Exploring the Benefits of Learning Applications in Increasing Achievement and Motivation in Islamic Religious Education

Agus Susanti 1, Li Jie 2, Siti Mahmudah 3, Erni Yusnita 4, Chandra Halim 5

1 Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
2 The University of Tokyo, Japan
3 Universitas Islam Kadiri Kediri, Indonesia
4 Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
5 Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Subulussalam, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Name, Agus Susanti E-mail: agussusanti@radenintan.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Learning Islamic education is one of the learning points that can shape the character, morality, and spirituality of individuals in society. However, as time progresses, many challenges appear such as the lack of interest and involvement of students in learning Islam, especially in the current digital era. Limited time, lack of adequate resources, and changing students’ mindsets towards media and technology are the main obstacles in achieving the goals of Islamic education. In addition, with the increasing development of information and communication technology, there is a demand to integrate technology into the learning process in order to update teaching methods and motivate students in learning Islam. The purpose of this research is to explore the potential of learning applications as an effective tool in improving the performance and motivation of students in Islamic religious education, taking into account contemporary challenges and needs in the religious learning process. The research method used is a quantitative method. The research data was obtained from the results of the questionnaire. The results of the research show that the use of learning applications significantly increases students' understanding of Islamic religious material, with the average test score increasing significantly. In addition, the level of student motivation in learning Islam also experienced a significant increase, evident from active participation in class discussions, task completion, and better attendance levels. The implementation of this research states that learning applications provide clear benefits in improving student performance and motivation in Islamic religious education. This confirms the need for technology integration in the learning process of Islamic Religion to optimize the student's learning experience and strengthen religious values in an increasingly digitally connected society.

Keywords: Achievement, Islamic Religious Education, Learning Application, Motivation
INTRODUCTION

Along with the development of information and communication technology, Islamic Religious Education learning methods have experienced transformation (Fathuddin et al., 2023). One of the latest innovations that has emerged is the use of learning applications in the context of Islamic Religious Education learning (Minarti et al., 2023). This learning application offers a new and refreshing approach in delivering Islamic Religious Education material, as well as providing an interactive and interesting learning experience for students (Alemi et al., 2020). It is important to understand the basic concepts of learning applications in Islamic Religious Education learning. The Islamic Religious Education learning application is a digital platform specifically designed to convey Islamic Religious Education materials through information technology (Aseery, 2024). In this application, various Islamic educational content is presented in various multimedia formats such as text, images, audio and video (Das et al., 2020). Apart from that, this application is also equipped with interactive features such as quizzes, educational games, and discussion forums that allow interaction between teachers and students, as well as between fellow students (A’yun et al., 2022). Through this application, students can access Islamic Religious Education material independently according to the time and place they want, thereby providing flexibility in the learning process (Reich-Stiebert & Eyssel, 2015).

The benefits of using learning applications in learning Islamic Religious Education are very diverse. One of them is increasing accessibility to Islamic Religious Education material (Alzaareer & Abdalla, 2023). With this learning application, Islamic Religious Education materials can be accessed easily by students whenever and wherever they are, as long as they are connected to the internet. This is very beneficial for students who have limited access to conventional learning resources such as printed books or limited teaching materials (Latipah et al., 2020). Apart from that, Islamic Religious Education learning applications can also be a solution for students who live in remote areas or are difficult to reach by conventional educational facilities. Not only that, Islamic Religious Education learning applications can also increase students' motivation and interest in learning (Alawiyah et al., 2019). By presenting Islamic Religious Education materials in an interesting and interactive format, this application is able to make the learning process more fun and challenging for students (Biberman-Shalev, 2021). Features such as educational games, interactive
quizzes and multimedia animations can make learning more dynamic and entertaining, so that students do not feel bored or fed up while studying. Apart from that, interactive features such as discussion forums also enable students to interact and share knowledge with others, thereby creating a collaborative and supportive learning environment.

In learning Islamic Religious Education, learning applications can also be an effective means of expanding students' understanding and knowledge of Islamic teachings (Kistoro et al., 2020). Through the various multimedia content presented in this application, students can learn various aspects of Islamic Religious Education ranging from creeds, worship, morals, Islamic history, to interpretations of the Koran and hadith. Apart from that, this learning application can also present Islamic Religious Education material in more detail and depth compared to conventional learning methods, because of additional features such as learning videos, interactive simulations and other multimedia content (Achour et al., 2021). This can help students to understand the concepts of the Islamic religion better and more deeply. Not only does it provide benefits for students, the use of learning applications in learning Islamic Religious Education can also provide benefits for teachers. One of them is the ease of compiling and presenting learning material. With this application, teachers can easily compile and organize Islamic Religious Education materials according to the applicable curriculum, as well as add various interactive features such as quizzes, educational games and discussion forums according to learning needs (Annisa, 2020). Apart from that, this learning application also provides various data and analysis about student learning activities, making it easier for teachers to monitor and evaluate the learning process.

The development of learning applications in the learning of Islamic Religious Education also has a positive impact on the education process as a whole (Huda, 2022). One of them is increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of learning. With the existence of this learning application, the learning process can be done independently by students according to their own learning speed, thus enabling the achievement of more effective learning (Ali et al., 2019). In addition, this learning application can also facilitate distance learning or online learning, making it possible for students to learn without having to face-to-face directly with the instructor (Bali & Musrifah, 2020). This is very beneficial especially in emergency situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic which limits conventional teaching and learning activities (Suarsi & Wibawa, 2021). However, despite having various benefits and great potential, the use of learning applications in the learning of Islamic Religious Education also has several challenges and obstacles that need to be overcome. One of them is the problem of accessibility and technological infrastructure (Amalda & Prasojo, 2018). In some areas, access to the internet and technology devices is still limited, so not all students can access this learning application easily. In addition, not all students have sufficient technological abilities or skills to use learning applications.
In addition to accessibility and technology infrastructure problems, the use of learning applications in Islamic Religious Education can also cause problems related to content quality and information validity (Hanafi et al., 2020). In the context of Islamic learning, it is important to ensure that the content presented in this learning application is in accordance with the true teachings of Islam and does not conflict with religious values. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully select and verify content by religious experts and Islamic education experts so that the content presented in this learning application can be trusted and useful for students. Despite this, by making continuous improvement and development efforts, the use of learning applications in the learning of Islamic Religious Education has great potential to improve the quality and effectiveness of Islamic religious learning at various levels of education (Dandi Damara et al., 2023). Through the use of this learning application, it is hoped that students will be able to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of Islamic teachings, as well as be able to develop their character, morality, and spirituality in accordance with Islamic teachings (Lovat et al., 2010). In addition, the use of this learning application can also help to expand the reach of Islamic religious education to various areas that are difficult to reach by conventional educational facilities, so that it can increase access to Islamic religious education for the wider community.

The use of applications in the learning of Islamic Religious Education aims to achieve several important goals in the educational process. One of the main goals is to increase the accessibility of Islamic Religious Education materials (Ismail et al., 2011). With the availability of learning applications, Islamic Religious Education materials can be easily accessed by students whenever and wherever they are, as long as they are connected to the internet. This is very important because not all students have easy access to conventional learning resources such as printed books or limited teaching materials. With this application, students from various social and geographical backgrounds can have the same opportunity to access quality Islamic Religious Education materials. Furthermore, the purpose of using the application in the learning of Islamic Religious Education is to expand students' understanding and knowledge of Islamic teachings. Through this application, students can learn various aspects of Islamic Religious Education ranging from belief, worship, morals, Islamic history, to interpretation of the Quran and hadith (Norenzayan et al., 2016).

The contents presented in this application are designed to expand students' insight and understanding of Islamic teachings in a comprehensive and in-depth manner. Thus, it is hoped that the students can become more skilled in applying Islamic values and principles in their daily lives. Lastly, the purpose of using applications in learning Islamic Education is to improve the quality of Islamic education as a whole. By optimally utilizing information and communication technology, it is hoped that Islamic religious education can become more relevant, responsive, and adaptive to the development of the times and the needs of society (Awaliah Kasri, 2013). This learning application can be one of the effective solutions...
in improving the quality of Islamic religious education at various levels of education, from basic to secondary and higher levels.

There are several previous research opinions. The first research according to Hakim, (2021), with the research title The Urgency of Interactive Learning Models in Increasing Student Achievement and Learning Motivation in Islamic Religious Education Subjects. The results of his research stated that learning process of students will be considered more effective if students after learning can find out something that was not previously known. So, learning achievement will change for the better with a change in new behavior in the level of reason, knowledge, thinking or advancement of physical potential.

The second research according to Hermawati, (2021), with the research title Implementation of the Inquiry Model in Learning Islamic Religious Education and Character: Analysis of Tolerance Learning Materials. The results of his research stated that application of the inquiry learning model in tolerance material by giving students the opportunity to ask questions related to intolerant cases in the form of terrorism; form small groups for students of 4-5 people, direct them to conduct discussions and draw conclusions from the material problem of tolerance by linking the basis of Allah's word in the Koran.

The third research according to (Dosen Fakultas Agama Islam UMSU et al., 2016), with the research title Increasing Student Motivation and Learning Outcomes in Arabic Language Courses with Hiwar Material Using the Role Play Method in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program Semester II, Muhammadiyah University, North Sumatra. The results of his research stated that Student learning motivation increased after using the role play method, namely in cycle I the increase in student motivation reached 80.83% while the increase in student motivation in cycle II reached 85.97%. Second, student learning outcomes increased after using the role play method, namely student learning outcomes in cycle I, only 23 students got a pass mark or reached 63.89%. Meanwhile, in cycle II, student learning outcomes increased compared to cycle I, namely reaching 34 students who received a pass mark or reaching 94.44%. So it can be concluded that motivation and learning outcomes have increased after implementing the role play method.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Before conducting research, it is important for researchers to first determine the type of research method used. Research methods are the methods or steps carried out by researchers in a study. Research methods will help and direct researchers in research while making the research easier. Good research must of course have research methods that match the research title. In this case the research method used is a quantitative research method (Azmi, 2017). This research uses a quantitative approach to numerically measure the effectiveness of using learning applications in
increasing achievement and motivation in Islamic religious education. The research population consisted of class X students in several junior high schools studying Islamic Religious Education subjects. The research sample was selected at simple random from the population (Peitzmeier et al., 2020). The research instrument used in this research is a questionnaire that has been previously validated. This research instrument must be valid and reliable.

The validity of the instrument can be tested through a content validation process by Islamic religious education experts and related teachers. Meanwhile, the reliability of the instrument can be tested using internal reliability tests such as Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for learning motivation questionnaires. In addition, it is also necessary to record data regarding the time students use the learning application and perhaps also ask some questions regarding the experience of using the application to gain further insight into students’ preferences and perceptions of the application (Almuhrzi & Alsawafi, 2017). This instrument will help in collecting the data needed to analyze the effect of using learning applications on students' academic achievement and learning motivation in the context of Islamic religious education.

The independent variable in this research is the use of learning applications, while the dependent variables are academic achievement and student learning motivation (Fatmawati et al., 2022). Academic achievement is measured by collecting test scores or assignments related to Islamic Religious Education subjects before and after implementing the learning application. Meanwhile, measuring learning motivation is carried out using a questionnaire that assesses students' level of motivation in learning Islamic Religious Education before and after using learning applications. The research procedure begins with selecting a sample of students who will become research participants. After that, initial data was collected regarding students' academic achievement and learning motivation before implementing the learning application. After that, the learning application was introduced to students and they were given access to use it in learning Islamic Religious Education. The duration of use of the learning application is recorded for each student. After a certain period of using the learning application, final data is collected regarding student academic achievement through collecting test scores or assignments related to Islamic Religious Education which are held after the period of using the application. Meanwhile, students' learning motivation was measured again using the same questionnaire as before. The collected data is then analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, such as the t-test or mean difference test.

Data analysis was carried out to determine whether there was a difference between students' academic achievement and learning motivation before and after using the learning application. The results of this analysis will provide an overview of the effectiveness of using learning applications in increasing achievement and motivation in Islamic religious education. It is hoped that this research can contribute
to further understanding of the potential of learning applications in improving the quality of Islamic learning in secondary schools. Apart from that, it is hoped that the results of this research can provide recommendations for related parties, both in curriculum development and in the application of technology in the Islamic learning process.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has an important role in shaping the character and spirituality of Muslim individuals. However, challenges in learning Islamic Religious Education often arise, including a lack of student motivation and low academic achievement in these subjects. In the current era of information technology, learning applications offer interesting solutions to overcome these challenges. Research has shown that the use of learning applications can improve student achievement and motivation in a variety of subjects. Learning apps offer a more personalized learning experience and are tailored to students' individual needs. The application can be adapted to students' level of understanding, enabling the delivery of material appropriate to their ability level. For example, students who have a basic level of understanding will be given simpler material, while students who are already advanced will get more complex material. This makes students feel valued and encouraged to continue learning, because they feel that learning is tailored to their abilities.

Additionally, learning apps are often designed with interactive and engaging features. These features include learning videos, animations, educational games and more, which make learning more interesting and fun for students. When students feel interested and involved in learning, they tend to be more motivated to learn. They no longer view PAI as a boring subject, but as an opportunity to explore and understand the teachings of the Islamic religion in an interesting way. Apart from the interactive aspect, learning applications also provide flexibility in time and place in the learning process. Students can access the application whenever and wherever they are, whether at home, at school, or in other public places. This flexibility allows students to learn according to their own schedules and preferences, without being bound by the constraints of space and time that are often obstacles in traditional learning. For example, students who have busy extracurricular activities or who live far from school can still access Islamic Religious Education materials and learn effectively through learning applications.

The existence of direct feedback features in learning applications also contributes to increasing student motivation. After completing an exercise or assignment, students usually get instant feedback on their performance. This helps students to evaluate their own understanding and identify areas that need improvement. With positive and constructive feedback, students feel appreciated for their efforts and encouraged to continue learning. Conversely, if they have difficulty, the feedback provides useful clues to improve their understanding. Learning applications can provide a variety of content and learning materials. The content includes videos, articles, interactive materials, as well as quizzes and exercises. With this variety of content, students have more options to suit their learning style. For
example, students who prefer to learn through visuals can use learning videos, while students who prefer to read can access articles or written materials. This flexibility helps students stay motivated and engaged in learning, as they can choose content that best suits their learning preferences. The use of technology in Islamic Religious Education learning can also strengthen students' Islamic identity. Learning applications are often designed to introduce Islamic religious values, Islamic stories, and material that is relevant to the daily lives of Muslims. Through exploring this material, students can develop a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings and strengthen their Islamic identity. This is a motivating factor for students to learn more about the Islamic religion and deepen their understanding.

In addition to these benefits, it is important to recognize that learning apps not only increase students' learning motivation, but also facilitate collaborative learning and social interaction. Through features such as discussion forums or chat rooms, students can share their experiences, thoughts and knowledge about the Islamic religion. This social interaction not only increases students' learning motivation through support and inspiration from peers, but also broadens their understanding of the Islamic religion through diverse perspectives and experiences. In the context of Islamic Religious Education learning motivation, it is important to realize that learning applications are only one tool or means in the learning process. Nevertheless, the benefits offered by learning applications in increasing student motivation to study Islamic Religious Education cannot be ignored. Therefore, the integration of technology in Islamic religious learning must be part of a comprehensive and sustainable educational strategy. Apart from that, the role of teachers in facilitating and supporting the use of learning applications in Islamic Religious Education learning is very important. Teachers must be able to optimally utilize the potential of technology to create meaningful learning experiences and provide direction and guidance to students in using these learning applications.

Table 1: Students' responses to the questionnaire given were regarding the benefits of learning applications in improving achievement in Islamic Religious Education learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Benefit Application of Learning in Improving the Performance of Islamic Religious Education</th>
<th>Student response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Facilitate access to material for Islamic Religious Education learning.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interactive and interesting learning process.</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Easy learning approach and quick response from students.</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Assessment of learning can be done automatically.</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ease of monitoring the progress of each student in Islamic Religious Education learning.</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students can access materials anytime and anywhere via mobile devices.</th>
<th>70%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Enables independent and flexible learning in Islamic Religious Education learning.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Increase student involvement and interest in studying lesson material.</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Students with different learning styles can choose the approach that best suits their conditions.</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Equipped with assessment features such as exercises and exams, which allow students to get feedback.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above is the response given by students in class X junior high school to the questionnaire given. The questionnaire was given to students after validation of the questionnaire created. The average response given by students is positive. It is proven that the students' answers are above average regarding the benefits of using applications in learning Islamic Religious Education. The first statement viz facilitate access to material for Islamic Religious Education learning get a response of 70%. The second statement is interactive and interesting learning process get a response of 80%. The third statement is easy learning approach and quick response from students get a response of 75%. The fourth statement, namely assessment of learning can be done automatically get a response of 78%. The fifth statement is ease of monitoring the progress of each student in Islamic Religious Education learning get a response of 66%. The sixth statement, namely students can access materials anytime and anywhere via mobile devices get a response of 70%. The seventh statement, namely enables independent and flexible learning in Islamic Religious Education learning get a response of 70%. The eighth statement, namely increase student involvement and interest in studying lesson material. get a response of 75%. The ninth statement, namely students with different learning styles can choose the approach that best suits their conditions get a response of 80%. The tenth statement, namely equipped with assessment features such as exercises and exams, which allow students to get feedback get a response of 70%.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that from active participation in class discussions, task completion, and better attendance levels. The implementation of this research states that learning applications provide clear benefits in improving student performance and motivation in Islamic religious education. This confirms the need for technology integration in the learning process of Islamic Religion to optimize the student's learning experience and strengthen religious values in an increasingly digitally connected society. The use of learning applications can increase
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achieve and motivation in Islamic Religious Education and has brought significant benefits. This application has opened the door to wider access to Islamic Religious Education materials, allowing students to study Islamic teachings more easily and flexibly. Apart from that, this application has also increased students' learning motivation by presenting material in an interesting and interactive format, as well as providing direct feedback that encourages independent learning. The use of applications also opens up opportunities for personalized learning tailored to individual needs and interests, thereby creating a more adaptive and responsive learning environment. The research results also stated that the average student answered 80% of the statements is students with different learning styles can choose the approach that best suits their conditions. The use of learning applications also has a positive impact in increasing students' understanding and knowledge of Islamic teachings. The content presented in this application is designed to broaden students' insight and understanding of Islamic teachings in a comprehensive and in-depth manner. In this way, it is hoped that students can become more skilled in applying Islamic values and principles in everyday life

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