

The Effect of Gamification Through Educational Game Media on Learning Motivation in Islamic Religious Education

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technology has created significant opportunities for innovation in educational practices, including the teaching of Islamic Religious Education (IRE). One instructional approach that has gained increasing attention is gamification, which integrates game elements into learning activities to enhance student engagement and motivation. This study aims to examine the effect of gamification through educational game media on students' learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education. The study employed a library research approach by reviewing relevant books, journal articles, conference proceedings, and other scholarly publications related to gamification, educational games, learning motivation, and Islamic Religious Education. The findings indicate that the implementation of gamification through educational game media has a positive impact on students' learning motivation. The incorporation of game elements such as points, levels, challenges, rewards, and immediate feedback creates a more interactive, enjoyable, and engaging learning environment. As a result, students become more actively involved in the learning process, demonstrate greater enthusiasm for learning activities, and develop a stronger commitment to understanding educational content. Furthermore, educational game media contribute to improving students' concentration, participation, and comprehension of Islamic Religious Education materials. The study concludes that gamification can serve as an effective pedagogical strategy for enhancing learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education. However, its successful implementation depends on teachers' digital competencies, the availability of technological infrastructure, and the appropriate integration of gamification elements with instructional objectives. Therefore, collaborative support from educators, educational institutions, and technology developers is essential to optimize the benefits of gamification in the digital learning era.

Keywords: gamification; educational games; learning motivation; Islamic Religious Education; digital learning.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has brought significant changes to various aspects of human life, including the field of education. In the era of digital transformation, educational institutions are increasingly required to adopt innovative learning approaches that align with students' characteristics and technological developments. One such innovation is the integration of gamification into the learning process through educational game media. Gamification refers to the application of game design elements in non game contexts to increase engagement, participation, and motivation among learners.

Learning motivation plays a crucial role in determining students' academic success. Motivated students tend to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, persistence, and active participation in learning activities. Conversely, low levels of motivation often result in decreased engagement, reduced learning outcomes, and limited achievement of educational objectives. Therefore, educators are expected to implement instructional strategies capable of fostering and sustaining students' motivation throughout the learning process.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is one of the subjects that contributes significantly to the development of students' spiritual, moral, and social values. However, conventional teaching approaches in Islamic Religious Education are often perceived as monotonous and less engaging by students, which may negatively affect their motivation to learn. As a result, innovative instructional methods are needed to create more interactive and meaningful learning experiences while maintaining the educational objectives of Islamic Religious Education.

Gamification has emerged as a promising approach to addressing this challenge. By incorporating game elements such as points, badges, levels, rewards, challenges, and leaderboards into learning activities, gamification can create a more enjoyable and engaging educational environment. Previous studies have demonstrated that gamification can increase students' interest in learning, encourage active participation, and improve academic performance across various educational contexts. In addition, educational games provide opportunities for students to learn through direct experience, problem solving activities, and interactive challenges that enhance both cognitive and affective learning outcomes.

The integration of gamification into Islamic Religious Education offers significant potential for improving students' learning motivation. Educational game media can transform abstract religious concepts into more accessible and engaging learning experiences. Through game-based activities, students are encouraged to participate actively in the learning process, collaborate with peers, and develop a deeper understanding of educational content. Furthermore, gamification can foster positive attitudes toward learning by creating a sense of achievement and intrinsic satisfaction.

Several studies have reported positive outcomes associated with the use of gamification in education, including increased student engagement, improved motivation, enhanced critical thinking skills, and better learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the implementation of gamification in Islamic Religious Education remains relatively underexplored, particularly regarding its effectiveness in enhancing students' learning motivation. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand how educational game media can be utilized effectively within the context of Islamic Religious Education.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to examine the effect of gamification through educational game media on learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of innovative instructional strategies and provide valuable insights for educators seeking to improve the quality of learning in the digital era.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. Library research was selected because the study aimed to examine and analyze the effect of gamification through educational game media on students' learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on existing scholarly literature and previous research findings.

The data used in this study consisted of secondary sources obtained from scientific journal articles, conference proceedings, books, theses, and other academic publications relevant to gamification, educational games, learning motivation, and Islamic Religious Education. The literature was collected through a comprehensive review of scholarly sources accessible through academic databases and digital libraries.

Data collection was conducted using documentation techniques, which involved identifying, selecting, reviewing, and recording relevant literature related to the research topic. The selected sources were evaluated based on their relevance to the concepts of gamification, educational game media, and learning motivation in educational settings.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis. This method involved organizing, interpreting, comparing, and synthesizing findings from various sources to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role of gamification in enhancing students' learning motivation. Through this process, the researchers identified key themes, patterns, and relationships among the reviewed studies to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of educational game media in Islamic Religious Education.

To enhance the credibility of the analysis, findings from different studies were critically compared and synthesized. This approach enabled the researchers to develop a broader perspective on the implementation of gamification and its contribution to increasing student engagement, participation, and motivation in the learning process.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study indicate that gamification has a positive influence on students' learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education (IRE). Based on the reviewed literature, the integration of game elements such as points, levels, challenges, badges, rewards, and leaderboards contributes to creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment (Gamifikasi et al., 2021).

The literature further reveals that educational games serve not only as entertainment but also as instructional media capable of supporting students' cognitive, social, and moral development. Educational games increase students' interest in learning, improve classroom participation, and enhance learning experiences through interactive and enjoyable activities (Latif et al., 2021).

Several studies also demonstrate that gamification encourages active student engagement by fostering a sense of achievement, competition, and curiosity. The implementation of gamified learning environments allows students to receive immediate feedback, monitor their progress through levels and scores, and obtain recognition for their accomplishments (Jusuf et al., 2016).

Moreover, technological advancements have facilitated the adoption of gamification in educational settings. Interactive learning platforms and digital educational games provide opportunities for self-directed learning, creativity, and continuous engagement. Consequently, students become more motivated to participate actively in learning activities and develop a stronger commitment to achieving educational objectives (Purba et al., 2024).

The findings also indicate that motivation plays a crucial role in determining learning success. Motivated students tend to demonstrate greater persistence, concentration, and participation in learning activities. Therefore, instructional approaches that effectively enhance learning motivation are essential for improving educational outcomes (Fernando et al., 2024).

Finally, the reviewed studies suggest that gamification can improve students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education by transforming learning into a more enjoyable and meaningful experience. Through the incorporation of game elements, students are encouraged to engage more actively with educational content while maintaining a high level of learning motivation (Bashith, 2025).

Discussion

Islamic Religious Education is fundamentally aimed at developing individuals who possess strong religious values, moral character, and social responsibility. Ahmad Tafsir identifies the objectives of Islamic Religious Education as the formation of *insan kamil*, *insan kaffah*, and individuals who understand their role as servants and vicegerents of Allah (Siregar et al., 2024). Achieving these objectives requires instructional approaches that not only deliver knowledge but also stimulate students' motivation and active participation.

The findings suggest that gamification provides a promising pedagogical approach for addressing motivational challenges in Islamic Religious Education. Traditional instructional methods are often perceived as monotonous, resulting in reduced student engagement. By incorporating game mechanics into learning activities, gamification transforms educational experiences into more enjoyable and interactive processes. This finding supports the argument that positive emotional experiences, including enjoyment, challenge, and achievement, can enhance students' intrinsic motivation to learn (Purba et al., 2024).

The effectiveness of gamification can be explained through motivational theories, which emphasize the importance of rewards, achievement recognition, and goal-oriented behavior. Elements such as points, badges, levels, and challenges provide students with clear learning goals and immediate feedback, thereby strengthening their commitment to learning activities. These findings are consistent with the view that motivation functions as a driving force that initiates, directs, and sustains learning behavior (Fernando et al., 2024).

Educational games also contribute to creating learner centered environments where students actively participate in the construction of knowledge. Rather than acting solely as recipients of information, students become active participants who interact with learning materials through exploration, problem-solving, and decision-making processes. Such learning experiences are particularly relevant to Islamic Religious Education because they facilitate deeper engagement with religious concepts and values while maintaining students' interest and enthusiasm (Latif et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the implementation of gamification aligns with contemporary educational demands that emphasize digital literacy and technological integration. The availability of digital platforms and educational applications enables teachers to design innovative learning experiences that correspond to students' interests and learning preferences. Consequently, gamification not only enhances learning motivation but also supports the development of twenty-first-century skills, including creativity, collaboration, and self-directed learning (Purba et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the successful implementation of gamification depends on several factors. Teachers must possess adequate digital competencies and a comprehensive understanding of gamification principles to ensure that game elements support learning objectives rather than merely providing entertainment. In addition, technological infrastructure and institutional support play critical roles in facilitating effective implementation. Without proper planning and supervision, there is a risk that students may focus more on game mechanics than on the intended learning content (Bashith, 2025).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that gamification can serve as an effective instructional strategy for enhancing students' motivation in Islamic Religious Education. By integrating educational objectives with engaging game elements, gamification contributes to more meaningful learning experiences, increased student participation, and improved understanding of religious concepts. Therefore, the adoption of gamification has considerable potential to improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education in the digital era.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that the implementation of gamification through educational game media has a significant positive effect on students' learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education (IRE). The integration of gamification elements, including points, levels, challenges, and rewards, contributes to the creation of a more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable learning environment. Such conditions encourage students to participate more actively in the learning process, enhance their curiosity, and strengthen their commitment to understanding instructional materials. Therefore, gamification functions not merely as a form of entertainment but also as an effective pedagogical strategy for supporting the achievement of educational objectives.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that gamification can facilitate students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education by transforming conventional learning activities into meaningful and motivating learning experiences. The incorporation of game-based elements promotes active participation, sustained engagement, and positive learning behaviors, which ultimately contribute to improved learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, the successful implementation of gamification depends largely on teachers' readiness and competence in designing and managing innovative learning environments. Educators are required to possess adequate digital literacy skills and the ability to select or develop educational game media that align with instructional objectives, student characteristics, and curriculum requirements. In addition, institutional support in the form of technological infrastructure, professional development programs, and educational resources is essential for maximizing the effectiveness of gamification-based learning.

In conclusion, gamification represents a promising instructional approach for enhancing learning motivation in Islamic Religious Education. Its integration into educational practice has the potential to foster greater student engagement, improve learning experiences, and contribute to the development of more effective and meaningful learning environments in the digital era.

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