

The Role of Digital Media in Overcoming the Learning Saturation of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Learning boredom at the elementary school level is often triggered by the dominance of monotonous lecture methods and non-contextual memorization materials, thus hindering the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics Education (PAIBP) learning. This study aims to describe the implementation of digital media, identify forms of learning saturation, and analyze the role of digital media in overcoming this phenomenon in SD N Karangdawa 02. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study involved school principals, PAIBP teachers, students in grades IV and VI, and parents as participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and documentation studies, which were then validated using triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study show that the use of digital media in the form of animated videos and gamification integrated with active learning methods has been proven to be able to significantly reduce student learning saturation. Digital media plays a role in increasing motivation, visualizing abstract concepts, and transforming the classroom atmosphere into a more dynamic one. These findings confirm that successful technology integration requires synergy between teachers' pedagogical competence, school infrastructure support, and active parental involvement to create an innovative learning ecosystem for the digital native generation.

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INTRODUCTION

In the digital era of the 21st century, technological transformation has brought significant changes in the world of education, including changes in interaction patterns, access to information, and learning strategies in elementary schools (Sholeh dkk., 2024). The development of digital technology has driven a paradigm shift in learning from teacher-centered to student-centered learning that is more interactive, flexible, and based on student learning experiences. The generation of students in the digital era is known as *digital natives* because children grow up in an environment that is familiar with digital devices, visual media, and interactive technology from an early age. The condition of familiarity with the digital world results in students tending to be more interested in learning that utilizes visual, audiovisual, and interactive media compared to using conventional learning methods that are monotonous (Amelia dkk., 2025).

In the context of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics (PAIBP) learning, the predominant use of lecture and memorization methods is still a common characteristic in elementary school learning. In fact, the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics materials require a learning process that is not only oriented to cognitive aspects, but must also be able to build religious experiences, appreciation of normative values, and emotional involvement of students. Research findings conducted by (Qoyimah & Ratnasari, 2025) shows that the reality of teaching Islamic Religious Education and Ethics (PAIBP) in elementary schools still tends to be one-way and does not make use of innovative learning media. Teaching conditions using the one-way method will have implications for the emergence of learning boredom in students which is

characterized by low attention, decreased motivation, and weak active involvement in the learning process (Ayshara & Kamil, 2025).

Learning burnout is a psychological phenomenon that describes a condition in which students experience emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation, and the appearance of boredom and meaninglessness towards learning activities. (Salmela-Aro et al., 2021) explained that learning boredom is a response to academic stress that takes place continuously without a balance between learning demands and students' adaptive capacity. The research conducted by (Zhang et al., 2024) also shows a significant increase in the problem of learning saturation, this is because the learning process carried out is meaningless and unpleasant. In the context of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics, learning boredom is a serious problem because it can potentially hinder the process of internalizing Islamic values, forming religious characters, and can hinder students in the process of achieving the goals of Islamic Education holistically (Abdillah & Nurjanah, 2023).

Theoretically, the phenomenon of learning saturation can be analyzed through the perspective of Self Determination Theory developed by (Ryan & Deci, 2024). The Self Determination Theory explains that students' learning motivation is influenced by the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Where, if the learning process is monotonous, minimal interaction, and does not provide a meaningful learning experience, then the psychological needs of students are not met, so it will trigger learning boredom in students. In addition, the theory of Multimedia Learning from (Mayer, 2021), asserts that the use of a combination of visual, audio, and text can increase the effectiveness of stimulating processing of verbal and visual channel information. Meanwhile, the ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) motivation theory explains that attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction are important components in building students' learning motivation through digital learning (Nissa et al., 2021).

Various studies have examined topics related to the use of digital media in education, including research conducted by (Sholeh et al., 2024), finding that the use of digital media is able to increase the motivation and involvement of students in learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. The research conducted by (Sembiring et al., 2024) argues that digital-based religious learning is a means to reconcile traditional Islamic values with the reality of students' modern lives in the digital era. Furthermore, research conducted by (Assingkily & Ahmad, 2025) shows that the use of digital media in Islamic Religious Education and Ethics can increase students' interest in learning and can increase students' interest in learning and strengthen students' moral values. On the other hand, research (Musyandi et al., 2024) also revealed that one of the main causes of learning boredom in elementary schools is the limited variety of digital media used as learning media, and teachers who continue to use traditional teaching methods that fail to facilitate the learning needs of the *digital native* generation. These findings are further strengthened by research conducted by (Li & Zhang, 2024) which states that monotonous and unpleasant learning experiences can contribute to increased academic burnout in students.

However, previous studies still have some flaws. Among them, first, most of the research focuses more on the influence of digital media on motivation or learning outcomes in general, rather than specifically examining the role of digital media in overcoming learning saturation in learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in elementary schools. Second, previous research tends to use a quantitative approach so that it focuses more on systematic measurement and has not been able to explore students' subjective experiences in depth related to the dynamics of learning saturation. Third, research on the implementation of digital media in the learning of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics still rarely involves multi-stakeholder perspectives such as teachers, students, parents and school principals in a stimulant manner, even though the involvement of various stakeholders is very important to understand the process of implementing digital media in a more comprehensive and conceptual manner (Handayani et al., 2024).

Based on these conditions, the phenomenon of the use of digital media in overcoming the saturation of learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics needs to be studied in depth, especially in the context of

elementary schools. This research not only focuses on the impact of the use of digital media, but also on analyzing the implementation process, the form of student learning saturation, and the factors that affect the success of the use of digital media in the learning of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. Therefore, the descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it can allow researchers to understand experiences, perceptions, and learning practices in a practical way based on the reality of the field.

This research offers novelty in several aspects. First, in terms of study focus, this study specifically examines the role of digital media in overcoming PAIBP learning saturation, not just increasing motivation or learning outcomes. Second, the approach used in this study is to use a multi-perspective descriptive qualitative approach by involving all stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, and principals) in order to obtain comprehensive data. Third, in terms of context, this research is set in Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School, an elementary school in the rural area of Tegal Regency that has specific characteristics in the implementation of digital media, so as to contribute to contextual understanding that has been rarely explored so far. Fourth, this study integrates analysis based on three main theories (Self Determination Theory, Multimedia Learning, and ARCS) simultaneously to explain the phenomenon of learning saturation and the role of digital media, which has rarely been explored by previous studies.

Broadly speaking, this study focuses on three main things, including describing the implementation of digital media in learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics at SD N Karangdawa 02, then to identify the symptoms of student learning saturation in learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics, and to analyze the role of digital media in overcoming learning saturation of learning. The theoretical benefit of this study is to develop literature on PAIBP learning that uses digital media, especially in the context of overcoming learning saturation. The practical benefits of this research are expected to be a guide for educators, school institutions, parents, and policy makers to create a more innovative, fun, and effective learning atmosphere for Islamic Religious Education and Ethics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type to understand in depth the phenomenon of the use of digital media in the learning of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics (PAIBP) and its role in overcoming student learning saturation at Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School, Margasari District, Tegal Regency. The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because this study seeks to explore experiences, perceptions, and learning practices that take place naturally in the school environment without manipulating the research conditions. In addition, this approach allows researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of student learning saturation and the implementation of digital media in PAIBP learning. The determination of informants was carried out using the purposive sampling technique, which is the deliberate selection of participants based on certain considerations relevant to the purpose of the research. This technique is used because not all parties have experience and information that is in accordance with the focus of the research. Informants were selected based on their direct involvement in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics as well as experience in the use of digital media in the school and home environment.

The research participants consisted of four categories of informants. First, the Principal of Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School, namely Sanusi, S.Pd.SD., was chosen because he has a role in school policy making related to the development of digital facilities and the implementation of technology-based learning. Second, the teacher of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics, namely Khairana Utami, S.Pd.I., was chosen because she is a PAIBP subject teacher who actively uses digital media in the learning process and has more than five years of teaching experience. Third, student informants were selected from grades IV and VI, namely Thalita Salsabila, Syifana Ozilia Salsabila, M. Abdan Syakuro, and Nila Zulfa Sa'diyah. The selection of these students is based on their active involvement in PAIBP learning, the ability to provide information communicatively, and direct experience in participating in digital media-based learning. Grades IV and VI were chosen to represent the characteristics of students at the middle and end of

elementary school levels so as to provide a more diverse variety of learning experiences. Fourth, the parent informants consisted of Kasim Hidayat, M. Misbahurrohman, Nenty Melani, and Tasiroh who were chosen because they had an active involvement in accompanying the children's learning process at home, especially in the use of digital media for religious learning.

Data collection techniques were carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using interview guidelines that were compiled based on the research focus and theoretical framework used. Participatory observation was carried out four times to directly observe the PAIBP learning process, the use of digital media, student responses, and the learning atmosphere in the classroom. Meanwhile, documentation studies were carried out on learning tools, digital media used by teachers, photos of learning activities, and other supporting documents. The validity of the data is carried out through source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information from school principals, teachers, students, and parents, while technical triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation. To strengthen the credibility of the data, this study also uses member check and peer debriefing techniques (Enworo, 2023).

Data analysis was carried out interactively using the Miles and Huberman model which included three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. At the data reduction stage, the researcher selects and focuses data that is relevant to the research objective. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a descriptive description to make it easier for researchers to understand the patterns and relationships between data. The last stage is carried out through gradual conclusion drawing and continues to be verified throughout the research process in order to produce credible findings. The entire research process is carried out by paying attention to the principles of research ethics, including informed *consent*, confidentiality of informant identities, and respect for the right of participants to withdraw from research at any time without certain consequences (Sopia et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School, Margasari District, Tegal Regency, Central Java Province. Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School has been equipped with digital learning support facilities such as projectors in each classroom, Wi-Fi networks, and computer labs. The research informants consisted of school principals, teachers of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics (PAIBP), six students in grades IV and VI, and four parents/guardians of students.

Based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, the study found that students' learning boredom in the subjects of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics was characterized by low student attention during learning, decreased learning motivation, the emergence of passive behavior, and students' perception of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics learning which is synonymous with memorization and monotonous lecture methods. One of the students of grade IV revealed that learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics felt boring when the teacher only used the lecture method without a variety of learning media:

"If the teacher only explains with lectures, I feel bored because I just listen and sometimes I get sleepy." (Thalita Salsabila, grade IV student)

This statement was reinforced by the teacher of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics who explained that some students have the perception that the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics is identical to memorization so that students' motivation to learn tends to decrease.

"When children hear Islamic Religious Education and Ethics lessons, what comes to mind is memorization so that some students become less enthusiastic about learning." (Khairana Utami, Teacher of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics)

In addition, parents of students also confirmed the learning boredom experienced by children when learning took place too monotonous and lacked interactivity. The results of observations during four

meetings showed that when teachers used the lecture method without supporting media, some students appeared passive, sleepy, talked to classmates, and lost focus during learning. This condition shows a decrease in student engagement.

The phenomenon of learning saturation can be analyzed using the perspective of Self-Determination Theory by (Ryan & Deci, 2024) which explains that learning motivation is influenced by the fulfillment of basic psychological needs in the form of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Learning motivation is also divided into two, namely intrinsic motivation that comes from within students such as internal interest and curiosity in Islamic Religious Education and Ethics subject matter, and extrinsic motivation related to learning methods, learning environment, and the use of learning media (Marberliantina et al., 2025; Susanti et al., 2025). In the context of PAIBP learning which is dominated by lectures and memorization without variation, students will lose intrinsic motivation because they do not find meaning or interest in learning activities. Students no longer feel that learning religion is fun or relevant to students' lives. As a result, learning boredom will appear as a manifestation of the inability to meet three needs, including the basic psychological needs of students for autonomy, competence, and social connectedness.

The findings of this study are in line with research (Zhang et al., 2024) which explains that *academic burnout* increases when the learning process fails to create an interesting and meaningful learning experience for students. Research (Salmela-Aro et al., 2021) also confirms that learning boredom arises due to academic pressure that takes place continuously without being balanced with a pleasant and relevant learning experience with students' lives. From the perspective of ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) theory, conventional learning that is dominant using the lecture method has not been able to meet *the attention* and *relevance* components in learning (Nissa et al., 2021). As a result, students view the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics as a boring lesson and synonymous with memorization.

Research (Khosiyono et al., 2022; Musyandi et al., 2024) also revealed that one of the main causes of learning boredom in elementary school is the lack of variety of learning media. Teachers who still use traditional learning methods tend to have difficulties in meeting the learning needs of the *digital native* generation who prefer visual and interactive learning.

The results of the study show that the implementation of digital media at Karangdawa State Elementary School 02 is carried out through the use of animated videos, digital images, interactive quizzes, and learning gamification integrated with active learning methods. The Islamic Religious Education and Ethics Teacher explained that digital media is used to help students understand abstract material, especially Islamic history material and the story of the prophet.

"I use digital videos and images to help students understand the story of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH through sequencing and retelling the flow of events." (Khairana Utami, Teacher of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics)

The strategy shows that digital media is not only used as a passive broadcast tool, but is also integrated with learning activities that encourage students' active participation. In addition, students show a high preference for gamification-based digital media such as interactive quizzes and animated videos.

"I like learning to use animated games and videos because it feels like playing and is easier to understand." (Syifana Ozilia Salsabila, grade IV student)

Students' preference for gamification-based digital media such as interactive quizzes suggests that elements of competition, scores, and instant feedback can be able to transform the perception of religious learning from a boring activity into a fun experience. The use of gamification elements in the preparation of teaching materials has proven to be very effective in triggering the spirit of learning in the digital era, where children grow up with a digital gaming experience that is rich in rewards and feedback (Haryani et al., 2023; Srimuliyani, 2023)

The findings show that digital media is able to create a more fun and interactive learning atmosphere for students. These findings are in line with the Multimedia Learning theory from (Mayer, 2021) which explains that students understand information more easily when material is presented through a simultaneous

visual and verbal combination. The use of animated videos and digital images helps students process information through visual and auditory channels so that learning becomes more effective. This is reinforced by research (Mayer, 2021; Rahayu et al., 2024) which revealed that learning presented through the simultaneous combination of words and images will make students' understanding more optimal because the human brain processes data through two different systems, namely visual and verbal channels.

This study also found that there is a continuity of digital media use between school and home. Parents use digital media such as YouTube and daily prayer applications to accompany their children's religious learning process at home. On the other hand, the integration of digital media in Islamic Religious Education and Ethics can overcome learning boredom and strengthen moral values when designed by paying attention to Islamic narrative aspects and students' personal reflections. With the consistency of an integrated and consistent learning approach at school and at home, it will be easier for students to appreciate moral and spiritual values in a contextual, reflective, and meaningful way (Assingkily & Ahmad, 2025; Marzukah, 2025).

"Children understand religious lessons faster if there are images and sounds through digital media." (Nenty Melani, parents of students)

This condition shows that digital media is not only a means of learning in schools, but also part of the religious learning ecosystem of students in a sustainable manner. The success of digital media implementation is also supported by school policies through the provision of learning facilities such as projectors, Wi-Fi networks, computer labs, and digital literacy training for teachers.

"The school provides digital facilities and IT training for teachers so that technology-based learning can run optimally." (Sanusi, Principal)

This support shows that the implementation of digital media requires synergy between teacher competence, school infrastructure, and institutional support in a systematic manner. Research (Assingkily & Ahmad, 2025) explains that the integration of digital media in Islamic Religious Education learning can strengthen students' learning experience when supported by a learning environment that is adaptive to technological developments.

This study found that digital media has a significant role in overcoming student learning boredom in learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. These roles include increasing students' attention and focus on learning, increasing learning motivation, helping to understand material through visualization, creating a fun learning atmosphere, and encouraging students' active participation in learning. The results of the interviews showed that students felt more enthusiastic when learning using digital media compared to conventional lecture methods.

"Learning becomes more fun because there are videos and pictures so that the material is easier to understand." (M. Abdan Syakuro, grade VI student)

Parents of students also observed a change in children's enthusiasm for learning after teachers started using digital media in PAIBP learning.

"Children become more enthusiastic about learning religion and retell the material learned at school more often." (M. Misbahurrohman, parents of students)

The PAIBP teacher explained that the use of digital media helps students maintain focus for longer because of visual and audio stimulation that attracts students' attention.

"With digital media, students become more focused and not get bored quickly because there is visual and audio stimulation." (Khairana Utami, PAIBP Teacher)

In addition, students also revealed that digital media helps them understand the material more concretely.

"It's easier to understand the material on the history of the Prophet when there are pictures and videos than just listening to lectures." (Nila Zulfa Sa'diyah, sixth grade student)

The findings show that digital media not only helps increase students' attention, but also strengthens conceptual understanding through the visualization of learning materials (Wicaksono, 2025; Zhou & Zhang,

2025). From the perspective of ARCS theory, digital media is able to meet the four components of student learning motivation. The attention component is fulfilled through visual and animated displays that attract students' attention. The relevance component is fulfilled because the material can be associated with real experiences through audiovisual media. The confidence component arises when students get direct feedback through interactive quizzes and gamification. Meanwhile, the satisfaction component can be seen from the emergence of students' happiness and enthusiasm while participating in learning (Rafdi, 2025).

The findings of this study also show that the use of digital media is able to change students' perception of the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. Previously, students viewed Islamic Religious Education and Ethics as monotonous memorization lessons, but after the use of digital media, students began to view religious learning as a fun, interactive, and relevant activity to the times (Hadi et al., 2025). Research (Hasbullah et al., 2026) explains that gamification in learning can increase student motivation and active participation. In addition, research by (Ki et al., 2025) also emphasized that interactivity-based learning media is effective in reducing learning boredom through emotional engagement and fun learning experiences. This makes a change in a positive perspective on the subject that can be used as a foundation for the formation of sustainable intrinsic motivation (Andriana & Rokmanah, 2023).

The factors that affect the success of digital media implementation in overcoming student learning saturation are influenced by several main factors. First, the digital pedagogical competence of teachers. Teachers are not only required to be able to operate digital devices, but also to be able to integrate digital media effectively in learning (Sitompul, 2022). Mastering digital literacy allows teachers to make technology part of their learning strategies, not just complementary (Pebriana et al., 2025). Second, infrastructure and school policy support. The provision of facilities such as projectors, Wi-Fi networks, computer laboratories, and teacher training on a regular basis is an important factor in supporting the implementation of digital media (Nurhidayati & Thaufani, 2025).

Third, parental involvement in accompanying the child's learning process at home. This involvement creates a continuity of learning experience between school and the family environment. Fourth, the characteristics of students as a *digital native* generation who prefer visual, interactive, and technology-based learning (Fatmawati, 2025). Fifth, the availability of digital content that is relevant, interesting, and in accordance with the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics materials. The findings show that the success of digital media implementation does not only depend on the technology used, but is also influenced by teacher readiness, school support, family involvement, and student characteristics (Sihotang & Ameylia, 2024).

The findings of this study show that digital media in the learning of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics not only functions as a visual aid, but also as a means of transforming students' religious learning experiences through the integration of visual, interactive, and gamification elements. This study shows that the reduction of learning boredom in Islamic Religious Education and Ethics learning occurs when digital media is contextually integrated through collaboration between schools, teachers, and families. These findings are a new contribution to the study of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in elementary schools, especially related to strengthening students' learning motivation in the digital native era.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the learning saturation of Karangdawa 02 State Elementary School students in the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics appears as a response to conventional methods dominated by lectures, monotonous reading activities, and memorization materials regardless of the real-life context. The implementation of digital media such as video, animation, and gamification integrated with active learning methods has proven to be able to overcome boredom. Digital media plays a role in increasing learning motivation, strengthening cognitive understanding through visualization of abstract concepts, and transforming the classroom atmosphere from passive to dynamic. The success of the role of digital media is determined by the synergy of teachers' digital pedagogical competence, school policy

support, parental involvement, students' characteristics as digital natives, and the availability of quality digital content. Further research is recommended to conduct a cross-institutional comparative study, develop an integrated digital media-based Islamic Religious Education and Ethics learning model, and conduct longitudinal research to evaluate the long-term effects of the use of digital media on students' religious values.

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