

Optimizing Digital Media to Enhance Learning Outcomes in Aqidah Akhlak: A Case Study at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

DDI Awang-Awang

Herniwati¹, Firman², Kaharuddin³, Muhammad Saleh⁴, Usman⁵

IAIN Parepare Indonesia

E-mail:

herniwatiasrif@yahoo.com, firman@iainpare.ac.id, kaharuddin@iainpare.ac.id,
muhammadsaleh@iainpare.ac.id, usman@iainpare.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of digital media in improving students' learning outcomes in the subject of Aqidah Akhlak at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah DDI Awang-Awang, Pinrang Regency. The research employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, conducted in two cycles comprising the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Digital media such as animated videos and interactive quizzes were utilized during the learning process. The results indicate a significant improvement in students' average scores, from 73.75 in the first cycle to 88.12 in the second cycle. These findings confirm that digital media not only enhance comprehension but also increase students' interest and active engagement in learning. However, the study highlights certain limitations, including a lack of in-depth discussion on potential challenges, such as limited technological access in certain areas, teacher readiness, and cultural resistance to technology in education. Future research is needed to address these challenges and explore the best methods for integrating digital technology into the curriculum.

Keywords: Digital Media, Learning Outcomes, Aqidah Akhlak

***Corresponding author:** herniwatiasrif@yahoo.com

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1. Introduction

The advancement of information technology and digitalization has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including education (Grabb, 2023). Today's children grow up in an environment deeply connected to digital technology. Gadgets, internet access, and other digital media have become an integral part of their daily lives (Gulla et al., 2020). The integration of media and technology into education is now a necessity to provide more engaging and effective learning experiences (Adiyana Adam, 2023; Firinta Togatorop et al., 2022). In the context of religious education, this integration serves not only as a teaching aid but also as

a strategy to harness the positive potential of digital technology to enrich the learning process.

Traditional learning methods are now considered less relevant to the demands of the times (Aji Silmi & Hamid, 2023). Transforming teaching methods, particularly through the utilization of digital media, has become an urgent solution to create more dynamic and innovative learning processes. Digital media facilitates a more engaging and interactive knowledge transfer. It offers broader access to information, enriches teaching methods, and increases students' engagement in the learning process.

The digital era has significantly impacted education, including Islamic Religious Education (Pabbajah et al., 2021).. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is an integral component of the curriculum in Islamic schools (Somad, 2021). In Islamic education, aqidah (faith) and akhlaq (ethics) are complementary aspects that play a crucial role. A strong aqidah forms a solid foundation of belief, while good akhlaq reflects the implementation of these beliefs in daily life (Jamil et al., 2023). This education is key to shaping individual character, values, and morality, especially for young children attending Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic elementary schools). As formal educational institutions, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah bear a significant responsibility to provide a learning environment that supports a comprehensive understanding and practice of Islamic teachings.

This issue is particularly relevant to the subject of Aqidah Akhlak, which requires a creative approach to attract students' interest. Despite its vast potential, the use of digital media in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), specifically in Aqidah Akhlak, still faces several challenges. Limited technological resources, insufficient training for teachers, and a lack of understanding of the potential of digital media remain significant obstacles. Additionally, skepticism persists among some stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of technology in religious education. However, digital media holds immense potential to enhance students' understanding and interest in Aqidah Akhlak when implemented with the right strategies.

The body of literature on the use of digital media in education, particularly within the context of PAI, has grown significantly in recent decades. Previous studies highlight the substantial potential of digital media in improving the

effectiveness of learning. Digital media, encompassing various tools and platforms such as videos, interactive applications, and simulations, enables more creative, interactive, and relevant learning approaches tailored to the needs of modern students (Hwang et al., 2023).

The integration of information technology into religious education can foster more effective e-learning environments (Nuryana, 2019). In his research, Nuryana found that technology not only expands access to information but also increases students' enthusiasm for learning religious materials. This is attributed to the ability of digital media to present content in more engaging formats, such as animated videos and infographics. Such innovations can bridge the gap between traditional religious teachings and contemporary technological trends, making the learning process both meaningful and appealing to students.

Mayer's Multimedia Theory is highly relevant in this context. According to Mayer, effective learning occurs when information is delivered through a combination of visual and auditory elements (Mayer, 2020).. Digital media facilitates the presentation of religious subjects, such as Aqidah Akhlak, in ways that are more comprehensible and memorable for students. For example, abstract concepts related to moral values can be visualized through animations or simulations, allowing students to see their application in daily life.

Additionally, research indicates that digital media can significantly enhance students' learning motivation. Several studies have found that students engaged in technology-based learning exhibit higher levels of motivation compared to those participating in conventional learning methods (Hidajat et al., 2023; Zaka, 2023). This increased motivation positively impacts learning outcomes (Tresnawati, 2019). However, challenges in implementing digital media cannot be overlooked. The success of technology integration in education largely depends on the readiness of infrastructure and teacher training (Tanwir & Rahman Fasieh, 2018). Limited access to technological devices, such as computers and internet connectivity, often poses a major obstacle, particularly in remote areas. Moreover, inadequate training for teachers in utilizing this technology can reduce its effectiveness in the learning process (Alelaimat et al., 2020).

Effective instructional design is also critical for maximizing the benefits of technology. Educational technology must be designed to support specific educational objectives (Gheisari et al., 2023; Hikmah, 2019). In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), this means digital media should align with the characteristics of the content and the needs of the students. For instance, interactive applications for Aqidah Akhlak should include features that encourage active participation, such as quizzes or simulations of moral values. Digital media also addresses weaknesses in conventional teaching methods. Students often find Aqidah Akhlak lessons dull or unengaging due to overly normative and monotonous approaches. By incorporating digital media, materials can be delivered in ways that are more appealing and relevant to students' worlds. Engaging learning experiences are more likely to yield better outcomes (Muijs et al., 2015)..

In the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, these challenges are more complex due to the limited resources typically faced by such institutions. Therefore, support from various stakeholders, including the government and the community, is essential to provide the necessary infrastructure and training. This support would enable optimal utilization of digital media to enhance learning outcomes, particularly in Aqidah Akhlak. This study examines how digital media can improve student outcomes in Aqidah Akhlak at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah DDI Awang-Awang. It identifies effective strategies for integrating digital technology into PAI education. Consequently, this research not only addresses educational challenges in madrasahs but also contributes to the development of teaching methods that are relevant to the digital era.

2. Methods

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) method conducted in two cycles, with each cycle comprising the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The digital media utilized included animated videos to explain Aqidah Akhlak concepts and digital quizzes to enhance interactivity in the learning process. Data were collected through observations, learning outcome tests, and interviews with teachers and students. The research began with the planning stage, which involved the development of digital media such as animated videos and interactive quizzes tailored to the learning objectives.

During the implementation stage, the digital media were integrated into classroom activities to provide a more engaging and relevant learning experience. Throughout the learning process, student engagement and learning outcomes were observed. The reflection stage focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the digital media used and adjusting strategies for the subsequent cycle to address any challenges encountered. Data analysis utilized both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach focused on understanding student engagement, motivation, and the overall teaching-learning process, while the quantitative approach emphasized improvements in students' average learning outcomes. The results of this analysis provided insights into the effectiveness of digital media in enhancing students' understanding and engagement in Aqidah Akhlak lessons.

3. Result and Discussion

Result

Based on the research results during the learning process in Cycle I and Cycle II, the learning outcomes of students in the Aqidah Akhlak subject showed a significant improvement. This increase was influenced by the utilization of digital media as a learning strategy. This improvement can be observed in the table below.

Table 1. Cumulative Data Table of Student Learning Outcomes

Student Name	Student Learning Outcomes			Status
	Pre-Action	Pre-Action	Pre-Action	
Aurel Magfira	37.50	75.00	87.50	Improved
Adibah Maulidah	50.00	75.00	100	Improved
Bilqis	25.50	62.50	87.50	Improved
Eva	37.50	62.50	75.00	Improved
Ghina Fauziah	37.50	50.00	62.50	Improved
Huriyah Atsilah	50.00	75.00	87.50	Improved
Nur Aisyah	25.50	50.00	87.50	Improved
Nur Asipah	37.50	62.50	100	Improved
Nur Khamizha	75.00	100	100	Improved
Siti Aisyah	75.00	100	100	Improved
Suriani	37.50	87.50	100	Improved
Aswandi	50.00	87.50	100	Improved
Fathurrahman	25.50	62.50	87.50	Improved
Ibnu Abidzar	37.50	50.00	75.00	Improved
Muhammad Aldy Asrul	37.50	62.50	62.50	Improved

Muhammad Azka Resky	37.50	75.00	75.00	Improved
Muhammad Jefri	50.00	75.00	100	Improved
Muh. Yusri	62.50	87.50	87.50	Improved
Muh. Alif Ismail	37.50	75.00	87.50	Improved
Muh. Fajar Al Adam	62.50	100	100	Improved
Total Score	889	1475	1762,5	
Average Score	44,05	73,75	88,12	

The table above presents quantitative data on the development of students' learning outcomes in the Aqidah Akhlak subject from the pre-action stage to Cycle II. Based on this data, there was a significant increase in the students' average learning outcomes at each stage.

In Cycle I, the implementation of digital media raised the average student score to 73.75. Data analysis indicated that this improvement resulted from the use of animated videos, which helped students better understand the material. However, some students still did not meet the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC). This was attributed to factors such as students' lack of experience with digital technology and varying learning styles. During Cycle I, observations noted that while students showed initial interest in digital media, their participation levels were not yet optimal. Teachers reported that some students hesitated to use interactive quizzes due to a lack of confidence in answering the questions.

In Cycle II, the learning approach was modified to include deeper interactive elements, such as live simulations and collaborative digital quizzes. Consequently, the average score increased to 88.12. Almost all students met the MMC, with some exceeding the teachers' initial expectations. Beyond score improvements, Cycle II revealed significant changes in student engagement. Students became more enthusiastic about learning and actively participated in class discussions. Teachers observed that students grew more confident in answering questions, both individually and in groups. Furthermore, digital media reduced students' anxiety about Aqidah Akhlak, making the subject more appealing and relevant to their lives.

Additionally, data from learning outcome tests showed that digital media not only enhanced students' understanding but also improved their ability to apply Aqidah Akhlak concepts in daily life. This was evident from the increased test scores in application and analysis aspects. Active student participation also rose during the learning process. In Cycle II, nearly 95% of students actively engaged in

class activities, such as answering questions, participating in quizzes, and sharing opinions in discussions. Attendance rates also improved, indicating that students were more motivated to attend lessons. Teachers involved in the study noted positive changes in classroom dynamics. They felt that digital media helped create a more conducive and engaging learning environment. Teachers also expressed greater motivation to adopt technology in their future teaching practices.

Overall, this research demonstrates that digital media has a significant positive impact on students' learning outcomes. The use of animated videos and interactive quizzes not only enhanced academic achievement but also built students' confidence and engagement in the learning process.

Discussion

Based on the findings, this research confirms that digital media can be an extremely effective tool in enhancing the quality of education, particularly in the Aqidah Akhlak subject. In this context, Mayer's multimedia theory becomes highly relevant, emphasizing that the integration of visual and audio elements such as those applied through animated videos proves to enhance students' understanding and retention. This aligns with Zalik Nuryana's study, which highlights that the use of information technology facilitates the learning process by visualizing abstract concepts (Nuryana, 2019).

The study also emphasizes the importance of interactivity in digital media. The use of digital media has been shown to improve students' learning motivation (Perwita, 2020). Observations during this research reveal that collaborative digital media not only enhances student engagement but also improves their social skills. Thus, digital media serves not only as a learning aid but also as a platform to develop other relevant skills for the digital age (Kuntari, 2023).

The successful implementation of digital media largely depends on teacher readiness and available infrastructure (Tanwir & Rahman Fasieh, 2018). Challenges encountered during this study included hardware limitations and a lack of initial teacher training in using the technology. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that schools have adequate access to technological resources and provide continuous training for educators. Moreover, this research provides insights into how digital media can help overcome obstacles in traditional learning. Participating

teachers reported that digital media enabled them to present complex material in simpler and more engaging ways. This supports the findings of several previous studies, which state that educational technology can enhance the productivity and effectiveness of education (Aji Silmi & Hamid, 2023; Gheisari et al., 2023; Grabb, 2023).

This study underscores that the integration of digital media in teaching Aqidah Akhlak not only enhances learning outcomes but also offers additional benefits, such as increased motivation, engagement, and students' social skills. The research recommends further investment in educational technology and teacher training to maximize the potential of digital media in education.

4. Conclusion

This study confirms that the use of digital media in teaching Aqidah Akhlak has a significantly positive impact on students' learning outcomes. Digital media not only facilitates material comprehension but also successfully enhances students' interest and engagement in the learning process. Therefore, integrating digital technology into education becomes a strategic step that should be continuously developed to achieve more optimal educational outcomes.

The results of this study have important implications for both educators and policymakers in the field of education. For teachers, utilizing digital media offers a more engaging and interactive approach to delivering learning materials. With adequate training, teachers can maximize the potential of technology to support learning that aligns with the needs of the digital age. Meanwhile, for policymakers, this research highlights the importance of strengthening technological infrastructure in schools, such as providing adequate digital devices and stable internet access. This step is crucial to ensuring the sustainable and effective use of digital media. Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for further development in designing digital media tailored to local contexts and Islamic educational values. These efforts are expected to create a more inclusive, innovative, and adaptive learning ecosystem aligned with contemporary advancements. Thus, the benefits of digital technology can be maximized to support more meaningful and high-quality learning processes in schools. By addressing existing opportunities and challenges, planned and strategic implementation of digital media can bring significant positive impacts to

the development of Aqidah Akhlak education. This effort also drives the transformation of education in schools to become more inclusive, innovative, and aligned with the needs of modern times.

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