

INTEGRATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: FOSTERING LEARNING QUALITY IN ELEMENTARY ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

M. Hulkin¹

Universita Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

22204082021@student.uin-suka.ac.id¹

Sedya Santosa²

Universita Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

sedya.santosa@uin-suka.ac.id²

Abstract: This research discusses the integration of Information Technology (IT) in the transformation of religious education, especially in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The main purpose of this research is to examine how the use of Information Technology can improve the quality of learning in the madrasah. The research methods used are literature study, interviews with teachers in Madrasah. The results show that the integration of Information Technology has brought positive impacts in learning, including increased student engagement, accessibility of learning materials, and teaching efficiency. However, challenges such as infrastructure and training still need to be addressed to maximize the benefits of Information Technology in the context of religious education. This research makes an important contribution in the effort to improve the quality of learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah through the utilization of Information Technology. The implication of this study is that the integration of Information Technology can improve the quality of learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. To achieve the full potential of IT in religious education, it is necessary to invest in IT infrastructure, training of educators, and development of relevant and interactive curriculum utilizing technology. This will help increase student engagement and facilitate access to religious education materials.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial topic for discussion, as we commonly understand that human intelligence or cleverness can also be measured by the level of education one receives to acquire knowledge. Individuals can also fulfill their living needs through various means. In this regard, the government has regulated education as stated in the 1945 Constitution Article 31 paragraphs 1, 2, and 3¹

Religious education is a form of education that emphasizes the delivery of values, principles, and beliefs of a religion to individuals or groups. The primary goal of religious education is to promote understanding, obedience, and loyalty to the teachings embraced within that religion². Religious education plays a significant role in shaping the values, ethics, and worldview of individuals. Additionally, religious education can serve as a source of insight and understanding of specific cultures and histories, contributing to the promotion of awareness of religious tolerance and cross-cultural understanding³.

The Islamic religious education, which is consistently taught and implemented in every school, is one of the teaching programs at each level of educational institutions. It also represents an effort of guidance and development from teachers to students, aiming for an understanding, deepening, appreciation, and implementation of Islamic teachings. This is to nurture individuals who are pious and possess noble character. The quality of education reflects the overall characteristics of educational services, both internally and externally, emphasizing expertise and meeting the expected needs within the scope of input, process, and output of education⁴

The improvement of educational quality aims to train and equip students in the educational process, and its activities can take various forms, one of which is through religious learning or activities. The expected outcome of implementing religious education is for the participants to cultivate and adopt attitudes and actions that align with the Indonesian national character, such as honesty,

¹ Oktiya Hayyu Liyandani dan Nur Kolis, "Kebijakan Pendidikan Keagamaan Islam Di Indonesia," *Edukasia: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 2, no. 2 (1 Agustus 2021): 145–54, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5651515>.

² Fadly Mart Gultom, *Kebijakan Pendidikan Keagamaan Islam Di Indonesia* (Deepublish, 2019).

³ Hasbi Indra, "Revitalisasi Pendidikan Keagamaan Islam Era Digital 4.0," *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, No. 2 (31 Desember 2019): 278–88, <https://doi.org/10.32832/Tawazun.V12i2.2408>.

⁴ Icep Irham Fauzan Syukri, Soni Samsu Rizal, dan M. Djaswidi Al Hamdani, "Pengaruh Kegiatan Keagamaan terhadap Kualitas Pendidikan," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (11 Juni 2019): 17, <https://doi.org/10.36667/jppi.v7i1.358>.

tolerance, religiosity, hard work, creativity, democracy, independence, and responsibility⁵.

Religiosity is an inherent quality within a religion, encompassing everything related to it. Therefore, religious learning is an attitude that must be cultivated and possessed by an individual, naturally illuminating attitudes and actions in everyday life. The attitudes and actions referred to are those in accordance with religious teachings. From the above explanation, religious learning is an ongoing effort undertaken by an individual or a group that is continuously connected to religious values⁶.

In the reality of Islamic education in Indonesia, when discussing Islamic educational institutions, besides pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), what comes to mind is madrasah. This educational institution emerged in the early century and can be considered a period of growth for madrasah in the history of Islamic education in the homeland⁷. In connection with that, the existence of madrasah is viewed by educational historians as one of the forms of Islamic education reform in Indonesia. The opinion that can be explained about this is that historically, the emergence of madrasah can be traced back to two situations. First, the emergence of changes in Indonesia, and second, the response of Islamic education to education policies in the Dutch East Indies⁸.

Islamic Elementary School, as one of the formal education institutions, has a curriculum composition that is suitable for developing religious education. The religious education conducted in Islamic Elementary Schools maintains an equilibrium between the character needed to succeed in this world and in the hereafter. Islamic Elementary Schools, serving as a primary education institution, are a crucial educational level, laying the foundation for subsequent education⁹. The main essence of education in Islamic Elementary Schools (MI) is the teaching of Islam. In this curriculum, students learn about Islamic concepts, ethics, religious regulations, the practice of worship, and various other important aspects

⁵ James Sinurat Dkk., *Pengembangan Moral & Keagamaan Anak Usia Dini* (Cv Widina Media Utama, 2022), <https://Repository.Penerbitwidina.Com/Publications/558622/>.

⁶ Muh Hambali Dan Eva Yulianti, "Ekstrakurikuler Keagamaan Terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Religius Peserta Didik Di Kota Majapahit," *Pedagogik: Jurnal Pendidikan* 5, No. 2 (17 Desember 2018): 193–208, <https://doi.org/10.33650/Pjp.V5i2.380>.

⁷ Nur Syahid, "Transformasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Qudwatuna* 3, No. 1 (30 Maret 2020): 55–70.

⁸ Nur Syarifuddin, "Madrasah Sebagai Bentuk Transformasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Al-Ibrah* 2, No. 2 (31 Desember 2017): 25–54.

⁹ Rhindra Puspitasari Dkk., "Transformasi Pendidikan Karakter Di Madrasah Pada Era Society 5.0," *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, No. 01 (25 Februari 2022), <https://doi.org/10.30868/Ei.V11i01.2796>.

related to the religion. Students are instructed to understand the fundamental values of Islam and how to apply them in their daily lives¹⁰.

In the success of learning, the quality of students is inseparable from the role and efforts of a competent teacher in their respective fields. Improving the quality of education in an institution requires teachers who genuinely have competence in teaching students, as fundamentally, teachers play a crucial role in the conceptualization and development of the curriculum. Thus, highly qualified teachers will create education of exceptional quality, contributing to the emergence of high-quality generations capable of competing in this era of globalization¹¹.

The rapid and advancing progress of time and technology brings about significant changes in human life. Considering the existing reality that information and communication technology are not merely supplementary tools for individuals but have become an integral part of human needs¹².

The role of information technology is becoming increasingly evident in various fields, including the religious domain. The use of this technology is expected to enhance the enthusiasm of learners in the learning process. The utilization of technology in the learning process is carried out to improve the effectiveness of the learning process, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the learning outcomes of the participants¹³.

Improving the quality of teaching in Elementary Islamic Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah/MI) is a step taken to enhance and optimize the learning process at the elementary level in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia. MI is an early basic education institution typically catering to students aged 7 to 12 years within the Indonesian Islamic education system¹⁴.

¹⁰ M Hulkin Dan Andi Prastowo, "Media Pembelajaran Audio Visual Untuk Meningkatkan Akhlak Sopan Santun Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 5, No. 3 (22 Juli 2023): 1553–62, <https://doi.org/10.31004/Edukatif.V5i3.5027>.

¹¹ Warda Maghfiroh, "Upaya Guru Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran Melalui Penerapan Teknologi Informasi Di Mi Miftahul Ulum Bago Pasirian," *Jurnal Petisi (Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi)* 3, No. 1 (24 Januari 2022): 20–28, <https://doi.org/10.36232/Jurnalpetisi.V3i1.1800>.

¹² Ani Heryani Dkk., "Peran Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Teknologi Dalam Meningkatkan Literasi Digital Pada Pembelajaran Ips Di Sd Kelas Tinggi," *Jurnal Pendidikan* 31, No. 1 (26 Maret 2022): 17–28, <https://doi.org/10.32585/Jp.V3i1.1977>.

¹³ Muammar Muammar Dan Suhartina Suhartina, "Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Teknologi Informasi Dalam Meningkatkan Minat Belajar Akidah Akhlak," *Kuriositas: Media Komunikasi Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 11, No. 2 (20 Desember 2018): 176–88, <https://doi.org/10.35905/Kur.V11i2.728>.

¹⁴ Ananda Hadi Elyas, "Penggunaan Model Pembelajaran E-Learning Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran," *Warta Dharmawangsa*, No. 56 (8 Juni 2018), <https://doi.org/10.46576/Wdw.Voi56.4>.

As for some previous studies related to this research, written by Komarudin Kamsina titled 'Integration of Technology in Learning: Implementation of Science, Technology, and Society Learning.' This research explains the implementation of digital technology in learning, which serves as an alternative instructional media tool for conducting learning activities. It also addresses technology as a tool for honing soft skills, acting as a learning environment to sharpen specific skills for learners, and technology to assist community activities, serving as a digital tool to facilitate community tasks¹⁵.

In another study written by Susi Hartati, Muhammad Fer Fernadi, and Esen Pramudya titled "The Integration of New Technology in Enhancing Islamic Education in Indonesia," the research discusses how advancements in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have impacted nearly every aspect of modern life. The field of education, for instance, has been significantly influenced in terms of ideas, theories, and practices. E-learning, E-education, E-journals, E-books, and E-libraries are just a few examples of how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been utilized in the education process, particularly in the classroom. Both teachers and students now have access to ample time and space for collaboration and learning. The inevitable convergence of ICT and Islamic Studies is something we cannot avoid. Utilizing ICT is one approach to practicing what Islam teaches to its community worldwide, as they continually strive for improvement in all aspects of human life¹⁶.

Based on the above description, this research aims to explore the correlation between information technology in religious education to enhance the quality of learning in elementary Islamic schools. The integration of technology is progressing rapidly in the current era, especially in the ongoing transformation of education. We must be prepared to face this educational transformation, whether it be in general education or religious education, and also in relation to the integration of information technology.

The use of qualitative research methods and library research often complement each other in the effort to gain a deeper understanding of a specific research topic. Qualitative research prioritizes a profound understanding of social phenomena or specific contexts, while library research, or research in libraries,

¹⁵ Khomarudin Kamsina, "Integrasi Teknologi Dalam Pembelajaran Implementasi Pembelajaran Ilmu Teknologi Dan Masyarakat," *Edueksos Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial & Ekonomi* 9, No. 2 (15 Desember 2020), <https://doi.org/10.24235/Edueksos.V9i2.7103>.

¹⁶ Suci Hartati, Muhammad Feri Fernadi, Dan Esen Pramudya Utama, "Integrasi Teknologi Baru Dalam Meningkatkan Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Al-Liqo: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, No. 2 (31 Desember 2022): 159–78, <https://doi.org/10.46963/Alliqo.V7i2.581>.

serves as a valuable instrument in supporting qualitative research by providing access to relevant information resources.

The library research approach involves evaluation based on document analysis. The data analysis process in this research utilizes qualitative analysis methods through content analysis. The application of content analysis is used to indirectly observe human behavior by analyzing various forms of communication, such as books, texts, newspapers, novels, songs, images, advertisements, and any type of analyzable communication. As this study focuses on the library research method, data collection techniques involve gathering literature data, which includes collecting relevant library materials related to the research subject. Subsequently, the author evaluates and identifies the focus of discussion from various primary data sources obtained from books, journals, articles, as well as secondary data, including the author's own perspectives.

The combination of qualitative research and library research has the potential to produce stronger research and a deeper understanding. Qualitative data obtained through methods such as interviews, observations, or text analysis can be reinforced with support from relevant literature. Moreover, qualitative research grounded in a robust theoretical framework from the literature will be more effective in explaining and interpreting findings more comprehensively.

Therefore, qualitative research and library research complement each other in the research process, allowing researchers to integrate insights obtained from the field with the perspectives provided by library resources, resulting in more profound and contextual research.

The following is a Research Instrument using interview techniques:

1. Type of information technology used in Elementary Islamic Schools
2. Information technology used by students in religious learning processes
3. Evidence data measuring the improvement of learning quality after the integration of information technology
4. Student responses to the use of information technology in religious learning
5. School preparedness for progress in the use of information technology
6. Challenges in the use of information technology

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In general, delineating the identity and function of an educator is not a complicated matter for most individuals. In this context, the understanding of a teacher is linked to the profession associated with educating children in formal educational institutions. Everyone agrees that the role of a teacher is crucial in

achieving success in the teaching and learning process at school¹⁷. The presence of an educator plays a crucial role in the implementation of learning in schools. This is because teachers are the elements that support the achievement of performance in the educational environment. A teacher must have excellent qualifications. Teaching is not a simple matter but rather a challenging activity; therefore, it is crucial for a teacher to understand aspects related to instruction¹⁸.

The researcher conducted an interview with one of the elementary Islamic school teachers in Palembang through the WhatsApp application. From our interview findings, the informant mentioned that their school has recently adopted the independent curriculum, which is closely aligned with the digitization of learning. In the context of religious education, the technology applied in the school includes the use of a projector as a teaching aid. Moreover, in the teaching and learning process, students are allowed to bring gadgets to higher classes only, with the goal of creating an active learning environment.

According to the informant, the transformation of religious education has a significant impact on the learning process. There is an improvement in the quality of religious education, especially with the integration of technology-based teaching tools. The students' response has been very positive, as the informant emphasized that not everything related to technology is detrimental; it depends on how individuals use it.

The speaker stated that the readiness of schools to face this transformation in religious education and rapid technological advancements aims to empower human resources. Here, teachers who are knowledgeable in this field are fully involved, as there are many elderly teachers facing difficulties in adapting to this transformation and technological progress. However, there are several challenges in the use of technology, such as limited facilities, and the hope for the future is that the government can minimize these issues

The findings of this library research emphasize that the integration of information technology in the transformation of religious education in Elementary Islamic Schools has a significantly positive impact on the quality of learning. Here are some key findings regarding the integration of information technology in the transformation of religious education that enhances the quality of learning in Elementary Islamic Schools:

¹⁷ muhammad Yaumi, "Integrasi Teknologi Informasi Dan Komunikasi Dalam Pembelajaran," *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan* 14, No. 1 (2011): 88–102, <https://doi.org/10.24252/Lp.2011v14n1a6>.

¹⁸ Widya Kurnia Putri, Muhammad Sofwan, dan Silvina Noviyanti, "Peran Guru Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Menggunakan Model Problem Based Learning Dengan Integrasi Teknologi Pada Siswa Kelas IV SDN 124/VIII Sidorejo," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 2 (8 Maret 2022): 46–52, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jpdk.v4i2.3861>.

1. Improvement in Educational Material Accessibility

The integration of information technology facilitates more practical and instant access to religious education content, enabling students to access learning resources online without being limited by location or time. Thus, openness to educational material has a broad scope, including online access to digitally or physically prepared educational materials. This allows anyone to benefit from internet access, especially students in elementary Islamic schools who can utilize facilities provided in the school.

2. Various Learning Materials

Information technology allows the use of various types of media, such as videos, audio, and animations, to teach religious concepts. This greatly assists in enhancing students' understanding through diverse learning methods.

3. Interactivity and Student Engagement

The use of technology-based learning platforms enables direct interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. Discussions, forums, and quizzes can engage students in the learning process.

4. Improved Monitoring and Evaluation

Teachers can efficiently monitor and assess the individual progress of students, providing more timely feedback. This also helps enhance responsiveness to the unique learning needs of each student.

The integration of information technology in religious education at Elementary Islamic Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) is considered a positive step to enhance the quality of learning. With the increased availability and variety of learning materials, students have a greater opportunity to understand and explore religious concepts.

The role of interactivity and student participation through technology is also a crucial factor in improving students' understanding and interest in the subject of religion. Teachers can effectively monitor the progress of each student and provide more personalized feedback, which is a distinct advantage.

However, it must be remembered that the implementation of information technology in religious education should be done wisely. Security and supervision must be seriously emphasized. Additionally, it is important to ensure that all students have equal access to technology to prevent disparities in learning.

CONCLUSION

The utilization of information technology in the context of religious education in Elementary Islamic Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) demonstrates significant potential impact. The integration of information technology enables improvements in more engaging and interactive teaching methods, expands access to various relevant educational resources, and allows for the development of a curriculum tailored to the needs of students and changes in society. As a result, the use of information technology in the transformation of religious education processes can lead to more effective and high-quality learning at the elementary school level, assisting students in better understanding, applying, and experiencing religious teachings.

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