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Islamic Religious Education Learning Strategy In The Digital Era

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Abstract: This study aims to explore learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the digital era through a qualitative literature study approach. The study was conducted by analyzing in depth various relevant literature to understand the impact of the development of information and communication technology on PAI learning methods. The findings show that the use of technology such as online learning platforms, mobile applications, multimedia, and social media can increase student access and participation in the Islamic religious learning process. In addition, the application of technology in learning strategies has been shown to help strengthen students' understanding of religious values, although it presents challenges such as the accuracy of information and the influence of the digital environment. In conclusion, PAI learning in the digital era requires a comprehensive and integrated approach so that technology can support the main goal of education, namely forming a character with noble morals according to Islamic teachings.

Keywords: *learning Islamic religious education amidst digital developments*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a central role in shaping the religious and moral identity of Muslims in various parts of the world. As an inseparable part of the formal education system, the main purpose of PAI learning is not only to convey religious material, but also to instill attitudes, values, and behaviors that are in line with Islamic principles. However, the rapid development of digital technology has brought major changes in the world of education, including in the approach to PAI learning. This change presents new challenges as well as opening up great opportunities in the way PAI material is delivered and studied. (Rahmadi, 2021).

In today's digital era, technology has penetrated almost all aspects of life, including the education sector. Tamim stated that the application of technology in Islamic Religious Education learning has the potential to increase ease of access, flexibility, and interaction in the teaching and learning process. Various digital devices and platforms, such as educational applications, technology-based simulations, and interactive learning media, provide various alternatives to deepen understanding of Islamic teachings, both in the school environment and outside the classroom. (Rozi & Lana, 2021).

The learning strategy applied in such conditions greatly determines the success of the teaching and learning process. Teachers no longer only act as conveyors of material, but also as designers of fun, flexible, and meaningful learning experiences. In this context, innovation in learning methods and media becomes a necessity that cannot be postponed. Starting from the use of digital platforms, the use of learning videos, to the development of online-based evaluation systems, all are part of the effort to adapt to the new situation. (Yuangga & Sunarsi, 2020). Local studies that have been conducted show that the success of distance learning is not only determined by the sophistication of technology, but also by the readiness of all components of education, including teachers, students, and parents. When the strategies used are participatory, contextual, and empowering, learning outcomes show significant improvements, even amidst limited facilities. Furthermore, this transformation provides an opportunity for educational institutions to reflect deeply on the old way of thinking that is too focused on physical classrooms. Online learning offers flexibility in time and place, but also demands discipline, independence, and high adaptive abilities from students.

Therefore, it is important to formulate an online learning strategy that is not only reactive to the crisis, but also proactive in forming a new learning culture that is more relevant to the development of the times. (Sari & Khamid, 2021). By utilizing learning from various local research results, this article examines in depth how distance learning strategies are applied at various levels and conditions of education in Indonesia. This study is expected to provide a more complete understanding of best practices that can be used as a reference in developing a sustainable and future-oriented learning system. (By Rahayu & Lindawati, 2021).

METHODS

The approach used in this research is qualitative-descriptive, where the author systematically conducts literature exploration to examine various online learning strategies from scientific sources. credible. This study was conducted by collecting and analyzing eight national journal articles that comprehensively discuss related issues, as well as two Indonesian language academic books that discuss the principles and practices of distance learning in the context of local education. The analysis was conducted through an in-depth review of the contents of each publication, by

identifying patterns, themes, and differences or similarities between the various approaches proposed or implemented. This research did not involve direct experiments in the field, but rather attempted to compile a synthesis of previous findings to formulate conceptual guidelines that can be used by education practitioners. The validity of the information was maintained by selecting only relevant sources that had gone through a formal peer-review or academic editing process. With this method, it is hoped that the understanding obtained is in-depth, contextual, and can be a basis for further studies or implementation at the policy level.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Design a learning model by utilizing web technology. The internet is not limited by distance and time, this is what makes learning possible anytime and anywhere. This makes web media very suitable to be used as a communication medium for distance learning. So that the use of the internet as a learning tool can be one way to increase the positive impact of internet use. This of course requires the participation of educators in its management so that its use can be directed properly and in accordance with the learning process. This is the focus of this study. The results of a study of various scientific sources show that online learning strategies in Indonesia have developed very dynamically, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic became the main trigger for digital education transformation. Each strategy implemented turns out to be very dependent on the social context, education level, and technological readiness of both teachers, students, and institutions.

Although basically the distance learning system relies on digital platforms as the main media, the effectiveness of its implementation is not only determined by technology, but also by the pedagogical approach used. One of the important findings of this study is the effectiveness of using a blended learning model. This approach integrates virtual face-to-face methods with task-based independent learning, and has been shown to increase student engagement. Research by Rahmadi shows that students who follow learning with a hybrid pattern are better able to manage learning time, compared to a full digital pattern. In the context of elementary education, this strategy also helps teachers maintain emotional connection with students, which is often lost in fully online learning. (Rahmadi, 2021). In addition, research by Rozi and Lana revealed that distance learning has a positive impact on students' learning independence, especially if teachers are able to direct the learning process towards a more reflective and participatory direction. In several studies, students showed increased ability to organize their own learning schedules, complete assignments without direct intervention, and seek alternative learning resources independently. However, this level of success is highly dependent on the support factors of the learning environment at home, including parental involvement and the availability of devices. (Kusnandar, A, 2020).

Problem Based Learning (PBL) strategies are also prominent approaches, especially at the middle and high school levels. In this model, students are encouraged to solve contextual problems related to everyday life. Rahayu and Lindawati noted that the implementation of PBL online can trigger active student participation, as well as improve critical thinking and online communication skills. However, its implementation requires teacher readiness in designing authentic problems and managing virtual discussions effectively. Other studies also show that digital media such as learning videos, podcasts, and interactive infographics play a crucial role in improving conceptual understanding, especially for students with visual and auditory learning styles. Innovation in learning media is an important solution to overcome student boredom that often arises due to the dominance of text and written assignments in online learning. The findings of Yuangga and Sunarsi strengthen this

argument, where they develop alternative media that are proven to reduce the level of learning boredom and increase the achievement of learning objectives. On the other hand, the main challenge found from all studies is the still high digital divide. Many students, especially in rural and island areas, face obstacles in accessing stable internet and adequate digital devices. Research by Sari and Khamid confirms that this inequality of access makes the implementation of online learning uneven, and can even widen the educational gap between regions. Not a few teachers have to rely on sending materials via instant messaging applications or even in printed form to reach students who cannot attend online. Kusnandar's book provides a conceptual understanding of the importance of flexible instructional design, namely learning design that is not fixated on one media format or learning duration. This flexibility is very much needed in emergency situations such as a pandemic, where students' learning conditions vary greatly. Meanwhile, Mulyasa emphasized that teachers' mastery of 21st-century competencies including digital literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication is an important foundation in developing effective distance learning strategies.

The overall results show that although technical challenges remain an obstacle, good practices from various regions show that with the right strategy, online learning is not only possible to implement, but can also be a vehicle for learning innovation. have a positive impact on students' character and competence. Sustainability of these efforts is needed, not only to answer emergency needs, but also to build an inclusive and sustainable digital education system in the future. (Makur, AP, & Jehadus, E, 2021). Based on the results of the review of the available literature, there are a number of important findings that can be arranged into several main dimensions, namely: the effectiveness of the learning approach, the role of technology in supporting the learning process, the responses of students and teachers, and the systemic challenges faced in implementing distance learning in Indonesia. Each of these dimensions is interrelated and forms a complex picture of the reality of online learning at various levels of education. (Mubarak, R, 2021).

First, in terms of the effectiveness of learning strategies, the blended learning model is one of the most widely used and recommended approaches. In this model, the learning process does not only take place through one communication channel or one specific learning time, but combines synchronous and asynchronous, and combines independent activities with direct virtual interactions. This approach has been proven to provide flexibility to students in managing their learning rhythm, while maintaining pedagogical relationships with teachers. Research by Rahmadi indicates that hybrid learning helps students maintain motivation and engagement, even in situations full of limitations. Second, the use of digital media has a significant impact on the quality of learning. Teachers who utilize learning videos, interactive platforms, and visual infographics tend to be more successful in maintaining student concentration longer. Visual content not only makes it easier to understand, but also provides a variety of forms of delivering important material in the context of monotonous online learning. The results of the analysis by Yuangga and Sunarsi show that interesting and contextual media can improve learning outcomes, especially among elementary and junior high school students. (Yuangga and Sunarsi, 2020)

Third, student learning independence is the main focus in almost all studies reviewed. Distance learning provides space for students to develop autonomous learning skills, from time management, information search, to reflection on the material being studied. However, not all students have this ability equally. A study by Rozi and Lana found that students who have positive home environmental support tend to show higher learning independence. Conversely, students with limited access or a less conducive learning atmosphere often have difficulty maintaining focus and

enthusiasm for learning. (Rozi and Lana, 2021). Fourth, in terms of teacher responses to online learning, there was a competency gap in the use of educational technology. Many teachers who were not yet familiar with online platforms had to learn independently or through impromptu training to be able to deliver the material effectively. In some cases, these limitations caused the learning process not to go according to plan. However, on the other hand, there were also teachers who were able to use this situation as an opportunity to innovate in teaching methods. Some of them adopted the Problem Based Learning approach as exemplified by Rahayu and Lindawati, which emphasizes the active involvement of students in solving real cases that are relevant to their lives. (Rahayu and Lindawati, 2021).

Fifth, the study also revealed a major challenge in the form of a digital divide. The availability of devices and internet access is a very prominent issue, especially in the 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged) areas. This inequality hinders the equalization of the quality of education, even though formally all students are required to take part in online learning. Teachers in areas like this, as explained in the study by Sari and Khamid, often have to take alternative methods such as sending assignments via text message or providing printed modules that can be picked up directly by parents at school. (Sari and Khamid, 2021). Sixth, from the learning design and policy perspective, there is an important shift in the way of looking at the educational process itself. The book written by Kusnandar states that flexibility is key in designing a distance curriculum. This includes flexibility in learning time, assignment choices, and evaluation models. Mulyasa reinforces this view by emphasizing the importance of teacher competency in the 21st century, namely, teachers must have digital sensitivity and be able to navigate various technologies while maintaining humanist pedagogical values. Finally, overall, this study shows that distance learning strategies in Indonesia still face various structural and cultural challenges, but also open up great opportunities for improving the education system in the future. Although not yet completely ideal, good practices that have been carried out by educators and educational institutions in various regions show that online education can be more than just a response to the pandemic, it can be the foundation for a more open, independent, and local potential-based education system. (Azis, TN, 2019).

Use of technology in *pai* learning In today's digital era, technological advances have completely overhauled the way of looking at the learning process, including in the realm of religious education. The integration of technology in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is not only intended to expand the reach and accelerate the learning process, but also to improve the quality of education and create a more interactive and participatory learning experience (soleha, ima jumratus 2018). In an effort to improve the quality of education in the midst of global development, it is inevitable that the results of empirical studies from developed countries need to be used as references in determining the standards of education quality (Yusufhadi Miarso, 2008: 66). If this is ignored, then education in Indonesia at risk of decline. Therefore, continuous improvement and enhancement of the quality of education is the responsibility of all elements in the education system. This study uses a case study approach with a data collection method through in-depth interviews involving the principal, vice principal, and Islamic Religious Education teacher.

The data obtained were analyzed through the process of representation, reduction, and interpretation. The results of the study indicate that the learning process has utilized educational technology in an integrated manner, both through hardware such as computers, laptops, and smartphones, as well as software such as home-based learning applications and open sources. Optimization of learning is carried out through a deep understanding of the content of the material, adjustment

of learning strategies according to context, and continuous development of knowledge. This study provides an important contribution to the development of the theory of "Teacher Competence in Technology-Based Learning" as discussed in the *Al-Thariqah* journal (6(1), pp. 88–104, 2021). In the context of distance learning, technology plays an important role in developing platforms that allow students to access learning materials from anywhere and at any time. This is very useful for students who are in remote areas or who have limited access to conventional educational institutions. The use of technology and interactive media is also an advantage. Teachers who are able to create interesting content in the form of videos, infographics, or online simulations have proven to be more successful in maintaining student attention, compared to conventional lecture methods. This shows that creativity in designing digital strategies plays a major role in the success of distance learning. Several studies even show that there is improving learning outcomes when the methods used are able to adapt to students' learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. However, it cannot be ignored that online learning strategies also have quite fundamental weaknesses.

One of the biggest challenges is the inequality of access to technology and internet networks. In some areas, students are forced to study with makeshift devices, and not a few only rely on their parents' cellphones to access assignments and learning materials. This gap creates inequality in the quality of education received by students in various regions. (Jalilah, SR, 2021). Another weakness lies in the readiness of teachers and educational institutions in managing online-based learning. Not all teachers have the technical and pedagogical skills to design interactive online learning. Some still have difficulty using digital platforms, managing virtual interactions, and compiling fair and comprehensive evaluations. This has the potential to reduce the effectiveness of learning and affect student satisfaction in following the learning process. On the student side, not all students have sufficient levels of independence and motivation to study independently at home. Disturbances from the surrounding environment, limited time with teachers, and minimal direct supervision often make students lose their way in learning.

This situation requires strong support from the family, which unfortunately is not always available, especially among families with high economic burdens. Considering all these advantages and disadvantages, it becomes clear that online learning strategies require a holistic and adaptive approach. Strengthening infrastructure, increasing teacher capacity, and psychosocial support for students must go hand in hand with the development of the learning strategy itself. Only in this way can online learning become a long-term solution that is not just reactive to the crisis, but also proactive in creating a more resilient and inclusive education system. Educational technology management Management of the use of educational technology includes a series of activities related to planning, implementing, evaluating, and developing technology in the world of education. Some aspects of educational technology management are as follows. Design: The planning stages in educational technology include selecting technology that is appropriate to learning needs, resource planning, developing implementation strategies, and determining the goals to be achieved.

Implementation: The process of implementing educational technology involves the installation and configuration of hardware and software, training for educators and students, and the development of materials and applications relevant to learning needs. Evaluation: Assessment of educational technology is carried out to measure the success and effectiveness of its use, evaluate its impact on student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the teaching process, and identify aspects that need to be improved. Development: Innovation in educational technology

includes the creation of new content and applications, as well as improvements to supporting systems and infrastructure to optimize the learning process. Security and Privacy: This aspect includes protecting student data from threats such as hacking, viruses, and malware, as well as ensuring that data is used in accordance with applicable data protection regulations. Budget and Resources: Managing educational technology also involves budgeting and distributing resources for the procurement, installation, maintenance of technology, and providing training and support for teachers and students. Stakeholder Collaboration: The effectiveness of educational technology management requires the active involvement of all parties involved in the world of education, including teachers, students, school administration, and other related institutions (Unik Hanafiah Salsabila & Niar Agustian, 2021: 123).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this journal shows that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in the digital era is faced with various challenges as well as opportunities, along with the use of information and communication technology. In general, the integration of technology in PAI has enabled the emergence of more flexible, interactive, and easily accessible learning methods. The use of digital media such as e-learning platforms, mobile applications, multimedia, and social media has expanded students' access to sources of Islamic teachings and increased their participation in the learning process. The application of technology in learning strategies has been proven to deepen students' understanding of religious teachings, both in theory and practice. Digital content in the form of videos, animations, and interactive applications provide a means for educators to deliver religious material in a more interesting way and in accordance with the characteristics of the digital generation.

This approach not only strengthens academic understanding, but also helps students internalize and practice Islamic values in everyday life. However, the use of technology in Islamic Religious Education also presents challenges, such as the sustainability of the use of technology, the validity of content spread in cyberspace, and social impacts that may disrupt the focus of learning. Therefore, educators need to implement a balanced strategy, namely by combining digital innovation with maintaining the authenticity and purity of religious teachings. Islamic Religious Education learning in the digital era requires a comprehensive and integrated approach so that teogy can function optimally as supporters in achieving the main goal of education: forming individuals with strong character, ethics, and based on Islamic values.

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