

Early childhood responses to digital gameboards as a medium for islamic religious literacy

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Abstract

This study aims to describe early childhood responses to the use of digital gameboard media as a tool for Islamic religious literacy in learning daily prayers. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method involving children at RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani. Data were collected through observations and interviews with teachers, then analyzed using data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that digital gameboard media elicited positive responses from children, reflected in increased learning motivation, interest, and confidence in reciting prayers. Children were also able to recognize and memorize daily prayers more effectively. This media creates a fun and interactive learning environment aligned with early childhood characteristics. Therefore, digital gameboard media can be an effective alternative for developing Islamic religious literacy in early childhood.

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INTRODUCTION

TimeEarly childhood is known as the golden age because it is during this period that children's spiritual, moral, social, and emotional development occurs rapidly. At this age, children are able to quickly grasp various information and values, including religious ones. Islamic religious education at this early stage not only introduces the basics of faith and worship, but also plays a role in fostering religious character through positive habits, instilling morals, and practicing good behavior from an early age.(Solekah, 2020).

Islamic religious literacy is understood as a child's ability to recognize, understand, and apply Islamic teachings in daily activities according to their developmental level. This literacy is a crucial element in character formation because Islamic values can be instilled through simple activities such as reciting prayers, greetings, sharing, being polite, and learning from exemplary stories. However, in reality, religious education for early childhood often focuses on memorization and cognitive aspects, rather than on understanding and cultivating Islamic-based behavior.(Hidayanti, 2021).

Challenges are increasing as children live in the digital age. Children are now more frequently exposed to technology and visual content, so religious instruction needs to be delivered through more engaging, creative, and personalized media.(Nurhayati & Khairunnisa, 2022)Without strengthening religious literacy from an early age, children absorb other values that are not always in line with Islamic teachings. Based on field facts, many children experience difficulty memorizing prayer phrases due to their limited vocabulary, short attention span, and still-developing memory. Furthermore, children begin to feel bored if prayer learning is done solely by listening and repeating without any variation or the use of engaging media. A lack of regular practice at home and at school also hinders memorization. As a result, even though children are able to recite prayers mechanically, their understanding of their meaning and application in daily life remains very limited.

The limited availability of learning media is a major obstacle to introducing Islamic religious literacy to young children. Many teachers still rely on oral memorization of prayers without utilizing visual, audio, or educational games appropriate to children's characteristics. This makes it difficult for children to understand religious values in a fun way, as the learning process becomes monotonous and less interactive. Furthermore, the limited variety of media also impacts children's motivation to learn, thus hindering their understanding and application of Islamic values. Therefore, the use of creative and interactive learning media is necessary to help children more easily recognize, understand, and practice Islamic religious literacy from an early age.

In an effort to provide learning media tailored to the characteristics and needs of early childhood, researchers developed a digital game board using the Canva app. Canva was chosen for its ease of use and the availability of a variety of templates and visual elements that support the design of engaging and interactive learning media. The game board, a digital game developed using the Canva app, contains daily prayer material.

Gameboard-based learning media is an educational tool that combines game elements with learning materials, making learning activities interactive, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate. For example, in a study using gameboards to teach Islamic religious material (prayers) to children aged 5-6, gameboards were recognized as "an engaging and enjoyable alternative learning medium."

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with descriptive methods, aiming to deeply examine the processes and phenomena that emerge in the use of learning media without any treatment or manipulation of the research variables. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study emphasizes understanding the meaning, context, and experiences of the research subjects in natural settings.(Creswell, 2018)Meanwhile, the descriptive method is used to present a systematic and objective picture of the implementation of learning, the use of media, and children's responses during learning activities.(Sugiyono, 2019). Through this research design, researchers are expected to gain a comprehensive understanding of the learning process and various problems that occur in early childhood education. The subjects of this study include all group B children in the kindergarten which is the research location at RA Attaqwa, Cimahi City. The data collection techniques used

are observation and interviews. The collected data are then analyzed through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The research results show that the Islamic literacy skills of early childhood children in recognizing and memorizing daily prayers at RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani show considerable variation. Based on observational data, some children are already able to recite several daily prayers, such as prayers before and after meals, prayers for getting into a vehicle, prayers for waking up, and other daily prayers, quite well. However, there are still children who are not yet stable in reciting prayers and require teacher guidance, especially in remembering the correct wording. Interview results also indicate that some children tend to memorize prayers verbally without understanding the situations in which prayers are used and their meaning in everyday life.

Based on observations and interviews conducted at RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani, it was found that early childhood Islamic literacy skills in recognizing and memorizing daily prayers show differences between individuals. The results are as follows:

The results of a study conducted at RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani provide an overview of early childhood responses to the use of digital gameboard media as a means of Islamic religious literacy in learning daily prayers. Research data were obtained through observations of several learning activities and interviews with class teachers. The research findings indicate that children display a positive response to the use of digital gameboard media, particularly in aspects of learning motivation, self-confidence, and the ability to recognize and memorize daily prayers. The research findings related to children's responses to the use of digital gameboard media are described as follows:

A. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Increasing Motivation and Interest in Learning

OnDuring early learning activities utilizing digital gameboard media, children demonstrated significant interest in the game's visuals. They enthusiastically watched the screen, followed the game's flow and instructions, and waited their turn in an orderly fashion. The visuals, reminiscent of a digital Monopoly game, and the accompanying audio recitation of prayers captured the children's attention, encouraging them to continue participating in the learning activities.

In subsequent lessons, the children's increased motivation became increasingly apparent. Not only were they able to maintain focus throughout the activity, but they also began actively asking for turns and expressing joy when they successfully completed a stage. Children who were previously easily distracted appeared more able to follow through with the lesson to completion.

The teacher said that the use of digital gameboard media was able to foster children's enthusiasm for learning because the activities were presented in the form of games.

"When using a digital gameboard, kids are more enthusiastic. They feel like they're playing, not studying hard, so they want to stay involved from start to finish." (Interview with Teacher A, RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani)

These findings indicate that digital gameboard media plays a role in gradually increasing children's motivation and interest in learning during the learning process.

B. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Increasing Self-Confidence

In the early stages of learning, some children still showed hesitation and shyness when asked to recite prayers independently. They tended to wait for the teacher's direction and were not yet confident in reciting

the prayers clearly. However, in subsequent lessons, a significant change in response was observed. Children began to be more confident in reciting prayers after listening to them read on a digital gameboard. They no longer seemed afraid of making mistakes and were willing to repeat the prayer words even if their pronunciation was not entirely correct. Some children expressed joy and pride when they successfully recited the prayer more fully.

The teacher explained that the learning atmosphere created through play makes children feel more comfortable so that their self-confidence increases.

"Children who are usually quiet and shy when asked to recite prayers have become more courageous through this game. Although they aren't perfect yet, they are willing to try, and that's good." (Interview with Teacher A, RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani)

These responses show that digital gameboard media is able to create a learning environment that supports the development of children's self-confidence.

C. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Learning and Memorizing Daily Prayers

In early learning, some children still had difficulty remembering the order of prayer words. They tended to only imitate parts of the prayer and stop mid-recitation. In subsequent learning, children's responses to recognizing and memorizing prayers showed better progress. Children began to be able to recite prayers with a more complete order of words after repeatedly listening to the prayer recitation through audio in the game. Furthermore, children began to associate prayers with the context of daily activities presented in the game, such as prayers before meals, prayers upon waking, and prayers before studying.

The teacher said that repeating the prayer readings through digital gameboard media helps children memorize prayers without pressure.

"With this digital gameboard, children memorize the verses more quickly because they hear the prayers repeated over and over while playing. They don't feel pressured, but the memorization comes naturally." (Interview with Teacher A, RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani)

Based on the observations and interviews, it can be concluded that throughout the learning process, children responded positively to the use of digital gameboards. This media increased children's motivation and self-confidence, as well as helping them learn and memorize daily prayers through a fun learning experience that aligns with the developmental characteristics of early childhood.

Discussion

Based on research conducted at RA Attaqwa Cerdas Nurani, it was found that young children showed a generally positive response to the use of digital gameboards as a means of Islamic religious literacy. This positive response was reflected in increased learning motivation, self-confidence, and the children's ability to recognize and memorize daily prayers. Digital gameboards not only support the delivery of material but also provide a fun learning experience that aligns with the developmental characteristics of young children.

This finding is in line with the view (Wulansuci & Kurniati, 2019) which emphasizes that early childhood learning needs to be tailored to the child's developmental characteristics to avoid academic stress and encourage active involvement in the learning process. In the context of this research, digital gameboard media can create a fun and developmentally appropriate learning experience, resulting in positive responses from children to Islamic religious learning.

A. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Increasing Motivation and Interest in Learning

The research results showed that children responded enthusiastically and showed a high level of curiosity to the use of digital gameboard media. They appeared more focused, actively followed the flow of the game, and showed interest in continuing to engage in learning activities. These responses indicate that digital game-based learning media can foster children's learning motivation because the learning process is packaged in a playful manner. This finding aligns with the results of other research. (Nisa & Suryana, 2022) which states that interactive digital learning media has a significant impact on increasing motivation and attention in early childhood. Engaging visual and audio displays in digital media can engage children more in the learning process. In this study, a digital gameboard equipped with prayer audio and game visuals provided stimuli tailored to children's learning needs, eliciting positive responses and a strong interest in learning.

The findings in this study are in line with the results of previous studies. (Hidayat & Rohman, 2020) Research has shown that learning through digital games can increase early childhood learning motivation. This is because the learning process is designed to be fun and encourage active participation. Games make learning activities feel light and non-pressuring, allowing children's interest in learning to grow and develop optimally.

B. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Increasing Self-Confidence

In addition to increasing motivation to learn, the children's positive responses were also evident in their self-confidence. Children who previously seemed hesitant and lacked the courage to recite prayers independently began to show courage and try after interacting with the digital gameboard. They no longer felt afraid of making mistakes and became more confident in repeating prayers.

This response indicates that the use of digital gameboard media can create a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable learning environment, allowing children to express their abilities more freely. This finding aligns with research (Pangestuti & Thaib, 2025). This finding is in line with the research results (Sari & Lestari, 2019) which states that a fun and pressure-free learning environment plays a crucial role in fostering self-confidence in young children. When children feel safe and comfortable during the learning process, they tend to be more confident in demonstrating their abilities and trying new experiences without worrying about making mistakes. It also states that interactive digital media can increase children's self-confidence and active participation in learning. Game-based media provides a space for children to learn without pressure, thus encouraging them to be more daring in trying and actively engaging.

C. Children's Responses to Digital Gameboard Media in Learning and Memorizing Daily Prayers

Children's positive responses were also evident in their ability to recognize and memorize daily prayers. They found it easier to remember the words of the prayers when they were presented repeatedly through audio in a game. In addition to verbal memorization, children also began to understand the context of prayers related to daily activities, such as before meals, when waking up, and before studying.

This finding is in line with research (Pratiwi & Fauziah, 2021) which states that digital game-based learning is effective in instilling religious and moral values in early childhood. Digital game media helps children connect learning materials with real-life experiences, allowing religious values to be gradually understood and internalized. Thus, developing Islamic religious literacy in early childhood focuses not only on memorization but also on understanding and incorporating religious values into everyday life. (Rahmawati, 2021) revealed that the use of digital media in teaching religious values to early childhood can improve children's understanding in a more contextual way. Through digital media, children more easily connect prayer material with everyday activities, making the process of recognition and memorization more meaningful. In addition to the cognitive domain, the use of interactive

digital media also has a positive impact on children's affective development. (Putri & Wahyuni, 2020) suggests that interactive learning media can encourage positive attitudes, feelings of enjoyment, and increase children's interest in active involvement in the ongoing learning process. Islamic religious instruction for early childhood presented through play activities is considered more effective in instilling religious values. This finding aligns with research. (Kurniasih & Hasanah, 2018) which reveals that the use of a play approach in religious learning can help children understand religious values more naturally and in accordance with their developmental stage.

Overall, the results of this discussion indicate that digital gameboard media can facilitate positive responses in children's Islamic religious learning. This media supports the integrated development of children's cognitive, affective, and social aspects through interactive, contextual, and enjoyable learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that early childhood education responds positively to the use of digital gameboards as a means of Islamic religious literacy. This response is reflected in increased motivation and interest in learning, growing self-confidence, and the ability to recognize and memorize daily prayers. Digital gameboards create an engaging, interactive learning environment that aligns with the developmental characteristics of early childhood education. The use of digital gameboard media encourages children to actively participate in learning without pressure. Children become more confident in reciting prayers, show enthusiasm during activities, and are able to understand the use of prayers in the context of daily activities through game-based learning experiences. This demonstrates that Islamic religious learning presented through game-based digital media can provide meaningful learning experiences for young children.

Thus, digital gameboard media can be used as an effective alternative learning medium for developing Islamic religious literacy in early childhood. This research is expected to serve as a reference for early childhood education educators in designing more creative and contextual Islamic religious learning, as well as serve as a foundation for further research to develop similar digital learning media with a broader range of materials and subjects.

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