

THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AS AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LEARNING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *The development of digital technology has triggered substantial transformations in the field of education, including in the teaching of Islamic Religious Education (IRE). IRE teaching at the junior high school level is expected not only to convey religious content cognitively, but also to effectively foster moral values and character in students. This article aims to examine the application of digital technology as a strategy to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education teaching at the junior high school level. The research method applied is library research through analysis of various previous research findings, books, and related scientific articles. The findings indicate that the use of digital technology through interactive learning media, e-learning platforms, educational applications, and educational social media can increase learning motivation, material understanding, active student participation, and the efficiency of PAI teaching. Therefore, the systematic integration of digital technology based on Islamic values can be an effective approach to improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education teaching in junior high schools.*

Keywords: *Digital Technology, Islamic Religious Education learning, Learning Quality, Junior High School, Islamic Education*

Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in the formation of the character of students who have faith, piety, and noble character in accordance with Islamic teachings. Values such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and discipline are important foundations in shaping students' character (Islam & Education, 2024). At the junior high school (SMP) level, students are in the early adolescent development stage which is greatly affected by the environment, including digital technology. However, in practice, PAI learning in junior high school is often faced with a number of challenges, such as monotonous learning methods, dominance of lecture approaches, limited learning media resources, and low interest and motivation for students' learning.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays an important role in the formation of good character and morals in students, especially at the junior secondary education level (Nasution, 2024). In addition, PAI also contributes to creating an environment conducive to student character development, where interaction between teachers, students, and parents is indispensable to achieve optimal character education goals (Sakur, Abdul, Jaenullah Jaenullah,

2022). Thus, religious education does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also on the development of attitudes and behaviors in accordance with religious values (Rudisa et al., 2021).

The role of digital technology in supporting modern learning is significant, especially in improving the quality and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. In this digital era, technology not only facilitates wider access to information, but also allows for more interactive and interesting learning methods for students (Auliyah, Diva Dhiyaul, 2025).

In the digital age, globalization will continue, and no one can stop it. Every nation or country involved in today's global civilization, using digital technology, will face the impact of globalization. It is important to manage globalization so that it can bring benefits and wealth in the future, not disadvantages. One of the great challenges in education in today's digital and globalization era is determining who is fully responsible for children's education (Ulfa Fatimah et al., 2024). While technology can improve the quality of learning, it is important to ensure that all learners have equal access to digital resources. In addition, teachers need to be trained to use technology effectively in their teaching, in order to take advantage of the full potential of the digital tools available. Thus, although digital technology offers many opportunities to improve learning, the success of its implementation depends heavily on the readiness and ability of teachers as well as the accessibility possessed by students. Oleh karena itu, penting bagi lembaga pendidikan untuk mengembangkan strategi yang komprehensif dalam mengintegrasikan teknologi ke dalam kurikulum dan pelatihan for educators. One of the signs that a person is learning is a change in behavior in that person which may be caused by changes at the cognitive, psychomotor and affective levels (Anshori, 2020).

On the other hand, junior high school students are a digital native generation who are familiar with technological devices, such as smartphones, the internet, and social media. This condition provides opportunities as well as challenges for PAI educators to utilize digital technology as an effective learning instrument. The use of digital technology in PAI learning is expected not only to improve the quality of the learning process, but also to be able to instill Islamic values contextually and applicatively in daily life.

Based on this background, this article examines in depth the use of digital technology as a strategy to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning in Junior High School.

Research Methods

The research method used in the preparation of this article is a literature study research method (Library Research) which is included in the category of qualitative research (Auliyah, Diva Dhiyaul, 2025). Data was collected through the exploration of various relevant literature sources, including educational textbooks, scientific journals both national and international, previous research results, and education policy documents related to Islamic Religious Education learning and digital technology. This approach was chosen because this study does not aim to test empirical hypotheses, but rather to compile a conceptual synthesis of the results of previous research that discusses the integration between digital technology and Islamic values in the context of PAI learning (Ilham, 2025).

The data analysis technique applied is content analysis with a descriptive-analytical approach. The analysis process is carried out through several stages, namely: (1) reading in depth and understanding the content of the literature that has been collected, (2) identifying the main concepts, findings, and arguments related to the use of digital technology in the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, (3) grouping data into certain themes, such as the form of digital technology utilization, its impact on the quality of learning, and challenges in its implementation, and (4) synthesize the findings in order to obtain a comprehensive and integrated understanding.

The results of this analysis process are then presented narratively by relating theories, previous research results, and the context of PAI learning at the junior high school level, thus producing a complete conceptual picture of the role of digital technology in improving the quality of PAI learning.

The data analysis technique is carried out through an in-depth study, comparison, and synthesis of various previous research findings in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the use of digital technology in the learning of Islamic Religious Education at the junior high school level.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Digital Technology in Learning

Digital technology in the field of education refers to the application of information technology-based devices, including computers, internet, multimedia, educational applications, and other digital platforms, which are used to support the teaching and learning process. In context Education Today, technology has a very important role. Its existence is expected to facilitate the learning process for both teachers and students.(Aliyah & Masyithoh, 2024)

Digital technology in education carries out several main roles, namely as a medium of information distribution, learning support instruments, interaction vehicles, and reference sources. Through these attributes, digital technology is able to support educators in building a more interesting and valuable learning environment.

Educational technology is also a study or practice that aims to support the teaching and learning process in schools by using available and adequate technology to develop learning concepts. In educational technology, there is a system that is needed to develop daily human needs or performance. Educational technology involves several components, including the equipment used to process and analyze data and solve existing problems. In the learning process, the tools used in educational technology can also change the role of teachers in teaching. Teachers hope that students can use existing technology to present their learning outcomes through various available media or tools. Nevertheless, the role of teachers is still needed in the classroom because educational technology aims to facilitate learning rather than replace the role of teachers entirely (Aliyah & Masyithoh, 2024). The role of technology in learning is to encourage cooperation between individuals and build understanding in a context that is easier to understand. The role of educational technology in creating quality education includes various aspects, such as providing learning facilities through the process of planning, developing, utilizing, managing, and evaluating learning resources.

Digital technology in learning has provided a logical premise for learning hypotheses and practices. It has transformed passive classrooms into active and interactive classrooms, with audio-visuals, graphics and models, smart classrooms and e-learning spaces that drastically motivate and increase students' attention levels.(Masnawati, 2024). Digital technology has brought significant changes in learning methods. From more interactive and diverse material delivery, to expanded accessibility and adaptive learning approaches, digital technology has provided new opportunities for students to learn more effectively, creatively, and collaboratively. It is important for educational institutions and teachers to take advantage of the potential of digital technology (Abdul Sakti, 2023).

In the realm of Islamic Religious Education, digital technology does not solely function as an instrument for delivering material, but also as a mechanism for internalizing Islamic values through visual, audio, and interactive approaches that are tailored to the profiles of junior high school students.

The Truth About Learning Islamic Religious Education In Junior High School

Islamic Religious Education can be defined as a deliberate and systematic effort to equip students to recognize, understand, appreciate, and implement Islamic teachings in daily life (F. R. Nurhayati et al., 2020). The learning process of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) does not solely focus on the cognitive dimension, but also includes affective and psychomotor aspects.

PAI material at the junior high school (SMP) level includes the Qur'an and Hadith, creed, morals, jurisprudence, and Islamic cultural history. These materials require learning strategies that are contextual and applicative so that Islamic values can be integrated secara mendalam dalam Personality of the Students. Thus, the application of digital technology is very important to support the achievement of PAI learning goals to the maximum.

The Utilization of Digital Technology in Islamic Religious Education Learning in Junior High School

1. Interactive Digital Learning Media

Digital learning media, including educational videos, animations, multimedia presentations, and infographics, can facilitate students' understanding of abstract Islamic Religious Education materials. Research conducted by Suryani (2020) shows that the application of interactive digital media in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education is able to increase students' conceptual understanding and interest in learning.

2. Platform E-Learning

E-learning platforms, such as Google Classroom and the Learning Management System (LMS), allow Islamic Religious Education educators to manage the learning process online or through a blended learning model. Through this platform, educators can distribute materials, assignments, and learning evaluations in a structured manner. Research by (L. Nurhayati, 2025) indicates that the use of e-learning in Islamic Religious Education learning can increase students' learning independence.

3. Islamic Educational Apps and Games

Islamic-based educational learning applications and games can be used as interesting and educational learning tools. This media supports students in learning Islamic Religious Education independently and increases their motivation to learn. Interactive media, which includes various forms of technology such as educational applications, interactive videos, educational games, and online learning platforms, allows the teaching and learning process to be more engaging and dynamic. This media not only makes students more active in learning, but also provides the opportunity to access various learning resources easily and practically. With interactive media, students can learn in a more fun and varied way, as well as develop skills needed in modern life, such as technology and communication skills (Rahmatullah & others, 2025).

4. Social Media as a Means of Education

Social media can be used constructively as a channel for conveying Islamic messages and light discussions about moral values. Islamic Religious Education educators can use social media to strengthen learning both inside and outside the classroom, while still paying attention to aspects of ethics and digital literacy.

The Impact of Digital Technology Utilization on the Learning Quality of Islamic Religious Education

The application of digital technology in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) makes a significant positive contribution to the quality of learning, which includes:

- a. Improvement of Material Understanding. There is a significant increase in material understanding in students who use digital media in learning. Learning videos and interactive simulations have proven to be effective in helping students understand abstract concepts, which are sometimes difficult to understand with conventional lecture or learning methods alone.
- b. Active Engagement. This research also shows that the use of technology-based learning methods can increase students' active involvement in learning. One method that has proven to be effective in this regard is gamification, which integrates elements of play in the learning process.
- c. Development of Critical Thinking Skills. One of the great advantages of using technology in learning is its ability to develop students' critical thinking skills. Technology provides students with access to various sources of information, whether through the internet, e-books, or other learning platforms, which allows them to explore topics more deeply and broadly (Resti Komalasari et al., 2025).

Challenges and Solutions in the Implementation of Digital Technology

Although it provides various benefits, the use of digital technology in PAI learning is faced with a number of challenges, such as limited supporting infrastructure, inadequate digital competence of teachers, and the risk of misuse of technology. Therefore, the mitigation measures needed include training programs for teachers, the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure, as well as the development of digital literacy and Islamic ethical values in the use of technology.

Overall, this study shows that the use of technology in learning has a very positive impact on improving material understanding, active student engagement, and the development of critical thinking skills. Although there are several obstacles faced, such as limited access to digital devices and lack of digital literacy, the benefits obtained from the application of this technology are enormous. Therefore, it is important to continue to develop infrastructure and provide appropriate training for teachers and students so that technology can be used optimally in supporting the learning process (Resti Komalasari et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The use of digital technology is an important strategy to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning at the Junior High School level. This technology is able to produce PAI learning that is more interesting, interactive, and meaningful. With careful planning and based on Islamic values, digital technology can function as an effective instrument in shaping students who have faith, noble character, and are ready to face challenges in the modern era. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning supported by digital technology does not solely focus on achieving cognitive aspects, but also plays a role in internalizing Islamic values in a more contextual, applicative, and relevant way to the characteristics of students as a digital native generation.

However, the application of digital technology in PAI learning is still faced with various obstacles, such as limited infrastructure, low digital competence of educators, and the potential for misuse of technology by students. Therefore, holistic strategic efforts are needed, including improving educational facilities and infrastructure, strengthening teachers' digital competence, and developing digital literacy and ethics based on Islamic values. With adequate infrastructure

upgrades and proper training, digital-based learning can be implemented more effectively and sustainably. This will not only improve the quality of student learning outcomes, but also provide a more enjoyable and relevant learning experience with the times.

The use of digital technology has been proven to be able to increase student learning motivation, understanding of subject matter, active involvement of students, as well as the development of students' critical thinking skills and learning independence.

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