The Integration of Digital Learning Media in Islamic Religious Education: A Study on Management and Implementation at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the management and implementation of digital learning media in Islamic Religious Education at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand. The research focuses on understanding how digital learning media is integrated into the teaching process, the challenges encountered, and the effectiveness of its application in improving students' learning experiences. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. The quantitative data is gathered through structured questionnaires distributed to teachers and students, while qualitative insights are obtained from in-depth interviews with school administrators and educators. Additionally, classroom observations are conducted to assess the practical implementation of digital learning media. The findings indicate that the integration of digital learning media has positively impacted students' engagement and comprehension in Islamic Religious Education. However, challenges such as limited digital infrastructure, teacher readiness, and access to suitable digital content remain significant concerns. The study highlights the importance of strategic management in ensuring the effective use of digital learning media, including teacher training, resource allocation, and policy development. The results suggest that a well-structured management system can enhance the effectiveness of digital learning media, making Islamic Religious Education more interactive and accessible.

Keywords: Digital Learning Media; Islamic Religious Education; Management; Implementation.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manajemen dan implementasi media pembelajaran digital dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam di Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand. Fokus penelitian ini adalah memahami bagaimana media pembelajaran digital diintegrasikan dalam proses pengajaran, tantangan yang dihadapi, serta efektivitas penerapannya dalam meningkatkan pengalaman belajar siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed-methods, yang mengombinasikan survei kuantitatif dan wawancara kualitatif. Data kuantitatif dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terstruktur yang diberikan kepada guru dan siswa, sementara wawancara mendalam dilakukan dengan pihak manajemen sekolah dan pendidik untuk memperoleh wawasan kualitatif. Selain itu, observasi kelas dilakukan guna menilai implementasi media pembelajaran digital secara praktis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi media pembelajaran digital memberikan dampak positif terhadap keterlibatan dan pemahaman siswa dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam. Namun, beberapa tantangan masih dihadapi, seperti keterbatasan infrastruktur digital, kesiapan guru, dan akses terhadap konten digital yang sesuai. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya manajemen strategis dalam memastikan efektivitas penggunaan media pembelajaran digital, termasuk pelatihan guru, alokasi sumber daya, dan pengembangan kebijakan. Hasil penelitian ini merekomendasikan bahwa sistem manajemen yang terstruktur dapat meningkatkan efektivitas media pembelajaran digital, sehingga Pendidikan Agama Islam menjadi lebih interaktif dan mudah diakses.

Kata Kunci: Media Pembelajaran Digital; Pendidikan Agama Islam; Manajemen; Implementasi.

A. Introduction

In the modern era, digital learning media has become an essential component in education, including Islamic Religious Education (IRE). The advancement of technology has led to the development of various digital tools that facilitate the teaching

and learning process, making education more engaging and accessible (Selwyn, 2020) (Setiawan & Masita, 2016). The integration of digital media in IRE aims to enhance students' understanding, motivation, and engagement in religious subjects. However, the effectiveness of digital learning media depends on proper management and implementation strategies, which remain a challenge for many educational institutions (Albirini, 2006).

Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, located in Thailand, is an educational institution that provides Islamic education alongside general subjects. As the world shifts towards digital learning, this school has attempted to incorporate digital learning media into its IRE curriculum. However, the effectiveness of this integration depends on several factors, including teacher readiness, infrastructure availability, and institutional support (Hennessy, 2019) (Setiawan, 2015). These factors influence how well digital media can support religious education while maintaining the core values of Islamic teachings.

One of the key challenges in integrating digital learning media in IRE is the balance between modern technology and traditional religious instruction. Islamic education traditionally relies on textual learning and oral transmission from teachers to students. The introduction of digital tools, such as interactive applications, online learning platforms, and multimedia resources, brings new dynamics to the teaching and learning process (Sahin, 2018). While these tools have the potential to enhance student learning, they also require careful management to ensure that they align with Islamic educational principles.

Furthermore, the use of digital learning media in IRE must address the issue of accessibility and equity. Not all students have equal access to digital resources, and disparities in digital literacy may hinder their ability to benefit from such tools (Selwyn, 2020). Teachers also need adequate training to effectively integrate digital media into their instructional methods. Without proper guidance, the use of digital learning tools may become ineffective or even counterproductive (Amin, 2017).

The role of school management in facilitating digital learning integration is crucial. Effective management involves not only providing access to digital tools but

also developing strategies to train teachers, support students, and evaluate the effectiveness of digital learning media (Kirkwood & Price, 2014). At Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, school leaders play a significant role in ensuring that digital learning media aligns with the institution's educational objectives and religious values.

Another important consideration in integrating digital learning media in IRE is the cultural and religious context of the students. Digital tools should be designed in a way that respects Islamic values while promoting interactive and engaging learning experiences (Zein, 2021). In some cases, the adoption of digital media has faced resistance from educators and parents who are concerned about its potential impact on traditional religious teachings. Therefore, management strategies must include efforts to address these concerns and ensure that digital learning media complements, rather than replaces, traditional Islamic education methods.

This study aims to explore the management and implementation of digital learning media in Islamic Religious Education at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School. By understanding how digital tools are integrated into religious instruction, this research seeks to identify best practices and challenges associated with their use. Additionally, it investigates the impact of digital learning media on student engagement and learning outcomes in IRE.

The focus of this study is to analyze the strategies employed by school administrators and teachers in managing digital learning resources. It examines the effectiveness of these strategies in enhancing student learning experiences and ensuring that digital tools align with Islamic educational values. Moreover, this research seeks to understand the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the use of digital learning media in IRE (Hassan et al., 2020).

A key aspect of this research is to evaluate the extent to which digital learning media improves students' comprehension of Islamic teachings. By comparing student performance before and after the introduction of digital tools, this study aims to provide insights into their effectiveness. Additionally, it explores how digital learning media influences students' motivation and engagement in religious studies (Hamzah, 2019).

Another objective of this study is to identify potential barriers to the successful integration of digital learning media in IRE. These barriers may include technological limitations, resistance to change, and lack of training among educators (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). Understanding these challenges will help in developing strategies to overcome them and improve the implementation of digital learning media in religious education.

This research also seeks to highlight the role of teacher training in the effective use of digital learning media. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating digital learning, and their level of digital competence significantly affects the success of its implementation (Rahman, 2018). Therefore, this study examines the training programs available for teachers at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School and their impact on the effective integration of digital learning tools.

Additionally, this study examines the perspectives of students regarding digital learning media in IRE. Students' attitudes towards digital tools, their level of engagement, and their perceived benefits of using digital media are critical factors in determining its success (Huang, 2020). By gathering student feedback, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of digital learning media on Islamic education.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of a more effective digital learning management framework for Islamic education institutions. By identifying best practices and addressing challenges, this research aims to provide recommendations for improving digital learning strategies in Islamic boarding schools (Nasir, 2022).

B. Research Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods research approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the management and implementation of digital learning media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand. The quantitative approach is used to collect numerical data on the effectiveness of digital learning media, measuring students' engagement, comprehension, and the overall impact of digital tools in the learning process. Data is

gathered through surveys distributed to students and teachers, providing insights into their perceptions and experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Descriptive statistical analysis is applied to present data in percentages and frequency distributions, offering a clear overview of how digital media is perceived and utilized in religious education.

The qualitative approach aims to gain deeper insights into teachers' and students' experiences in integrating digital learning media into PAI. Data is collected through in-depth interviews with teachers and focus group discussions (FGDs) with students, exploring the challenges, opportunities, and strategies employed in managing digital learning in an Islamic educational setting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, classroom observations are conducted to examine how digital media is used in teaching and how interactions between teachers and students are influenced by digital learning tools. These observations provide a richer understanding of the practical application of digital learning media in religious education.

Data analysis is conducted using a triangulation approach to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Quantitative data is analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data is processed using thematic analysis to identify emerging patterns from interviews and observations (Braun & Clarke, 2019). By integrating both approaches, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness and challenges associated with digital learning media in PAI. The findings are expected to offer valuable recommendations for Islamic school administrators in developing more effective strategies for optimizing digital-based learning.

C.   Results and Discussion

Results

The findings of this study indicate that the integration of digital learning media into the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School has had a significant positive impact on students' engagement and comprehension. Survey results show that 75% of students reported increased interest and motivation to participate in lessons when digital media, such as interactive videos

and educational apps, were used (Hennessy, 2019). Teachers also observed that students were more enthusiastic and active in discussions when technology was incorporated into lessons, highlighting the potential of digital tools to enhance student engagement in religious education.

In terms of comprehension, the data revealed that 70% of students showed a better understanding of the PAI subject matter after the introduction of digital learning media. This is particularly evident in topics that involve abstract religious concepts, where multimedia resources have been beneficial in visualizing and explaining the content more clearly (Huang, 2020). Students who had access to digital learning media performed better in both formative and summative assessments, with average scores increasing by 15% compared to the previous semester when traditional methods were used (Selwyn, 2020).

However, the study also revealed that not all students equally benefited from the use of digital tools. There were notable differences in students' ability to utilize digital learning media effectively based on their previous exposure to technology. While students who had prior experience with digital tools showed greater ease in using the media, others with limited technological exposure struggled to navigate the tools effectively, which affected their learning outcomes. This discrepancy highlights the need for more inclusive digital education strategies to ensure equal opportunities for all students (Albirini, 2006).

Moreover, the teacher interviews and focus group discussions highlighted that while the integration of digital tools was generally well-received, several challenges hindered the full potential of digital learning media. One of the major obstacles identified by teachers was the lack of sufficient training and professional development in using educational technology. Although some teachers were familiar with basic digital tools, they expressed the need for more advanced training to effectively integrate digital media into their lessons (Kirkwood & Price, 2014).

The limited availability of digital devices and internet connectivity in some areas of the school also emerged as a significant challenge. Although the school provided digital tools for students, the disparity in access to devices and stable internet

connection created an uneven learning experience. Students who faced technical issues often fell behind in their lessons, which led to frustration and disengagement (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). This issue calls for improved infrastructure and access to technology to ensure that all students benefit equally from digital learning resources.

Discussion

The results of this study confirm the potential benefits of integrating digital learning media in PAI. As highlighted by Hennessy (2019), the use of multimedia and interactive tools can significantly enhance student engagement, particularly in subjects like PAI, where traditional learning methods may sometimes fail to capture students' attention. By incorporating videos, animations, and other interactive content, students are not only more engaged but also gain a deeper understanding of abstract religious concepts. This aligns with the findings of Zein (2021), who emphasized that technology can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in Islamic education.

However, the study also identifies significant challenges that must be addressed to ensure the effective integration of digital media in PAI. One of the key findings is the disparity in students' access to and proficiency with technology. As Albirini (2006) noted, unequal access to digital tools can create a digital divide, leading to differences in learning outcomes. This issue is particularly concerning in the context of religious education, where equal access is essential to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to engage with the material. Therefore, schools need to consider strategies for providing equitable access to digital learning resources for all students, such as offering training on digital literacy or providing devices to students who lack them.

The lack of teacher training was another major challenge identified in this study. As Kirkwood and Price (2014) observed, teachers' ability to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices is heavily dependent on the quality of professional development they receive. In this study, teachers expressed a need for more comprehensive and ongoing training in educational technology to enhance their teaching methods and improve student outcomes. This finding suggests that teacher professional development programs should focus not only on basic technology skills but

also on how to effectively use digital tools to enhance pedagogical practices in specific subjects like PAI.

Additionally, the challenges related to infrastructure, such as inconsistent internet connectivity, highlight the importance of investing in the technological infrastructure of schools. As Ghavifekr and Rosdy (2015) pointed out, the availability of reliable internet access and devices is critical for the successful implementation of digital learning tools. The findings of this study suggest that schools need to invest in improving their digital infrastructure, particularly in remote or underdeveloped areas, to ensure that all students can access digital learning resources without hindrance.

Despite these challenges, the positive impact of digital learning media on student engagement and comprehension cannot be overstated. The results of this study are consistent with the research conducted by Selwyn (2020), which found that digital tools, when used effectively, can increase student engagement and improve academic performance. By providing interactive and engaging content, digital learning media can transform the learning experience, making it more dynamic and accessible.

The integration of digital tools in PAI also aligns with the broader trend of digital transformation in education. As Sahin (2018) noted, the adoption of technology in education is not merely a trend but a necessity to prepare students for the future. In the case of Islamic education, the use of digital media can enhance the teaching and learning of religious content while maintaining its authenticity. By leveraging technology, educators can create more personalized and interactive learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs of students.

In conclusion, while Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School has made significant strides in integrating digital learning media into PAI, the findings of this study suggest that further improvements are needed to maximize the benefits of digital tools. Schools must address the challenges related to teacher training, access to technology, and infrastructure to ensure that digital media can be effectively utilized in enhancing the quality of Islamic education. By overcoming these barriers, schools can create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment that supports both the academic and spiritual development of students.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that the integration of digital learning media in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School, Thailand, has a significant positive impact on student engagement and understanding. The use of digital media, such as interactive videos and educational applications, successfully increased student motivation and facilitated understanding of abstract concepts in IRE. Students who engaged with digital learning media showed a significant improvement in their learning outcomes compared to traditional teaching methods. However, it is important to note that the success of this technology usage largely depends on students' ability to access and utilize digital devices.

Although there are clear benefits, this study also identified challenges that need to be addressed in order to maximize the potential of digital learning media, such as disparities in students' access to technology and a lack of training for teachers in integrating digital tools into their teaching practices. Limitations in infrastructure, particularly regarding unstable internet connectivity, also pose significant barriers. Therefore, more inclusive strategies are needed to ensure all students can access digital media equitably and gain equal benefits from it.

It is recommended that Bumrungsuksa Islamic Boarding School enhance technology training for teachers, improve technological infrastructure, and provide more equitable access to digital devices for all students. By addressing these challenges, the integration of digital learning media can be optimized, making a significant contribution to improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education. This will not only support students' academic achievements but also prepare them to face the challenges of education in the digital age.

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