technological innovation from becoming detached from human needs. Thus, the three philosophical dimensions identified in this study *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un* perform different but complementary functions: *Kiai-Intelek* establishes teacher identity, *Tajdid* establishes the orientation toward adaptation and innovation, and *Al-Ma'un* establishes the ethical and social direction of educational practice.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study is the development of the Transcendental-Facilitator Model as a conceptual reconstruction of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy for IRE teacher competence in Society 5.0. The model emerges from the intersection of three philosophical foundations: *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un*. Rather than treating these concepts as separate historical ideas, the model synthesizes them into an integrated framework for understanding the contemporary identity of Islamic Religious Education teachers. The model proposes that an IRE teacher should simultaneously function as a spiritually grounded intellectual, an adaptive innovator, a critical mediator of technology, and a facilitator of human development.

The first theoretical dimension is transcendental grounding. The teacher's competence is not ultimately determined by technological proficiency but by the values and purposes that guide the use of knowledge and technology. This dimension derives

primarily from the theological orientation of Ahmad Dahlan's educational thought, in which knowledge must be connected with faith and manifested through meaningful action. Consequently, technology cannot become an autonomous educational objective. AI, Big Data, digital platforms, and other technological resources are positioned as instruments that should serve educational, moral, and humanitarian purposes. This provides an important conceptual distinction from purely technology-centered models of teacher competence.

The second dimension is intellectual-critical competence. The *Kiai-Intelek* concept implies that religious authority must be accompanied by intellectual openness and critical reasoning. In the digital environment, this competence becomes increasingly important because teachers and students encounter enormous quantities of information whose validity cannot be assumed. IRE teachers therefore need the capacity to verify sources, distinguish authoritative religious knowledge from misinformation, critically evaluate AI-generated content, and contextualize religious teachings in relation to contemporary problems. The teacher consequently functions not merely as a transmitter of established information but as an epistemic mediator who helps students construct responsible knowledge.

The third dimension is adaptive and innovative competence, derived from the principle of *Tajdid*. Society 5.0 is characterized by continuous technological and social transformation; consequently, teacher competence cannot be regarded as a fixed collection of skills acquired once during formal teacher education. Teachers must engage in continuous professional learning, experimentation, reflection, and pedagogical innovation. In this framework, *Tajdid* provides a philosophical basis for lifelong professional development. Teachers are expected to adopt useful technological innovations while retaining the capacity to reject technologies that conflict with pedagogical, ethical, or religious principles.

The fourth dimension is humanistic-social competence, which derives primarily from the ethical orientation of *Al-Ma'un*. Technological development can increase educational efficiency but may simultaneously intensify inequality, isolation, algorithmic dependence, and the commodification of knowledge. The *Al-Ma'un* orientation requires educators to evaluate educational innovation according to its contribution to human welfare, social justice, inclusion, and empowerment. Therefore, a Transcendental-Facilitator does not simply ask whether a technology is innovative but also asks whether its use benefits students, reduces exclusion, protects human dignity, and strengthens social responsibility.

The fifth dimension is the facilitative role of the teacher. This represents the major shift from the conventional teacher-as-information-provider model toward the teacher-as-facilitator. In an environment where information can be accessed instantly through search engines, digital repositories, and generative AI, the unique value of teachers increasingly lies in their ability to provide interpretation, ethical guidance, emotional support, contextual understanding, and meaningful interaction. The teacher therefore becomes a facilitator of intellectual and spiritual development rather than merely a provider of information. This conceptualization is consistent with research showing that interpersonal relationships remain an indispensable dimension of Islamic education despite technological digitalization (Roszana et al., 2026).

The theoretical novelty of the model therefore lies not simply in combining technology and Islamic values. Such integration has already been discussed in previous research. Its distinctive contribution is the reconstruction of teacher identity through the philosophical integration of transcendence, intellectuality, renewal, and social humanism. The model can consequently be represented as a conceptual sequence:

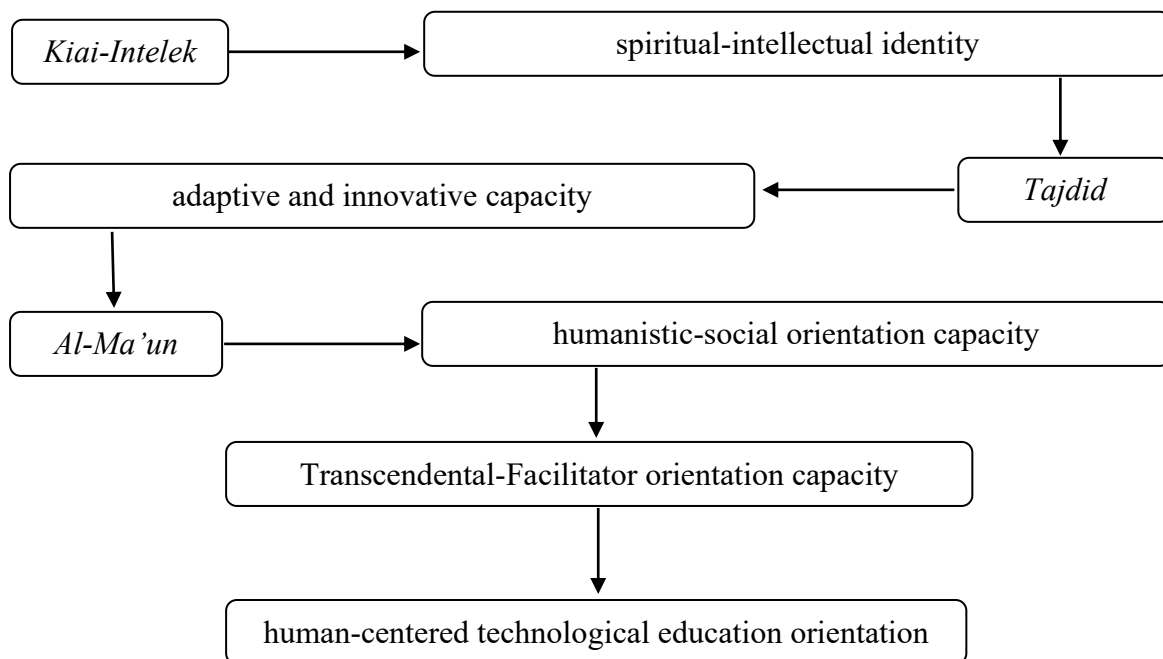


Figure 1. The Transcendental-Facilitator Model of IRE Teacher Competence in Society 5.0

This sequence illustrates that the proposed model is not an additional digital-teaching framework detached from Islamic educational philosophy. Rather, it represents a philosophical reinterpretation of teacher professionalism in which technological competence is integrated into a broader conception of human development. The model consequently contributes to the theoretical discussion of Islamic teacher education by demonstrating that the historical intellectual heritage of Ahmad Dahlan can serve as a conceptual resource for responding to contemporary technological transformation without abandoning its transcendental foundation.

The findings have several practical implications for IRE teachers and educational institutions. At the classroom level, IRE teachers should develop competencies that go beyond technical mastery of digital applications. Professional development should include AI literacy, digital information verification, ethical use of technology, digital content creation, and the pedagogical use of learning analytics, while simultaneously strengthening spiritual formation, communication, empathy, and character education. In practice, teachers can use AI and digital platforms to support lesson planning, differentiated learning, formative assessment, and access to learning resources, but the interpretation and ethical evaluation of religious content should remain under professional teacher guidance. This approach is consistent with the argument that technology should complement rather than replace the relational function of the teacher (Jatmiko et al., 2026; Baharuddin et al., 2025).

At the institutional level, schools and madrasahs need to redesign teacher professional development around an integrated competency framework. Training programs should not be divided rigidly between “digital training” and “religious training.” Instead, professional development can combine technological literacy, pedagogical innovation, Islamic ethics, critical thinking, and social-emotional competence. Teacher communities and professional learning groups can function as spaces for *Tajdid* by enabling educators to share technological practices, critically evaluate AI applications, and develop digital learning resources grounded in authoritative Islamic sources. Such programs would transform the concept of continuous professional development from a technical requirement into an institutional culture of intellectual and ethical renewal.

The findings also have academic implications for the study of Ahmad Dahlan and Islamic education. Existing scholarship has established the relevance of Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy to educational modernization, character formation, social empowerment, curriculum integration, and contemporary Islamic education (Mutiah et al., 2021; Akhyar et al., 2024; Hasanah et al., 2024; Chasanah & Khoir 2026)). This study extends that scholarship by connecting the philosophical categories of *Kiai-Intelek*, *Tajdid*, and *Al-Ma'un* to contemporary teacher competence. The theoretical implication is that historical

educational thought can be treated not merely as an object of historical reconstruction but as a source for conceptual development in responding to emerging educational problems. In this sense, the Transcendental-Facilitator Model provides an initial theoretical bridge between Islamic educational philosophy and contemporary discourse on teacher professionalism in technologically mediated education.

At the policy level, the findings suggest that teacher competency standards for Islamic education should accommodate the simultaneous demands of technological transformation and ethical-spiritual formation. Policies focusing exclusively on digital literacy may produce technically competent teachers without sufficient capacity to address misinformation, algorithmic bias, inappropriate AI use, or the ethical dimensions of digital religious content. Conversely, teacher development programs that emphasize religious mastery without digital competence may leave educators inadequately prepared for the realities of Society 5.0. Therefore, teacher competency policies should promote an integrated framework incorporating digital-technological literacy, pedagogical competence, critical epistemic capacity, Islamic ethical competence, spiritual maturity, and social-humanistic competence.

The policy implication is also relevant to curriculum development in Islamic teacher education institutions. Universities and teacher-training institutions can incorporate AI ethics, digital Islamic literacy, media literacy, and technology-assisted pedagogy into IRE teacher education while maintaining courses related to Islamic theology, ethics, philosophy, and character formation. The purpose is not to increase the technological content of teacher education indiscriminately but to create educators who can critically determine the appropriate relationship between technology, knowledge, and human values. Such a curriculum would embody Ahmad Dahlan's principle of integrating religious and general knowledge in a contemporary form.

Finally, the findings indicate several directions for future research. Because the Transcendental-Facilitator Model is developed through qualitative philosophical and library research, its conceptual dimensions require empirical validation. Future studies could develop measurable indicators for each dimension and examine the model through surveys, interviews, classroom observations, or mixed-method research involving IRE teachers at different educational levels. Comparative research could also investigate how the model operates across Muhammadiyah and non-Muhammadiyah educational institutions, urban and rural contexts, or different levels of technological readiness. Such empirical investigation would determine whether the proposed model can move beyond a theoretical reconstruction toward an operational framework for teacher professional development.

Overall, the practical, academic, and policy implications converge on one central proposition: the future of Islamic Religious Education should not be constructed through a choice between spirituality and technology. Instead, Society 5.0 requires an educational paradigm in which technological capability is subordinated to intellectual responsibility, spiritual purpose, and human welfare. In this context, the philosophical legacy of Ahmad Dahlan provides a meaningful foundation for developing IRE teachers who are technologically adaptive without becoming technologically dependent, intellectually progressive without losing spiritual orientation, and socially responsive without abandoning their professional role as educators. This is the central significance of the Transcendental-Facilitator Model proposed in this study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that K.H. Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy remains relevant to the development of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in the Society 5.0 era. However, its relevance requires philosophical repositioning rather than merely reproducing its historical form. The concept of *Kiai-Intelek* can be reconstructed as an educational identity that integrates religious and intellectual competence with critical digital literacy, technological adaptability, and humanistic responsibility.

The study identifies three interconnected philosophical foundations: *Kiai-Intelek* as the basis of spiritual-intellectual teacher identity, *Tajdid* as the foundation for adaptive and innovative competence, and *Al-Ma'un* as the foundation for humanistic and social-ethical responsibility. The integration of these dimensions leads to the proposed Trance scene, which positions the IRE teacher not merely as a transmitter of religious knowledge or user of technology, but as a facilitator who critically mediates knowledge, guides the ethical use of technology, and maintains the spiritual and human dimensions of education.

The novelty of this study lies in transforming the historical concept of *Kiai-Intelek* into a contemporary framework for IRE teacher competence in Society 5.0. The model provides a conceptual bridge between Ahmad Dahlan's educational philosophy and contemporary challenges involving artificial intelligence, digitalization, information abundance, and the preservation of human values. Therefore, IRE teacher development should integrate technological literacy with spiritual maturity, critical thinking, ethical awareness, pedagogical competence, and social responsibility.

As this study is based on library research and philosophical interpretation, further empirical research is needed to validate the Transcendental-Facilitator Model in actual educational settings. Future studies may develop measurable indicators of the model and examine its implementation among IRE teachers across different educational contexts.

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