

Integration of Technology and Social Media in Islamic Religious Education Learning in the Digital Era

Fikratul Munawarah^{1*}, Acisnawati², Hasmuddin Agus³, Budiman⁴, Muhammad Tang⁵, Juhasdi Susono⁶

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Al-Furqan Makassar

E-mail: : fikratulmunawarah7@gmail.com^{1*}, acisnawati46@gmail.com², hasmuddinagus184@gmail.com³,
budiman21071997@gmail.com⁴, muhammadtang.mt78@gmail.com⁵, juhasdimm@gmail.com⁶

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ABSTRACT

The development of information technology and social media has brought significant changes to educational practices, including in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This condition demands the integration of technology that is not only oriented toward ease of access but also toward strengthening the values and goals of Islamic education. The integration of technology and social media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning becomes relevant to improve the quality of the learning process, expand learning resources, and encourage active participation of students in the digital era. However, the use of technology in religious education also presents challenges that need to be addressed to ensure they do not contradict Islamic values. Based on that context, this research aims to analyze the integration of technology and social media in Islamic Religious Education and identify the accompanying opportunities and challenges. This research uses a literature study method by reviewing various scientific sources related to educational technology, social media, digital literacy, and Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. The study results show that the integration of technology and social media can enhance students' learning motivation, activity, and understanding thru the use of digital platforms and online learning media. However, challenges such as the digital divide, low digital literacy, and the potential for media misuse still require attention. Therefore, the integration of technology in PAI learning needs to be accompanied by strengthening digital literacy, ethical guidance, and supervision based on Islamic values so that educational goals can be optimally achieved

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in various fields of life, including the world of education. Islamic Religious Education, as an important part of the national education system, also needs to adapt to these changes. The integration of technology in the PAI learning process opens up opportunities to enhance its quality and relevance, but at the same time poses challenges in maintaining Islamic values and principles. (Rahman, 2019: 112-128). Amid the rapid development of the digital era, the use of technology in the world of education has become an unavoidable necessity, including in Islamic education. Technology can be effectively applied in the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum thru the utilization of various digital tools. Research findings indicate that the use of technology such as learning applications, e-learning platforms, and social media can enhance the effectiveness of the learning process, expand access to materials, and strengthen communication between teachers and students. However, the implementation of technology still faces several obstacles, such as limited facilities, lack of teacher readiness, and cultural resistance to change.

Therefore, the integration of technology in Islamic education has great potential to enhance the quality of learning, as long as it is well-planned and supported by adequate technological facilities, so that the technology-based Islamic Education (PAI) learning process can be optimally implemented. (Ais Isti'ana, no.1, 2024: 302). The advancement of information and communication technology has had a significant impact on the world of education. Technology has changed the way we learn and acquire information, and Islamic Religious Education is not exempt from its impact. As an important component of the national education system, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) needs to adapt to technological developments to remain relevant and capable of shaping students who are faithful and have good morals. The use of technology in PAI opens up many new opportunities. One of them is thru the use of various digital platforms, such as educational applications, interactive videos, and online materials that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. The presence of such media not only makes the learning process more flexible and engaging for students but also makes it easier for teachers to present more diverse and in-depth material.

However, the use of technology in Islamic Education (PAI) also presents significant challenges. One of the main challenges is ensuring that the use of technology does not shift the core principles and values of Islamic teachings. Students must be able to filter digital content to ensure it aligns with Islamic teachings, considering that the online world is filled with various information. Additionally, technology also has the potential to cause negative impacts, such as information misuse or the adverse effects of social media, which can contradict Islamic moral values. Therefore, educators and educational institutions need not only to adopt technology but also to regulate and utilize it wisely to remain in accordance with Islamic values. Every step in integrating technology into Islamic Education (PAI) must consider the spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions, so that it can produce a generation that is not only intellectually superior but also spiritually strong and possesses noble character. The advancement of information and communication technology has a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the world of education. Among the most prominent technological innovations is social media. Although initially used as a tool for communication and entertainment, social media has now evolved into a significant means of supporting the learning process, including in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). (Triastuti et al., 2017). Fauzi and Hidayat found that the use of WhatsApp in the PAI learning process can enhance students' active engagement (Fauzi & Hidayat, 2020). Rahmah and her colleagues also revealed that the use of platforms such as Instagram and YouTube can encourage students' motivation in understanding religious material (Rahmah et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Putra and Sari emphasize that social media also expands the space for religious discussions beyond the classroom environment (Putra & Sari, 2021). However, most of these studies still focus on the utilization of specific platforms and have not deeply examined how social media affects the cognitive (understanding) and affective (motivation) domains of students in PAI learning. Additionally, research on optimal strategies to maximize the use of social media in religious education is still relatively limited.

Given these conditions, this research offers novelty by examining the role of social media more comprehensively in the context of PAI learning. This study focuses on how social media can enhance students' understanding of religious material and encourage their learning motivation, while also identifying the challenges that arise in its implementation. Therefore, this research is important to address various issues in religious education in the digital era and to contribute to formulating more adaptive, effective, and contemporary PAI learning strategies.

2. METHODS

This research uses the library research method, which is a research technique conducted by collecting, reading, and reviewing various written sources related to the topic of utilizing technology and social media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research is theoretical and relies on the analysis of concepts, theories, and findings from previous studies available in books, scientific articles, journals, research reports, and other digital documents. In the process, the research goes thru several steps. First, the researcher searches for and selects relevant references regarding the development of information technology, the application of technology in PAI learning, and the use of social media in learning activities. Second, all the obtained references are analyzed in depth to understand the ideas, theories, empirical findings, and thoughts of experts that align with the focus of the study. Third, the information from various sources is recorded and grouped into specific themes, such as the influence of technology on PAI learning, the role of social media in enhancing student motivation and understanding, and the obstacles in its implementation. Fourth, the organized data is processed into a comprehensive analysis that provides answers to the research problems. The use of the literature study method allows this research to broadly review the development of literature related to the integration of technology and social media in Islamic Education (PAI), while also identifying research gaps that underpin the novelty of this study. Thus, all research data is sourced from library documents without involving direct data collection in the field.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Utilization of Technology in Religious Education

Plays an important role in supporting the learning process of Islamic Religious Education. Thru technology, students can gain broader access to various rich and constantly updated religious information and reference sources. Various digital platforms also provide interactive spaces that enable two-way communication between teachers and students, while also serving as a medium for discussions among students. Additionally, technology is able to present learning materials in a more engaging manner thru audio, video, and animation displays, thereby aiding students' understanding. Technology also opens up opportunities for collaborative learning among students from various locations, enriching their knowledge and learning experiences thru online platforms. (Sugianto et al., 2023) The application of the PBL (Project Based Learning) method makes the integration of technology in Islamic Religious Education more effective. Various forms of digitalization have been implemented in the student environment to support digital competence, such as the use of Google Forms for attendance, Quizziz for exams, Trello for assessments, and Google Meet or Zoom for online meetings. Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are also utilized to enhance students' knowledge thru additional learning materials. (Dwistia et al., 2022) PAI learning that utilizes technology can enhance student participation and activity during the learning process. Technology also allows for more personalized material delivery because content and methods can be tailored to the needs of each student. Moreover, technology-based learning encourages the creation of collaboration and the exchange of ideas among students on various PAI topics. (Mubarok et al., 2023) The use of technology in PAI learning has a significant impact, both positive and negative. From a positive perspective, technology enhances learning effectiveness because thru e-learning, students can access materials anytime and anywhere at their own learning pace. In addition, technology also facilitates the learning process by presenting more engaging and interactive digital media, such as videos,

animations, and educational applications, making religious material easier to understand. (Wahyudi, 2023)

The use of technology in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) requires educators and students to adapt to various new tools and platforms, which often demand additional time and effort. If the adaptation goes well, technology can be maximally utilized in religious education. On the other hand, there are negative impacts that need to be considered, such as the potential misuse of technology that can disrupt students' concentration and reduce social interaction. Additionally, uncontrolled internet access can expose students to inappropriate content. (Tarmizi Pane et al., 2024) In general, the use of technology in PAI should be done wisely and with proper supervision so that its benefits can be optimized and its negative impacts minimized. The use of technology should be directed toward improving the quality of learning and deepening students' understanding of religious teachings. (Nuzli et al., 2022). Based on various findings, the author views that the utilization of technology in PAI learning indeed contributes significantly to the improvement of learning quality, but its application must remain within the framework of Islamic values thru proper guidance. The integration of technology not only serves to modernize the learning process but should also strengthen the religious understanding and character formation of students comprehensively.

3.2 Challenges and Opportunities of Technology in Religious Opportunities

In enhancing digital literacy, guidance can be provided by imparting an understanding of the importance of protecting personal data and the risks of its misuse. Teaching online etiquette also needs to be emphasized, as the digital space demands the same politeness as real life. Students are directed to choose trustworthy sources of information and to get into the habit of verifying the truth of news before spreading it. In addition, they need to be guided to use the internet for beneficial purposes and to be more selective in receiving information. This effort must also instill a sense of mutual respect in the digital space by avoiding bullying and teaching how to handle differences of opinion wisely without harming others. (Ahmad Muflihin and Toha Makhshun, 2020). One of the major challenges in Islamic education in the digital era is maintaining the authenticity and reliability of the material conveyed thru digital media. The rapid and abundant flow of information demands careful supervision to ensure that the circulating content is not incorrect or contrary to Islamic teachings. Educators must ensure that all digital materials remain in accordance with Islamic principles and can be used as valid references. Another challenge arises from the gap in access to technology, especially in areas that do not yet have adequate infrastructure. Economic conditions can also limit the ability of some communities to utilize technology in religious education. Efforts need to be made so that digital-based Islamic education can be accessed evenly. In addition, the use of technology in learning must be accompanied by adequate data protection and privacy efforts as a form of information security. (Danial & Muyasarah, 2023)

Nevertheless, digital technology also offers great opportunities. Online platforms allow people from various countries to access quality Islamic educational materials, thereby spreading religious knowledge more widely and promoting cross-cultural understanding. With proper utilization, Islamic education can reach a global audience and have a positive impact on Muslims around the world. Efforts to improve digital literacy in Islamic education can be carried out thru continuous guidance. Students need to be educated about the importance of protecting personal data and the potential dangers of information misuse. They should also be accustomed to behaving ethically when interacting in the digital space just like in the real world. In addition, the ability to choose trustworthy sources of information and avoid hoaxes needs to be strengthened, along with

the awareness to use the internet in a beneficial and selective manner. Equally important, students should be encouraged to respect others, maintain a harmonious digital environment, and avoid bullying behavior or responding to differing opinions immaturely. Several theories can be used to understand the challenges and opportunities of Islamic education in the digital era. One of them is the digital literacy theory, which emphasizes the importance of skills and understanding in using technology appropriately and responsibly. In Islamic education, digital literacy plays an important role in maintaining the authenticity of religious materials while also fostering ethical awareness in accessing internet-based information. UNESCO is one of the international organizations actively developing a digital literacy framework to support 21st-century education processes. In its various recent policy documents, UNESCO emphasizes that digital literacy not only includes the ability to use technological devices but also encompasses critical thinking skills, information evaluation, and ethical awareness in the digital world. This is explained in *Digital Literacy in Education: Policy Brief* (UNESCO, 2011) and reinforced in the update of the digital competence framework thru the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) program during the 2018–2023 period.

Islamic education in the 21st century digital era faces various challenges as well as opportunities. Some of the main obstacles include the authenticity of the material, the quality of learning, and the gap in access to technology. Nevertheless, the wise use of technology opens up opportunities to expand the reach of education, implement more interactive and creative learning methods, encourage innovation, and enhance the evaluation process. To address these challenges, targeted guidance and the application of supporting theories such as digital literacy, constructivism, and curriculum development are needed. With the right steps, Islamic education can continue to develop and have a positive impact amidst digital advancements. The constructivist approach can be utilized to develop interactive and creative learning methods, where knowledge is built thru experience and interaction with the environment. In digital-based Islamic education, teachers can use technology to enrich the knowledge construction process thru visualization and direct engagement. In addition, the development of a curriculum that integrates technology while remaining aligned with Islamic values is also important, so that the learning strategies and materials prepared remain relevant and capable of improving the quality of education in the digital era. Based on the aforementioned explanation, the author views that Islamic education in the digital era requires a balance between the utilization of technology and the reinforcement of religious values. Technology indeed opens up vast opportunities for innovation and expanded access, but it still requires guidance, strong digital literacy, and a well-directed curriculum to stay within the bounds of religious law. Therefore, digital-based Islamic learning must be designed wisely by ensuring the authenticity of the material, information security, and the instillation of digital ethics so that technology truly becomes a means to strengthen religious understanding, not the other way around.

3.3 Social Media as an Educational Tool

Social media is a means that allows its users to interact and connect with anyone, wherever they are. This platform is available in the form of websites and applications that operate thru internet-based technology (Triastuti, Endah, & Dimas Adrianto, 2017). Social media can also be understood as a resource that arises from interactions between individuals within a community (Alyusi, 2018). Basically, social media is one of the platforms in cyberspace, so it has characteristics that are not much different from digital media in general: 1. Network 2. Information 3. Archive 4. Interaction 5. Social simulation 6. User-generated content 7. Dissemination Social media, also known as new media, provides a remote communication space that gives users the freedom to choose the information they want to access. This platform is often referred to as a social

network, rather than an online mass media, because it has significant social power and is capable of widely influencing public opinion. (Watie, 2016). Social media is an interactive internet-based platform that serves as a means of online communication and interaction, both individually and in groups. Thru this media, users can connect, socialize, and exchange messages, information, ideas, and various forms of expression without the constraints of space and time thru virtual networks or communities. Social media also enables two-way information exchange in various forms, ranging from collaboration to introductions thru text, images, or audiovisual content. (Sari, 2021). Some benefits of using social media are as follows: 1. It serves as a platform to search for, receive, and disseminate various learning information. 2. It functions as a place for storing, managing, and organizing data. 3. It can be utilized to design, strategize, and organize various activities. 4. It becomes a tool for monitoring, evaluating, and measuring various processes or activities.

Social media also serves as a means to monitor organizational activities and reassess various plans and strategies that have been implemented in a community or institution. (Triastuti, Endah, Dimas Adrianto. 2017). Platforms such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube are examples of social media that can be utilized as supporting tools for the learning process. In addition, digital libraries, e-learning, and various online learning media developed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education can be used to support learning activities, especially in the subject of PAI. (Jai, Rochman and Nurmila, 2020). According to the findings of Yuliani, Kamal, and Sesmiarni (2022), platforms such as Zoom Meeting, WhatsApp, and Google Classroom can be utilized as learning media that facilitate the smooth process of teaching and learning. However, the use of these media also faces several obstacles, such as the high cost of internet data, network disruptions, difficulty in understanding the material, and limited learning devices. The proposed solutions include the implementation of alternating face-to-face and online learning (hybrid learning), the use of media that aligns with students' abilities, internet quota support, and training in the creation of learning media. Based on the above exposition, the author views social media as having great potential as a supporting tool for PAI learning, especially in expanding access to information, enhancing interaction, and facilitating more flexible learning. However, its utilization must be directed to avoid negative impacts such as distraction, misuse, or dependence on technology. Therefore, the use of social media in PAI learning needs to be accompanied by guidance, adequate digital literacy, and the selection of platforms that are suitable for the students' conditions. With the right steps, social media not only becomes a communication tool but can also function as an effective educational space in line with Islamic values.

4. CONCLUSION

The use of technology in PAI learning provides many opportunities to enhance information access, enrich learning methods, and encourage more dynamic interactions. However, its use still needs to be properly directed to avoid negative impacts, such as invalid information or digital distractions. Digital literacy becomes a key aspect, as stated by UNESCO, which includes the ability to understand, filter, and use information responsibly. With strong digital literacy, students can utilize technology without neglecting ethical values and Islamic teachings. Social media can also be an effective learning tool if used in a controlled manner. Overall, the integration of technology in Islamic Education (PAI) must be balanced: maximizing its benefits to deepen religious understanding while ensuring that Islamic values remain the main foundation in every digital activity.

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