

The Utilization of Social Media in Islamic Education

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Abstract

The development of the digital age has changed people's lifestyles including in the domain of Islamic Religious Education. Social media has a significant role in the learning process, facilitating access to information, interaction, and collaboration between learners. The utilization of social media as a learning tool for Islamic Education is in accordance with the principles of the 2013 curriculum, where learners play an active role in the learning process. Although it provides great benefits, the use of social media also poses challenges, including the spread of false information that can affect learners' religious understanding and beliefs. Therefore, it is necessary to improve critical skills in verifying the truth of information on social media platforms. This research uses the literature review method to explore the utilization of social media in Islamic Education. The results show that social media has a positive impact on learning, but also causes negative impacts such as addiction, exposure to negative content, and disruption to learning concentration.

Keywords: Digital era development; Islamic religious education; Social media.

INTRODUCTION

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein state that social media is "an online platform built on the principles of Web 2.0 ideology and technology, which facilitates the creation and exchange of user-generated content", (Anang Sugeng Cahyono, 2016). "Social media as online media where users can participate, share or various new things, and create content for blogs, social networks, wikis, forums and virtual worlds" (Nur Ainiyah, 2018).

In English, the term "education" comes from "educate", which refers to the process of improving and developing, (Nik Harryanti, 2014). In the context of Islamic education, terms such as ta'lim, ta'dib, or Tarbiyah are used. "Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning National Education System defines education as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment that allows students to develop spirituality, personality, moral intelligence, and skills needed for individuals, communities, nations, and countries", (Afifuddin Harisahh, 2018).

The development of Islamic religious learning is currently experiencing a significant acceleration thanks to advances in information technology, especially through the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram and YouTube. Social media has become an integral part of people's daily lives, especially among the younger generation, who utilize these platforms not only to socialize, but also to gain religious information and knowledge. In the context of Islamic education, terms such as ta'lim (teaching), ta'dib (moral education) and tarbiyah (general education) are often used to describe various aspects of the learning process that takes place online. Apart from being a means of socialization, social media also serves as an effective platform for disseminating religious content. Through videos, articles and online discussions, educators and scholars can reach a wider and more diverse audience. Facebook and Instagram, for example, allow the dissemination of da'wah through images and short videos that are easy to access and understand. Meanwhile, YouTube provides a space for long lectures and in-depth discussions that can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

This allows Islamic learning to be more flexible and adaptable to individual needs. In addition to the benefits in knowledge dissemination, social media also opens up opportunities for more active interaction and discussion between teachers and students or between fellow learners. Platforms such as Twitter (X) and Facebook allow users to participate in discussion forums, ask questions and share opinions on religious topics. These interactions not only enrich their understanding of Islamic teachings, but also help to form a supportive and encouraging learning community. However, it is also important for users to remain critical and selective in filtering the information received, so as not to get caught up in inaccurate or misleading information.

The use of social media in Islamic religious learning not only brings benefits, but also presents obstacles, especially with regard to the veracity of information. Al-Khalifa and Al-Mulla point out that fake news and misinformation can affect learners' religious understanding and beliefs. In this digital age, information spreads very quickly, and there is not always a guarantee that any information accessed is accurate and trustworthy. This can lead to the spread of teachings that are not in line with the true principles of Islam, as well as cause confusion among learners. To address this issue, it is important for educators and religious leaders to be active in providing correct and trustworthy content on social media. They should utilize these platforms to spread valid teachings and provide clarification on misinformation. In addition, education on digital literacy is also very important for learners so that they can sort and evaluate the information they receive. Good digital literacy will help learners recognize reliable sources and avoid fake news or misleading information.

In addition, collaboration between educational institutions and religious authorities is also needed to supervise and control religious content on social media. This could include developing guidelines and standards for educators and content creators to ensure that the material disseminated is in accordance with the correct teachings of Islam. With strict supervision and joint efforts to improve digital literacy, it is hoped that obstacles related to the truth of information in learning Islam through social media can be minimized. "Therefore, it is important for Islamic educators and learners to have critical skills in verifying information before receiving and disseminating it" (Tasik, M. N., Rahayu, T., & Listiana, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research utilizes the literature review method by collecting relevant data and obtaining information from various legitimate sources to explore the use of social media in Islamic religious education. The literature review is an important tool in conducting the review and as a theoretical basis that supports the problem under study. By conducting a literature review, researchers can identify the latest trends and findings in the field, thus enriching the analysis and interpretation of the research.

Literature reviews are conducted because knowledge is always growing and changing, and research topics and variables that have been studied by other researchers before are often updated. Through a literature review, researchers can understand recent developments and how previous research can contribute to the research being conducted. This allows researchers to find research gaps and identify areas that require further research, as well as ensure that the research being conducted is relevant and up-to-date. In addition, by studying research conducted by other researchers, researchers can learn from their methods, approaches and findings. This not only helps in formulating a strong theoretical framework, but also in avoiding the same mistakes and increasing the validity and reliability of the research. The literature review also allows researchers to evaluate different perspectives and approaches, thus providing a more comprehensive and holistic view of the use of social media in Islamic religious education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Social Media in Islamic Learning

The digital shift has changed the way Islamic religious learning takes place with social media at the center. Al-Quradaghi states that social media expands access to religious information, increases the diversity of learning resources, and allows for denser interaction among learners. With the advent of social media, anyone can now access different types of religious content, ranging from lectures, discussions, to in-depth studies provided by various

scholars and religious experts. This not only increases the number of sources of information available but also enriches learners' perspectives and understanding of Islam. Besides expanding access, social media also allows learners to interact more intensively with fellow learners and teachers. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook allow live discussions through comments or live streaming features, where users can ask questions and discuss in real-time with scholars or teachers. This creates a dynamic and interactive learning environment, which supports the exchange of ideas and deeper understanding. In addition, features such as discussion groups and forums also facilitate collaboration and support between learners, strengthening the sense of togetherness and community in learning Islam. "In addition, this platform is also a platform for various ideas, experiences, and deep religious understanding", (Hutami, D., & Muslimin, A. 2019).

2. Social Media as Islamic Education Learning Media

Now, social media is one of the main means for people to communicate and build relationships with others in cyberspace. "Apart from being a tool for social interaction or communication, social media also has the potential to shape the views, attitudes, and behavior of its users", (Watie, E. D.S. 2016). Using social media provides significant advantages in the field of education. Social media as a learning tool is in line with the characteristics of the 2013 curriculum, where the teacher no longer acts as the controller of the learning process, but focuses more on the students. In this model, students are given the opportunity to actively take charge of their learning process, set goals, and figure out how to achieve them within existing rules and deadlines. Platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Google are widely used by students to access various learning resources, video tutorials and online discussions that support their learning process.

In addition, the ease of access to social media allows students to utilize the platform as an effective learning medium. Social media provides a variety of content formats, such as videos, articles, infographics, and discussion forums, which can be tailored to different learning styles of students. For example, learning videos on YouTube can help students who prefer to learn through visuals and audio, while discussion forums on Facebook or Google Classroom allow in-depth interaction and collaboration between students and teachers. With proper utilization, social media not only enriches the learning experience but also increases student motivation and engagement in the learning process. "However, teachers currently need to improve their understanding and skills in using social media and other digital resources as part of today's technology", (Tafonao, T., Saputra, S., & Suryaningwidi, R., 2020).

Social media has a variety of benefits, including :

- 1) As a Learning and Information Exchange Tool: Since it allows many people to access and share information quickly, social media can be used as a useful learning tool. Participating in discussions and sharing relevant resources, teachers and students can upload and download learning materials. This enables dynamic and interactive information exchange, enhances collaboration, and enriches the teaching and learning process by introducing different knowledge and perspectives.
- 2) For Documentation, Administration, and Unification: Social media also helps organize education. Social media can help teachers and students store and manage important documents such as assignments, projects, and class notes. They can also make administrative pieces like schedules, announcements, and progress reports more accessible and organized.
- 3) As a Means of Planning, Methods, and Management: Social media can be used for lesson planning, methods, and management. Through this platform, teachers can design and share lesson plans, teaching methods and learning strategies. The platform has features such as calendars, discussion groups and collaboration tools. Social media also helps in planning and executing teaching and learning activities more systematically and effectively.
- 4) Aids in Control, Assessment, and Measurement: Social media provides tools that allow teachers to track their students' progress in real-time in terms of control, assessment, and measurement. Online quizzes, surveys, and discussion forums can be used to assess student understanding and provide feedback. Social media also allows teachers to measure student participation and engagement in lessons and find areas that require further attention. This makes the evaluation process more thorough and continuous.

There are several functions of social media according to its use, namely:

- 1) Expanding social interaction through the internet, Using social media and online platforms, people can interact with others around the world, transcending cultural and geographical boundaries. The internet allows people to interact with each other, share experiences, and build new relationships quickly and easily. Various forms of communication such as video calls, text messages, discussion forums and social networks are all part of this growing social interaction, resulting in more relationships and cooperation around the world. In addition, the internet enables the formation of interest-based communities that share support, information and networking opportunities that were not previously possible.

- 2) Changing communication practices from a single source to interaction with multiple sources, Before the digital era, communication was usually centered on a single source, such as a classroom teacher or television broadcaster. However, with the advent of the internet and social media, communication practices have changed to become more interactive and multi-directional, so people can now interact with multiple sources at once.
- 3) "Channeling knowledge and information, and allowing users to become message and information creators" (Doni, F. R., 2017).

3. The Impact of Utilizing Social Media as Learning Media

The use of social media can support learning. "Due to its popularity among students, it provides benefits for users in sharing learning resources, interacting, collaborating, and discussing learning information" (Suci, W., Muslim, S. and Chaeruman, U. A. 2022).

The positive impact of social media in learning is :

- a) Facilitating the learning process, Social media provides various tools and platforms that facilitate the teaching and learning process. With access to video tutorials, presentations and downloadable teaching materials, students can learn in a more flexible and interactive way. This helps reduce time and place barriers, allowing students to learn anytime and anywhere.
- b) Making it easier to interact with others, Social media makes it easier for students and teachers to interact more easily and quickly. Through platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Google Classroom, they can communicate directly, exchange ideas and give feedback quickly. It also allows collaboration between students on group projects or assignments.
- c) Broaden horizons, With access to multiple sources of information from around the world, social media helps students broaden their horizons and understanding of various topics. They can follow educational accounts, participate in online discussions, and gain new perspectives from different parts of the world.
- d) Making it easier to obtain learning materials, Social media provides extensive access to a variety of learning materials, such as e-books, articles, educational videos and online courses. Students can easily find and use these resources to support their studies, without having to rely on traditional textbooks only.
- e) Relieve learner fatigue, Social media can also be used as a healthy entertainment tool for students, helping to relieve fatigue after intense study sessions. Funny videos, educational games and other creative content can provide a refreshing break between studies, keeping students motivated and energized.

- f) Making it easier for learners to obtain religious knowledge. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Facebook provide a variety of religious content, such as lectures, commentaries and religious discussions. Students can access this material to deepen their understanding of religion, take online religious classes, and interact with religious scholars or experts.
- g) Easily obtain and search for general information, such as current news, entertainment, information about the outside world etc. Social media allows students to quickly search and obtain general information, such as current news, entertainment, and information about the outside world. By following trusted news accounts and information sources, they can stay up-to-date with the latest global events and trends, which can also add to their general knowledge.

Besides the positive impact, of course, social media also has a negative impact, for example as follows ;

- a) Addictive, Excessive use of social media can lead to addiction, where students become overly dependent on the platform and find it difficult to control their usage time. This can result in a decrease in time spent on studying and other productive activities, and affect their mental and physical health.
- b) Pornography, which will impact their learning, play environment and behavioral attitudes, Social media can be a conduit for inappropriate content, including pornography. Exposure to this content can disrupt students' learning focus, negatively affect their social environment, and lead to undesirable behavioral changes. In addition, easy access to pornographic content can damage their moral and ethical development.
- c) Laziness, Excessive engagement with social media can make students lazy and less motivated to complete schoolwork or participate in academic activities. The tendency to spend time passively on social media reduces productivity and enthusiasm for learning.
- d) Disrupting learners' learning concentration, Social media can be a significant distraction during study time. Constant notifications, messages and the temptation to check social media accounts can disrupt students' concentration, making it difficult for them to focus on subject matter and academic tasks.
- e) Spending pocket money, (especially if accessed from an internet cafe), Accessing social media from internet cafes (warnet) or using mobile data can spend students' pocket money. The costs incurred to access the internet on an ongoing basis can

become a financial burden, reducing the budget that should be used for other important needs.

- f) Students can be indoctrinated by irresponsible people, spreading dzolim religious teachings (hoaxes), Social media allows for the rapid dissemination of information, including indoctrination by irresponsible people. Students can be subjected to harmful content or false religious teachings (hoaxes), which can influence their views and have a negative impact on their beliefs and actions.

Learners lose their humanity and only aim for fun and enjoyment, Excessive reliance on social media for entertainment and fun can make students lose human values, such as empathy, responsibility, and social sensitivity. Excessive focus on instant gratification can distract them from long-term goals and healthy character development.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Social media provides a platform for learners of Islam to interact, discuss and collaborate in learning about religion. The discussions that take place on social media allow for a better exchange of thoughts and experiences on Islamic religious concepts. In the context of learning Islamic religious education (PAI), the use of social media has become increasingly relevant. Social media is not only used as a communication or information sharing tool, but also as an effective learning medium. Teachers can use various social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Google as a means to deliver learning materials, facilitate discussions between learners, assign tasks or learning projects.

However, the use of social media in learning also has impacts that need to be considered. For example, learners can become addicted to social media, which can disrupt their concentration in learning. In addition, exposure to negative content such as pornography or hoaxes can also damage learners' learning environment and behavior. Therefore, it is important for teachers and parents to monitor learners' social media use and provide appropriate guidance. In addition, it is necessary to teach learners about good digital literacy, so that they are able to filter the information received and use social media wisely. Thus, social media can be an effective tool in learning Islamic religion, as long as it is used with the right understanding and properly supervised.

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