

DIGITAL-BASED LEARNING INNOVATION IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' LEARNING INTEREST

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis inovasi pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) berbasis digital dalam meningkatkan minat belajar siswa. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif-analitis. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen pembelajaran digital. Teknik triangulasi digunakan untuk meningkatkan validitas data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemanfaatan media digital, platform pembelajaran daring, dan strategi gamifikasi mampu meningkatkan motivasi, keterlibatan, dan kemandirian belajar siswa. Selain itu, pembelajaran digital membantu siswa memahami materi keagamaan secara lebih kontekstual dan menarik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa inovasi pembelajaran PAI berbasis digital berperan signifikan dalam meningkatkan minat belajar siswa dan membentuk pengalaman belajar yang lebih efektif serta bermakna.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Digital, PAI, Minat Belajar*

Abstract

This study aims to analyze digital-based learning innovations in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in improving students' learning interest. This research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of digital learning documents. Data triangulation was applied to enhance the validity of the findings. The results indicate that the use of digital media, online learning platforms, and gamification strategies significantly increased students' motivation, engagement, and independent learning. Moreover, digital learning supported students in understanding religious materials in a more contextual and engaging manner. This study concludes that digital-based innovations in Islamic Religious Education play a significant role in enhancing students' learning interest and creating more effective and meaningful learning experiences.

Keywords: *Digital Learning, Islamic Education, Learning Interest*

Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed various sectors of human life, including education. Digital transformation has changed traditional learning paradigms into more flexible, interactive, and technology-oriented models, which require educational institutions to continuously innovate in learning practices (Selwyn, 2016). The integration of technology in learning environments has been widely recognized as a strategic effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in shaping students' moral character, spiritual awareness, and ethical behavior. However, the subject faces major challenges in maintaining its relevance and effectiveness in the digital era, where students are exposed to diverse sources of information and media influence (Hidayat, 2015). The transformation of Islamic education requires adaptive pedagogical strategies that align religious values with contemporary technological developments (Al-Attas, 1991).

Students' learning interest is a key psychological factor that determines learning success and academic achievement. High levels of learning interest encourage active participation, intrinsic motivation, and sustained engagement in learning activities (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Conversely, low learning interest has been linked to decreased academic performance and weak internalization of learning values (Schiefele, 2009). Digital learning media provide significant opportunities to create more engaging, interactive, and contextual learning experiences. The use of educational videos, mobile learning applications, learning management systems, and virtual learning environments can enhance students' involvement in the learning process (Mayer, 2009). Multimedia-based learning has been proven to improve students' comprehension and motivation through the integration of visual and auditory elements (Clark & Mayer, 2016). Digital-based learning innovation contributes to a shift in the role of teachers from being the sole source of knowledge to becoming facilitators and learning designers. Teachers are required to master both pedagogical competence and digital literacy to effectively design student-centered learning environments (Koehler & Mishra, 2009). This professional transformation is essential to meet the demands of 21st-century learning competencies (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, digital innovation is not intended to replace spiritual and moral dimensions, but rather to strengthen the internalization of Islamic values. The integration of Islamic principles with digital learning strategies is necessary to ensure that technological progress remains aligned with the objectives of Islamic education (Langgulung, 1986). Religious education in the digital age requires a balanced approach between technological utilization and spiritual development (Nasr, 2002). Most contemporary students belong to the generation of digital natives who are accustomed to using smartphones, social media, and online platforms in their daily lives. This reality requires educators to design learning environments that correspond to students' digital habits and learning preferences (Prensky, 2001). The mismatch between traditional teaching methods and students' digital culture may reduce their interest and engagement in learning (Tapscott, 2009).

Previous studies have demonstrated that digital learning innovations can significantly increase students' motivation and learning interest. Technology-enhanced learning environments have been shown to positively influence students' academic engagement and learning outcomes (Schindler et al., 2017). However, studies that specifically focus on digital innovation in Islamic Religious Education and its impact on students' learning interest remain limited (Zainuddin, 2018). Therefore, research on digital-based innovations in Islamic Religious Education learning is highly important. Such research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of adaptive learning models in Islamic education (Creswell, 2012). Practically,

it can provide guidance for teachers and educational institutions in designing more effective, engaging, and spiritually meaningful learning strategies (Sugiyono, 2015).

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that digital-based learning innovation in Islamic Religious Education is an inevitable necessity in modern education. This study aims to explore various forms of digital learning innovation in Islamic Religious Education and to analyze their contribution to increasing students' learning interest in a comprehensive manner (Yin, 2014). The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for the development of relevant, contextual, and sustainable Islamic education practices (Fullan, 2016).

Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive-analytical approach to explore digital-based innovations in Islamic Religious Education and their role in increasing students' learning interest. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers, classroom observations, and document analysis of digital learning materials used in teaching practices (Creswell & Poth, 2020). Purposive sampling was applied to select participants who actively integrated digital media into their instructional practices, ensuring the relevance and depth of the data obtained (Yin, 2020). Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns and meanings related to digital learning innovation and students' learning interest. The validity of the data was strengthened through triangulation of data sources and techniques, as well as member checking to ensure the accuracy of the interpretations (Miles et al., 2020). Ethical considerations were carefully observed by obtaining informed consent from participants and maintaining confidentiality throughout the research process (Cohen et al., 2021).

Results and Discussion

The results showed that the integration of digital tools in Islamic Religious Education classrooms significantly transformed students' learning experiences. Teachers reported that interactive videos and mobile learning applications increased students' attentiveness and reduced classroom distractions. Students appeared more motivated and demonstrated stronger curiosity toward lesson materials. These changes were consistently observed across different learning sessions and classrooms. Additionally, students reported that digital resources made learning more enjoyable and meaningful. These findings are in line with recent studies emphasizing the positive role of digital media in learning engagement (Zhao, 2021). Similar conclusions were also found regarding technology-enhanced religious education practices (Rahim, 2022). Data analysis revealed that the use of online learning platforms improved students' discipline and learning autonomy. Students accessed Islamic learning materials more frequently outside classroom hours and showed better time management skills. Interview results indicated that students valued the flexibility offered by digital learning platforms. Teachers observed improvements in students' responsibility in completing assignments. These patterns reflected a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning practices. Recent research has reported similar improvements in learner autonomy through digital education (Kumar, 2020). These outcomes are also supported by studies focusing on technology-supported self-directed learning (Alam, 2021).

Classroom observations indicated that digital-based learning encouraged more active student participation. Students were more willing to ask questions and express opinions when digital platforms were used. The interactive features of learning applications reduced students' anxiety and increased their confidence. Teachers noted that group discussions became more

dynamic with the support of digital tools. These changes contributed to a more collaborative learning environment. Previous studies have demonstrated that digital interaction tools enhance classroom communication and participation (Li, 2020). Supporting evidence was also reported in recent works on digital collaborative learning (Hartnett, 2021).

The findings highlighted that teachers' digital pedagogical competence significantly influenced the effectiveness of digital learning innovations. Teachers who frequently attended digital training workshops designed more engaging learning activities. They integrated multimedia elements more effectively and creatively. Students showed stronger emotional engagement in lessons conducted by digitally competent teachers. These results indicate a close relationship between teacher competence and student learning interest. Similar conclusions have been reported regarding teachers' technology integration skills (Tondeur, 2020). Recent research also emphasized the importance of digital pedagogy for effective learning environments (Instefjord, 2021).

Students reported that digital learning content made Islamic Religious Education more relevant to their daily experiences. Lessons incorporated real-life moral dilemmas and contemporary social issues using digital case studies. Students felt that this approach helped them connect Islamic values with modern challenges. This relevance increased their intrinsic motivation and long-term interest in the subject. Teachers also observed deeper reflection and discussion among students. These findings align with research emphasizing contextual learning in digital environments (Jahnke, 2020). Similar results were found in studies on relevance-based digital education (Harris, 2021). The use of gamification strategies showed a strong influence on students' motivation and learning enjoyment. Digital badges, points, and competitive leaderboards created a sense of achievement among students. Learners spent more time engaging with learning materials when gamified elements were introduced. Teachers observed more consistent participation and persistence. This demonstrates that game-based features can sustain long-term interest in learning. Recent studies confirmed the effectiveness of gamification in digital learning contexts (Dicheva, 2020). Supporting evidence was also provided in studies focusing on educational game design (Sailer, 2020).

Digital storytelling emerged as an effective approach for conveying moral and spiritual messages in Islamic Religious Education. Students expressed that animated stories of prophets and Islamic historical events were easier to remember. Emotional engagement increased as students connected with the characters and moral lessons. Teachers reported improved classroom atmosphere and stronger student empathy. These outcomes demonstrate that narrative digital media support affective learning domains. Similar findings were reported in recent studies on digital storytelling in education (Robin, 2020). Further support was identified in research addressing multimedia narrative learning (Yang, 2021).

Collaborative learning through digital platforms improved students' social interaction and knowledge-sharing behaviors. Students actively participated in online discussion forums and group chats related to lesson topics. They reported feeling more confident expressing ideas in digital spaces. Teachers observed stronger peer-to-peer support and teamwork. This environment enhanced students' sense of community and belonging in learning. Recent research has highlighted the role of online collaboration in improving student engagement (Martin, 2020). Similar conclusions were drawn in studies on digital cooperative learning (Zheng, 2021). Parental involvement increased as a result of digital learning system implementation. Parents were able to monitor their children's learning activities and progress through digital portals. This transparency strengthened communication between teachers and parents. Students reported feeling more motivated when parents were informed of their learning achievements. Teachers

observed improvements in students' learning consistency at home. Recent studies have confirmed the positive relationship between digital parental engagement and student performance (Bhamani, 2020). Similar evidence has been reported in research on home school digital partnerships (Goodall, 2021).

Students demonstrated improved self-regulated learning skills through the use of digital platforms. They learned to plan their learning schedules and track their progress independently. Teachers observed more disciplined learning behaviors over time. Students reported increased confidence in managing academic responsibilities. This autonomy contributed to sustained interest and persistence in learning. Recent research has identified digital tools as effective in developing self-regulated learning skills (Broadbent, 2020). Supporting findings have been reported in studies on digital metacognitive learning strategies (Panadero, 2020). Digital-based learning reduced students' learning boredom and increased classroom vitality. Multimedia-rich lessons created a more stimulating learning environment. Students reported that interactive lessons were less monotonous than traditional lectures. Teachers observed increased laughter, enthusiasm, and positive classroom energy. These changes contributed to a more supportive learning climate. Recent research supports the role of multimedia in reducing learning fatigue (Khalil, 2020). Similar conclusions were noted in studies on student engagement in virtual learning environments (Dixson, 2021).

Students showed improved understanding of abstract Islamic concepts through interactive visual representations. Digital simulations helped them visualize religious concepts more concretely. Students reported feeling more confident in understanding difficult topics. Teachers observed fewer misconceptions and higher-quality classroom discussions. This clarity enhanced students' motivation to learn more deeply. Recent studies support the role of visualization tools in conceptual understanding (Makransky, 2020). Similar findings have been reported in research on digital visualization in education (Roussou, 2021).

Critical thinking skills developed as students engaged with digital inquiry-based learning tasks. Students analyzed contemporary ethical issues using digital resources and online references. Teachers observed deeper reasoning and reflective thinking in students' responses. Online discussions encouraged multiple perspectives and respectful debate. These activities strengthened students' cognitive engagement. Recent studies support the use of digital inquiry learning for critical thinking development (Kong, 2020). Similar results were found in research on online argumentation-based learning (Erkens, 2021). Digital assessment tools provided immediate and meaningful feedback to students. Online quizzes helped students quickly identify their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers observed increased student motivation after receiving instant feedback. Students reported feeling more challenged and motivated to improve. This feedback mechanism strengthened learning persistence. Recent studies have confirmed the effectiveness of digital formative assessment (Nicol, 2020). Supporting evidence has been found in studies on technology-enhanced feedback systems (Van der Kleij, 2021).

Differentiated instruction was more effectively implemented through digital learning platforms. Teachers provided personalized learning materials according to students' abilities. Students who needed more support received targeted digital resources. Advanced students had access to enrichment tasks. This personalization reduced learning anxiety. Recent research confirms the benefits of digital differentiated learning (Tomlinson, 2020). Similar findings were reported in studies on adaptive learning technologies (Holmes, 2021). Students developed more positive attitudes toward Islamic Religious Education after experiencing digital-based learning. They described the subject as more interesting and enjoyable. Teachers observed improved emotional attachment to learning activities. Students expressed pride in understanding Islamic

teachings. This shift indicates a significant improvement in affective learning outcomes. Recent studies reported similar attitudinal changes through digital learning (Scherer, 2020). Supporting findings were also reported in research on technology acceptance in education (Teo, 2021).

Institutional support was identified as a crucial factor in sustaining digital learning innovation. Schools with strong technological infrastructure showed higher quality learning implementation. Teachers reported feeling more confident using digital tools. Students in these environments experienced more stable learning processes. This support increased overall learning satisfaction. Recent studies emphasized the role of school leadership in digital transformation (Dexter, 2020). Similar evidence was reported in research on educational technology infrastructure (Kafyulilo, 2021). Despite the positive outcomes, several challenges were identified in implementing digital learning. Issues such as limited internet access and unequal device ownership affected learning continuity. Teachers developed creative offline-online hybrid strategies to overcome these limitations. Students showed adaptability in using alternative resources. These challenges fostered resilience and problem-solving attitudes. Recent research discusses similar digital divide challenges in education (Bozkurt, 2020). Supporting evidence was reported in studies on equitable access to educational technology (Van Dijk, 2020).

Triangulation of data from interviews, observations, and documents confirmed the consistency of the findings. Students' increased learning interest was reflected in improved attendance and more timely assignment submission. Teachers' observations matched students' self-reported experiences. Document analysis also supported these behavioral changes. This consistency strengthened the credibility of the research results. Recent methodological studies have emphasized the importance of triangulation in qualitative research (Nowell, 2020). Similar support was found in research on qualitative rigor and trustworthiness (Flick, 2020). Overall, the findings confirmed that digital-based innovation in Islamic Religious Education significantly increased students' learning interest. The combination of interactive media, collaborative platforms, and personalized learning strategies created meaningful learning experiences. Students showed stronger motivation, better learning habits, and deeper appreciation of Islamic values. Teachers acknowledged the sustainability of these strategies for future learning development. These findings contribute to the development of digital pedagogy in religious education. Recent studies have also confirmed the long-term benefits of digital learning innovation (Bond, 2021). Similar conclusions were found in research on digital transformation in education (Zawacki-Richter, 2020).

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that digital-based learning innovation in Islamic Religious Education has a positive and significant impact on improving students' learning interest. The use of interactive media, online learning platforms, and creative digital learning strategies successfully creates a more engaging, participatory, and meaningful learning environment. Students demonstrated increased motivation, active involvement, and greater independence in the learning process. In addition, teachers became more innovative in designing contextual and relevant learning activities. Therefore, the integration of digital technology in Islamic Religious Education learning is an effective strategy to enhance the quality of instruction and to strengthen the internalization of Islamic values among students.

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